



**MEMORANDUM AND CONSULTATIVE REPORT
OF UGANDANS IN THE DIASPORA
ON THE PROTECTION OF SOVEREIGNTY BILL, 2026**

Submitted to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and Committee on Legal and
Parliamentary Affairs, Parliament of Uganda

**Submitted by: Uganda Diaspora Leadership Council,
under the coordination of Uganda Global Forum**

Date: 21 April 2026

Received
H. Mung'anya
23/04/2026
0755419858
0414377155



**MEMORANDUM AND CONSULTATIVE REPORT
OF UGANDANS IN THE DIASPORA
ON THE PROTECTION OF SOVEREIGNTY BILL, 2026**

Submitted to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and Committee on Legal and
Parliamentary Affairs, Parliament of Uganda

**Submitted by: Uganda Diaspora Leadership Council,
under the coordination of Uganda Global Forum**

Date: 21 April 2026



To:

Office of the Clerk to Parliament,
Parliamentary Building,
Kampala, Uganda.

Re: Memorandum for the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026

We respectfully submit this memorandum and the attached consultative report containing views gathered from Ugandans residing abroad regarding the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026.

We recognize and support the legitimate objective of protecting Uganda's sovereignty, constitutional order, and national interest from undue external influence. At the same time, feedback received through our consultation process indicates concern that certain provisions of the Bill, as currently drafted, will unintentionally affect Ugandan citizens residing abroad and their ordinary family support, economic, and civic activities.

To inform this submission, a public webinar was convened with 465 participants and the [YouTube recording](#) that went on to receive more than 6,000 views within just 24 hours, reflecting strong and immediate public interest in the issue. In addition, a survey circulated through diaspora networks received responses from Ugandans residing across 31 countries. These views have informed the attached consultative report and the recommendations set out in this submission.

Our review suggests broad support for a balanced approach that preserves the Bill's core purpose while strengthening clarity, proportionality, and practical implementation. We therefore request the Committees' consideration of targeted amendments in the following areas:

- Remove the classification of Ugandan citizens residing abroad as foreigners in the Bill
- Clarify that ordinary lawful activities by Ugandan citizens abroad do not fall within the scope of the Act
- Clarify that lawful research, opinion, commentary, and policy engagement do not constitute prohibited conduct under the Act
- Exempt persons handling legitimate private matters for Ugandans abroad from registration as agents of a foreigner
- Exclude lawful money transfers from Ugandan citizens abroad from declaration requirements, including family support and private investment
- Explicitly exempt remittances and lawful private support transfers, including family, community, and other ordinary social support.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Nalule McLaughlin
Executive Director, Uganda Global Forum



Areas of Concern and Proposed Amendments in the Bill for the Non-Resident Ugandans (NRUs)

In considering the Bill, we submit that legislation is strongest where it advances legitimate public objectives while remaining consistent with constitutional principles of citizenship equality, legal certainty, proportionality, fair administrative process, protection of property rights, and freedom of lawful expression. These principles are also consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, including citizenship, property, and fair process protections.

Clause 1: Definition of “Foreigner”

“We cannot be defined as foreigners elsewhere and also at home. Are we stateless?”

~ Uganda diaspora member in Zambia

The Bill defines a “foreigner” to include “a Ugandan citizen residing outside Uganda.” This provision emerged as one of the most significant concerns raised during the consultation. Many respondents spoke first from a place of identity and belonging. They rejected any legal framing that appears to treat Ugandans abroad as foreigners, arguing that residence outside Uganda should not erase citizenship, attachment, or rights. These submissions reflect a strong shared view that citizenship must remain the starting point for any law affecting Ugandans abroad.

Ugandans in the diaspora are estimated at approximately 2.5 million people residing across more than thirty countries. In 2025, they sent home an estimated USD 2.5 billion, as reported by the Bank of Uganda, representing approximately 3.8 percent of national GDP and one of the country’s leading sources of foreign exchange. Respondents therefore noted that citizens making such significant economic and social contributions should be clearly distinguished from genuine foreign actors targeted by the Bill.

Amendment One: Remove the classification of Ugandan citizens residing abroad as foreigners in the Bill under section 1.

This is a foundational amendment, because without it many of the concerns arising in later provisions of the Bill remain unresolved. The proposed amendment would better align the Bill with the principle of equal citizenship, under which citizenship status should not be diminished solely by residence outside Uganda.

Clause 2: Application of the Act

Clause 2 applies the Act to persons acting as agents of foreigners and extends to a broad range of activities, including political engagement, transfer of funds, representing interests before

Government, influencing policy, influencing public opinion, and digital engagement. If Ugandan citizens abroad remain classified as foreigners, ordinary lawful diaspora activities could potentially be captured in ways that feel very close to everyday life for many families. For example, a daughter in London sending money home for her mother's medication in Mbarara, a father in Boston paying school fees for his children in Kampala, a brother in Dubai supervising construction of a family house through a cousin in Jinja are now being treated as foreign-linked activity.

Amendment Two: Clarify that lawful activities undertaken by Ugandan citizens residing abroad in their capacity as citizens shall not constitute activities of a foreigner or an agent of a foreigner.

This would preserve the intended focus of the Bill while avoiding unintended burdens on ordinary diaspora engagement. Clarifying the scope of the Act would improve legal certainty by ensuring ordinary private conduct is not inadvertently captured by provisions aimed at harmful foreign interference.

Clause 13: Economic Sabotage

Clause 13 criminalizes publication of information or activities that weaken or damage the economic system or viability of the country. Respondents agreed that coordinated campaigns of deliberate economic disinformation orchestrated by or for foreign interests deserve appropriate sanction. However, they expressed concern that the Bill's treatment of "economic sabotage" is too broad and could sweep in legitimate speech on Uganda's economy, including research, journalism, investment analysis, and public criticism. They warned that where the wording does not clearly require intent to cause harm, the clause risks being used against lawful expression rather than genuine economic wrongdoing.

For example, a Ugandan economist abroad warning about currency pressures, a banker discussing debt risks, a business owner sharing investor concerns, or a diaspora professional commenting on policy reforms could fear that honest analysis may be misunderstood as harmful publication. Submissions indicated that such uncertainty may create a chilling effect that silences exactly the diaspora expertise, professional networks, and informed perspectives that Uganda's own diaspora engagement efforts seek to attract for national development. A narrower and clearer formulation would help protect freedom of lawful expression while preserving the State's ability to sanction deliberate harmful conduct.

Amendment Three: Clarify that lawful research, opinion, commentary, and policy engagement do not constitute prohibited conduct under the Act.

Clause 14 and Clause 15: Registration of Agent of a Foreigner

Clause 14 prohibits any person from acting as an agent of a foreigner unless that person is registered with the Department and issued with a certificate of registration by the Minister. Clause 15 further requires a person seeking registration to apply to the Minister and provide extensive personal, business, contractual, financial, and operational information.

Submissions pointed out that the Bill would place a particularly heavy burden on elderly recipients, especially those living in hard-to-reach areas who rely mainly on local mobile money services to receive support from relatives abroad. They warned that registration and compliance requirements could create serious practical barriers for older and other vulnerable persons who depend on these funds for medical care, daily upkeep, and other essential needs. As one respondent noted that “the Bill is insensitive to senior citizens who rely on diaspora support for medical needs and basic upkeep, yet cannot travel to Kampala or urban areas for registration.” Feedback further highlighted that private remittances currently serve as a lifeline for “the elderly and vulnerable,” particularly where public support systems remain limited. Exempting legitimate private family and property matters would promote administrative fairness and ensure regulatory obligations remain proportionate to actual risk.

Amendment Four: Exempt persons handling legitimate private matters for Ugandans abroad from registration as agents of a foreigner.

Clause 21 & 25: Declaration of Sources of Funding

Clause 21 requires any person receiving funding from a foreigner to declare the source of funds to the Minister, while Clause 25 prevents supervised financial institutions from paying out such funds unless declarations are made and, where applicable, ministerial authorization is provided. It also requires monthly reporting by financial institutions on such transfers. Views received indicated concern that if formal banking and regulated remittance channels become associated with administrative hurdles, uncertainty, or compliance risk, some transfers may shift to informal channels. This could reduce transparency, weaken use of regulated systems, and undermine the very oversight the law seeks to strengthen. Clear exemptions for ordinary citizen transfers would support legitimate expectation that routine family support and private investment can continue through formal regulated channels.

Amendment Five: Explicitly exempt remittances and lawful private support transfers under Clauses 21 and 25 from Ugandan citizens residing abroad to family members, dependants, or for private investment purposes from the declaration requirement.

This would help preserve the objective of regulating suspicious or harmful foreign funding while avoiding unintended burdens on legitimate diaspora support and economic contribution. It would also provide clarity to both citizens and financial institutions on the intended scope of the provision.

Clause 22: Restrictions on Funding from Foreigners

Clause 22 restricts the receipt of financial support, donations, loans, or other assistance from a foreigner above the prescribed threshold without written approval of the Minister. During the consultation, many contributors expressed concern that, if Ugandan citizens residing abroad are treated as foreigners, this provision could directly affect ordinary remittances and private family support sent to relatives and friends in Uganda. They also warned that if formal remittance channels are made subject to ministerial approval, reporting obligations, heightened compliance scrutiny, and forfeiture risk, many transfers are likely to shift to informal and untraceable channels.

In that event, Uganda would not gain the oversight it seeks, but would instead risk losing the foreign exchange, tax revenue, and financial transparency associated with regulated transfers, while the underlying flows continue outside the formal system. Targeted exemptions would better protect property rights and due process by ensuring private funds are not unnecessarily delayed, restricted, or subjected to discretionary approvals without clear cause.

Amendment Six: Explicitly exempt remittances and lawful private support transfers under section 22, including assistance to family members, friends, community initiatives, faith-based contributions, emergency needs, bereavement support, and other ordinary social obligations.

Conclusion

We submit that sovereignty and constitutional governance are mutually reinforcing. Laws that are clear, proportionate, and fairly administered strengthen both national security and public confidence. We ask for the six amendments described above. The continued contribution of Ugandans abroad, including an estimated USD 2.5 billion in remittances last year, reflects the enduring commitment of citizens who remain closely connected to their country. We ask Parliament to honour that with the same clarity with which we have always honoured Uganda. Uganda's sovereignty is strengthened not only through legal protection, but also through the confidence, cohesion, and continued contribution of its citizens wherever they reside. We request the Committees to consider the proposed amendments so that the Bill may achieve its intended purpose while avoiding unintended consequences for Non-Resident Ugandans and their families. We remain available to provide any further clarification or engagement that may assist the Committees.

*Submitted following consultations involving Non-Resident Ugandans
Through the
Uganda Global Forum & Uganda Diaspora Leadership Council
April 2026*

SUBMISSION NOTE

This memorandum is submitted through Uganda Global Forum and Uganda Diaspora Leadership Council following a consultation process involving diaspora participants across more than thirty countries.

*For more information contact: info@ugandaglobal.org
Website: <http://www.ugandaglobal.org/>*

**CONSULTATIVE REPORT OF UGANDANS IN THE DIASPORA
ON THE PROTECTION OF SOVEREIGNTY BILL, 2026**

Final Report

Consultation Report: Findings and Recommendations

Prepared for:

Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs
Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs
Parliament of Uganda

By:

Uganda Global Forum

April 2026

DISCLAIMER

This report presents findings from a rapid consultation conducted among Ugandans residing abroad regarding the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026. The views summarized herein reflect perspectives voluntarily submitted by respondents during the consultation period and are intended to support constructive dialogue and informed policy consideration. They should not be interpreted as representing the views of all Ugandans in the diaspora.

This publication reflects UGF's commitment to transparency, institutional integrity, and continuous learning as the organization evolves.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or translated without prior permission. © Uganda Global Forum, 2026

For information on usage rights or further inquiries, please contact:
info@ugandaglobal.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from a rapid consultation undertaken among Ugandans living abroad on the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026. The consultation was organized to gather diaspora perspectives, understand potential implications of the proposed legislation, and document practical recommendations for consideration by Parliament and other stakeholders. The consultation combined a public webinar and a follow-up survey.

The webinar attracted 465 participants, and the [YouTube recording](#) later received more than 6,000 views within 24 hours, reflecting strong and immediate public interest. The consultation was further strengthened by a survey that reached Ugandans residing across 31 countries, providing broad international input and helping ensure that the findings reflected perspectives from a wide range of diaspora communities.

Overall findings indicate that many respondents support the legitimate objective of protecting Uganda's sovereignty, constitutional order, and national interest from undue external influence. However, respondents also expressed concern that certain provisions of the Bill, as currently drafted, will unintentionally affect Ugandan citizens residing abroad and their ordinary family support, economic, and civic activities.

The consultation found broad support for targeted amendments that preserve the Bill's core purpose while strengthening clarity, proportionality, and practical implementation.

Six amendment priorities emerged consistently:

1. Remove the classification of Ugandan citizens abroad as foreigners.
2. Clarify that lawful citizen activities abroad do not fall within the scope of the Act.
3. Protect lawful research, opinion, commentary, and policy engagement.
4. Exempt legitimate private matters from agent registration requirements.
5. Exempt lawful transfers from declaration requirements.
6. Protect remittances and private support transfers.

The report concludes that Uganda's sovereignty is strengthened not only through legal safeguards, but also through the continued confidence, cohesion, and contribution of all its citizens wherever they reside.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ugandan diaspora continues to play an important role in the country's development through remittances, investment, enterprise, professional contribution, philanthropy, and sustained social ties with families and communities across Uganda. In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the value of deeper and more coordinated diaspora engagement, both as a development asset and as an important part of Uganda's broader relationship with its citizens abroad. This evolution reflects a wider shift toward more structured participation in matters of national relevance.

Diaspora communities are increasingly engaged not only in supporting households and local development, but also in contributing to wider national conversations that affect their rights, responsibilities, and long-term relationship with the country. In this context, the quality of laws and policies matters. Clear, balanced, and consultative frameworks are essential to sustaining confidence, encouraging continued engagement, and strengthening the contribution that Ugandans abroad can make to national progress.

The economic significance of the diaspora further reinforces this point. Uganda's sovereignty is strengthened not only through legal and institutional protection, but also through economic resilience. Bank of Uganda cross-border remittance data for 2025 show total inflows of approximately USD 2.50 billion. Remittance delivery is also strongly integrated into accessible financial channels, with 73.32 percent of inflows transmitted digitally and 60.83 percent received through mobile money. Taken together, these indicators show that remittances are not only significant in value, but are also widely distributed and closely woven into everyday household financial life across Uganda.

At the same time, the protection of national sovereignty remains a legitimate and important objective of the state. Protecting Uganda's constitutional order, national interest, and independence is a principle that many Ugandans, including those living abroad, recognize and support. The central policy question, therefore, is not whether sovereignty matters, but how it is protected in ways that remain proportionate, legally clear, and supportive of the constructive role citizens can continue to play wherever they reside. It is within this broader context that the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026 generated significant attention among Ugandans in the diaspora. The Bill raised questions relating to citizenship, remittances, investment, family support, civic participation, and the practical relationship between the Ugandan state and its citizens abroad. These issues created the need for a structured process through which diaspora perspectives could be gathered, documented, and presented in an organized manner.

This report presents the findings of that process. It brings together perspectives gathered through public engagement and written submissions in order to highlight the main issues raised, identify recurring themes, and contribute constructively to the ongoing discussion on the Bill.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTATION

The overall objective of the consultation was to gather timely views from Ugandans living abroad on the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026, and document them in a structured way to support constructive engagement with policymakers and other stakeholders. It also aimed to create space for civic participation by helping diaspora communities understand the Bill, explore how its provisions may affect them, receive legal guidance, and share their concerns and recommendations.

Specific objectives included:

- Assess the level of support, concern, or opposition regarding the proposed Bill
- Identify the main issues and recurring themes raised by diaspora participants
- Document practical suggestions and recommendations
- Generate an organized evidence base for future dialogue and policy engagement
- Provide a platform for constructive global diaspora participation in an ongoing national policy matter

3. METHODOLOGY

The findings in this report were generated through a rapid diaspora consultation process undertaken during the active public discussion period surrounding the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026. Two complementary data collection channels were used.

- 1) The first component was a public webinar held on 18 April 2026. The session was organized to explain the proposed Bill in accessible terms, support public understanding of selected clauses, and provide space for participants to ask questions and receive legal interpretation on issues affecting Ugandans in the diaspora. The webinar attracted 465 live participants. Following the live event, the recording was shared online and received more than 6,000 views within 24 hours, indicating strong and immediate public interest in the issue.
- 2) The second component was an online survey circulated after the webinar through diaspora networks, WhatsApp groups, social media platforms, and other community channels. Participation was voluntary and open to Ugandans living outside Uganda, as well as Ugandans residing in Uganda whose views related to the Bill's implications for diaspora communities. Respondents were invited to indicate their position on the Bill and provide written comments, concerns, and recommendations. The survey received 178 responses from participants residing across 31 countries, reflecting broad international reach.

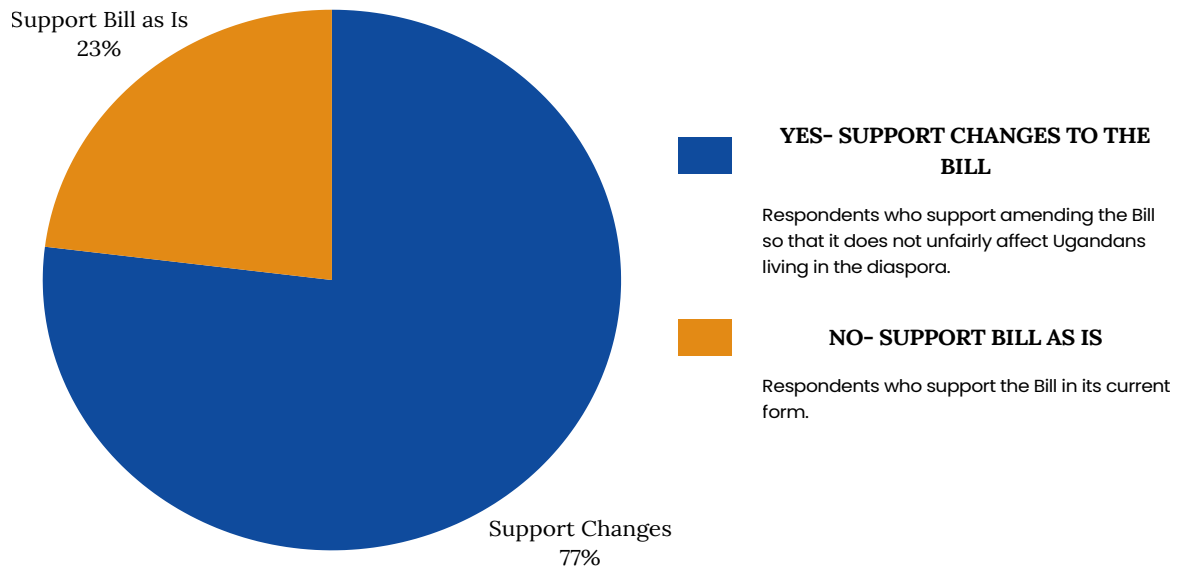
This consultation was not designed as a statistically representative survey of all Ugandans in the diaspora. Rather, it was a rapid, voluntary consultation intended to gather timely views from engaged participants during an active policy moment. The findings should therefore be understood as reflecting the perspectives of those who chose to participate, while still offering a credible and useful snapshot of issues raised by diaspora communities across multiple countries.

3.1. INTERPRETATION OF SURVEY RESPONSES

Of the 178 responses received through the survey, 137 respondents selected “Yes” and 41 selected “No.” However, review of the written submissions showed that some respondents who selected “No” still expressed concern about the Bill in its current form or called for changes. This suggests that a small number of participants may have misunderstood the question, and that support for amendment may be higher than the raw count alone suggests. This pattern highlights the importance of interpreting the survey in light of both its quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative results provide a useful overall indication of how respondents positioned themselves in relation to the Bill. At the same time, the written comments reveal the reasoning behind those positions and help clarify cases where a selected response did not appear to align with the substance of the accompanying submission.

The qualitative submissions were especially important in this consultation because many respondents used the open-ended section to explain, in practical terms, how the Bill could affect their lives, families, investments, and relationship with Uganda. These comments provided richer insight into concerns relating to citizenship, remittances, lawful expression, private investment, and administrative burden. They also helped distinguish between respondents who clearly supported the Bill in its current form and those who may have selected an option inconsistently while still expressing reservations or support for amendment. For this reason, the findings presented in this report do not rely on the Yes/No count alone. Rather, they draw on both the numerical responses and the substance of the written submissions. Taken together, these two forms of evidence provide a fuller and more credible picture of respondent views, and strengthen the overall interpretation of the consultation results.

Figure 1: Overall Respondent Views on Amending the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026

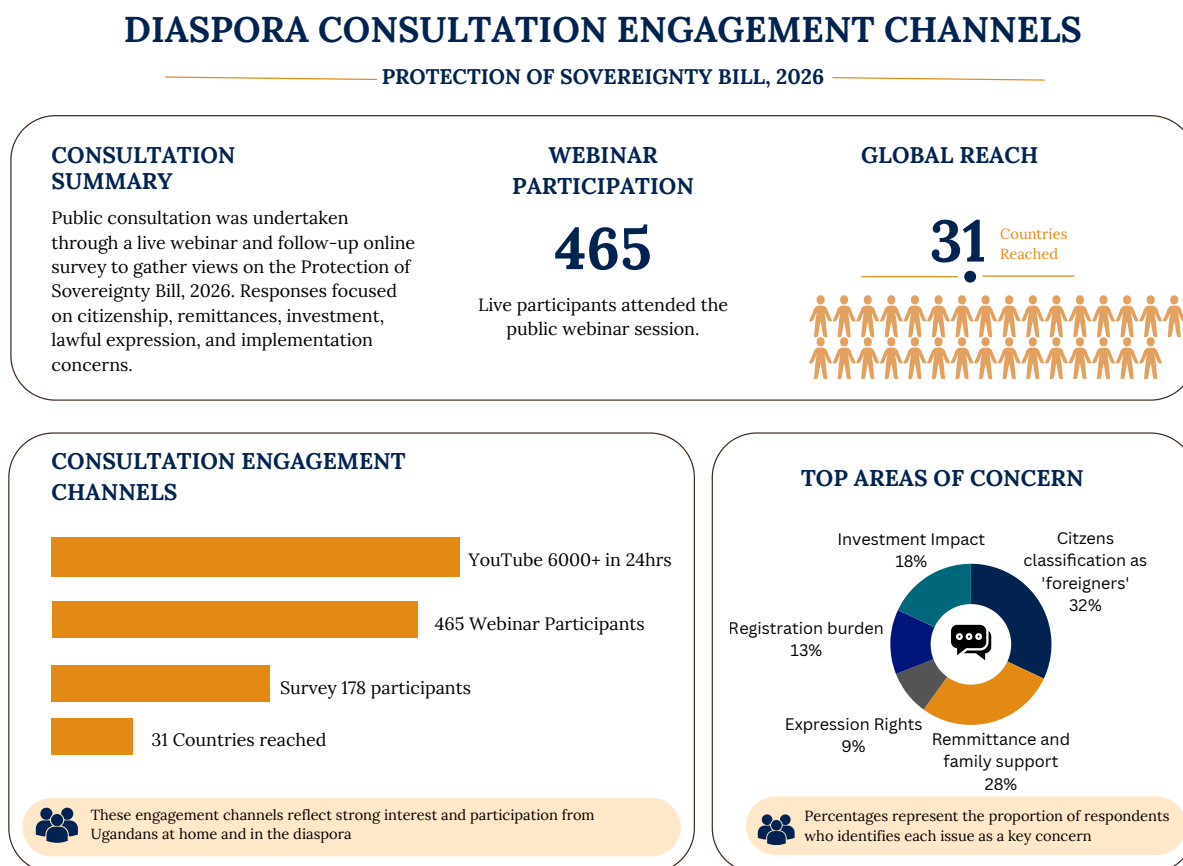


A clear majority (77%) of respondents support changing the Bill so that it does not unfairly affect Ugandans in the diaspora.

4. FINDINGS

The consultation revealed strong and consistent themes across submissions. While respondents came from different regions, professions, and family circumstances, many of the concerns they raised converged around a common message: the Bill, in its current form, risks capturing ordinary citizens whose connection to Uganda remains active, lawful, and deeply rooted in family, identity, and contribution. Many respondents made clear that they support the legitimate goal of protecting Uganda’s sovereignty. Their concern was not with that objective itself, but with the possibility that the wording and operation of the Bill may unintentionally weaken the very relationship between Uganda and its citizens abroad that national policy has increasingly sought to strengthen.

Figure 2: Diaspora Consultation Engagement Channels Dashboard



Source: Uganda Global Forum

Figure 2 provides a visual summary of the consultation reach, participation channels, and key concerns raised by respondents. It highlights the scale of engagement achieved through the webinar, digital viewership, international survey participation, and recurring issues identified during the consultation process.

One of the clearest findings concerned citizenship and belonging. Respondents reacted strongly to the classification of Ugandan citizens residing abroad as foreigners. For many, this was not merely a technical legal issue. It was experienced as a challenge to identity, belonging, and equal status as citizens. Participants repeatedly stated that residence abroad should not diminish citizenship, especially where many continue to maintain strong economic, emotional, and social ties to Uganda. Several respondents described the language of the Bill as alienating and inconsistent with the reality that Ugandans abroad continue to see themselves as part of the national community, not outside it.

“The bill designates me, a dual citizen Ugandan residing abroad, as a foreigner. How can a Ugandan be a foreigner in their own country? This has the effect of stripping me of my Ugandan citizenship at a stroke of a pen. Living and working abroad does not take away my right to my authenticity as a Ugandan.”

A second major theme was the centrality of remittances and private support transfers to household welfare and community life. Respondents consistently emphasized that money sent from abroad is not abstract foreign funding. It is often the means through which families survive. Many described monthly support for school fees, rent, medicine, food, funeral expenses, and elderly care as part of their ordinary responsibility to relatives at home. Others pointed out that support also extends beyond the immediate household to include friends, church contributions, village projects, and emergency community needs. What emerged clearly from the responses is that diaspora transfers operate as a practical social safety net, filling gaps where formal protection systems remain limited. Respondents worried that if such support is brought under approval, declaration, registration, or reporting systems intended for foreign actors, the burden will fall not on abstractions but on real households already relying on these resources.

“Uganda government should remember the funds we send back home help our economy and family. Many in the diaspora will feel they are being victimized and will stop remitting funds home. This will have negative impacts on the economy, and the wellbeing of those relatives who rely on the funds remitted by relatives in the diaspora for school fees, medical bills, and general welfare.”

Related to this was a broader concern about the likely effect of the Bill on investment confidence. Respondents repeatedly described diaspora contribution not only in terms of direct remittances, but also in terms of long-term investment in land, housing, rental property, small businesses, community schools, farming, and income-generating projects. Many stressed that these investments are often gradual and personally financed over years of sacrifice abroad. The concern was that if Ugandans abroad are treated as foreigners, then the people they instruct or pay in Uganda to manage property, supervise construction, receive funds, or support projects may be caught in a burdensome compliance regime. Participants feared this would introduce uncertainty, discourage future investment, and weaken trust in Uganda as a place where diaspora citizens can safely plan, build, and contribute over time.

“It puts an inconsiderate hindrance to financing our projects back home in addition to posing threats to our families who receive our money. The process of becoming a foreign agent puts them in absolute fear and danger whilst impeding economic growth for our country. It is going to discourage me from investing in my home country.”

Another strong finding was the concern that the Bill may unintentionally capture ordinary daily activities that are lawful, personal, and routine. Respondents did not read the Bill only in relation to large political questions. They read it through the lens of practical life. They asked what it would mean to send money to a relative, ask a cousin to supervise a construction project, pay a caretaker, hire a plumber, or contribute to a burial. In this sense, many respondents experienced the Bill as overly broad because it blurred the line between genuine foreign interference and ordinary citizen conduct. Respondents wanted the law to distinguish clearly between hostile external influence and the normal acts through which Ugandans abroad remain involved in family and community life.

“If I send Christmas presents, school books, shoes, or clothes to my family, that is termed as assistance and the recipients will have to register as foreign agents to receive them without fear of being arrested. If I want to help our village construct a well or create income-generating projects, do I need Cabinet approval to fund construction of a well in my own village? Really?”

The consultation also revealed substantial anxiety around legal clarity, breadth of wording, and the possibility of misuse. Respondents repeatedly pointed to vague or expansive language in the Bill, especially around concepts such as foreign influence, prohibited activities, and economic sabotage. Many accepted that deliberate attempts to destabilize the country, spread harmful disinformation, or advance hostile foreign agendas should be addressed. However, they feared that where definitions are broad and intent is unclear, the law could end up affecting legitimate opinion, journalism, academic research, investment analysis, or ordinary policy commentary. This was especially significant for diaspora professionals who may speak publicly on Uganda’s economy, governance, or development challenges from abroad. The concern was that uncertainty itself could silence useful expertise.

“Clause 13 criminalizes publication of any information that weakens or damages the economic system or viability of the country. There is no intent requirement and no materiality threshold. This captures journalism, academic research, and investor analysis. The offence should require proof of intent to cause economic harm and a direct causal link to material damage. Journalism, research, and commentary must be explicitly exempt.”

Practical implementation concerns were another recurring finding. Respondents raised questions not only about what the Bill says, but about how it would work in practice. They questioned how approvals would be obtained, how long registration would take, whether digital systems exist, and how elderly or rural recipients would realistically comply. Many feared that even where the intent of the law is regulatory, the actual effect may be bureaucratic delay, confusion, and exposure of vulnerable people to systems they cannot reasonably navigate. Senior citizens dependent on diaspora support were mentioned repeatedly as a particularly at-risk group. Respondents stressed that legal frameworks must be tested against the everyday realities of those who would live under them, especially where access to transport, digital systems, or state offices is limited.

“While the intent of the bill may be regulatory, it overlooks the critical role the Ugandan diaspora plays in the national social safety net. Requiring elderly recipients to register as foreign agents creates an impractical bureaucratic barrier that threatens their access to essential medical and daily care. A thorough impact assessment is needed to ensure this legislation does not inadvertently penalize the very citizens it should protect.”

At the same time, the consultation pointed to an important opportunity: respondents welcomed being consulted. Many appreciated the chance to receive an explanation of the Bill, to ask questions, and to submit their views in an organized way. This suggests not only concern, but readiness for constructive engagement. A recurring sentiment was that laws affecting Ugandans abroad should not be developed without diaspora input. Respondents did not present themselves as opponents of Uganda’s sovereignty. Rather, many described themselves as committed citizens seeking fairness, clarity, and continued inclusion in national life. The process itself demonstrated that digital consultation tools, when used deliberately, can help connect institutions to Ugandan citizens across multiple countries and regions.

“Most importantly, decisions like this should involve proper consultation. Ugandans at home and abroad should be heard. We all want the same thing, a stronger, united country. Policies should reflect fairness, understanding, and humanity, not fear or exclusion.”

Taken together, the findings suggest that the strongest diaspora concerns are not abstract or ideological. They are grounded in daily realities: identity, household survival, long-term investment, lawful participation, and practical fairness. Respondents broadly supported the legitimate aim of protecting Uganda from harmful external influence. What they asked for, consistently, was a more precise and balanced legal framework that distinguishes genuine foreign threats from the ordinary lawful conduct of Ugandan citizens living abroad. That overall pattern strongly supports the six amendment areas already set out in the memorandum submitted alongside this report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultation findings indicate that many respondents support the core objective of the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026, while favoring targeted amendments to improve legal clarity, proportionality, and practical implementation. Respondents generally did not call for abandonment of the Bill. Rather, they urged refinement so that the legislation more clearly distinguishes genuine harmful foreign interference from the ordinary lawful activities of Ugandan citizens residing abroad. The recommendations below reflect the six amendment areas already presented in the accompanying memorandum and arise directly from the recurring themes identified during the consultation process. They are framed in a constructive spirit, with the aim of strengthening both the effectiveness of the Bill and public confidence in its implementation.

- 1) The first recommendation concerns citizenship classification. Respondents strongly urged reconsideration of the provision that defines a Ugandan citizen residing outside Uganda as a foreigner. Many viewed this as inconsistent with citizenship status and unnecessarily

disruptive to the relationship between Uganda and its citizens abroad. It is therefore recommended that Ugandan citizens, regardless of residence, be expressly excluded from the definition of a foreigner under Clause 1 of the Bill.

- 2) The second recommendation relates to the scope of application of the Act. Respondents noted that the Bill, if read broadly, may capture ordinary lawful activities undertaken by Ugandans abroad in their capacity as citizens. These include family support transfers, management of private property, community engagement, policy submissions, and participation in public discussion. It is therefore recommended that Clause 2 be clarified to expressly state that lawful activities undertaken by Ugandan citizens abroad, acting in their personal capacity as citizens, do not constitute activities of a foreigner or agent of a foreigner.
- 3) The third recommendation concerns lawful speech, research, and policy engagement. Respondents repeatedly supported action against deliberate attempts to undermine Uganda through disinformation or coordinated harmful conduct. At the same time, they requested clear safeguards for legitimate journalism, academic work, expert commentary, economic analysis, and good-faith public debate. It is therefore recommended that Clause 13 be refined to clarify that lawful research, opinion, commentary, and policy engagement do not constitute prohibited conduct under the Act.
- 4) The fourth recommendation relates to registration requirements under Clauses 14 and 15. Respondents expressed concern that persons handling legitimate private matters for Ugandans abroad could unintentionally be drawn into registration requirements designed for agents of foreign interests. Examples frequently cited included relatives overseeing land matters, caretakers managing homes, contractors supervising projects, lawyers processing documentation, and persons receiving routine family instructions. It is therefore recommended that legitimate private arrangements involving Ugandan citizens abroad be expressly exempted from registration as agents of a foreigner.
- 5) The fifth recommendation concerns declarations of transfers under Clauses 21 and 25. Many respondents felt that lawful transfers originating from Ugandan citizens abroad for family support, dependants, private investment, education, or healthcare should not be subjected to declaration systems intended to monitor suspicious foreign funding. It is therefore recommended that remittances and lawful private support transfers be expressly exempted from declaration requirements under Clauses 21 and 25 where the source is a Ugandan citizen residing abroad and the purpose is legitimate private support or investment.
- 6) The sixth recommendation concerns restrictions on funding under Clause 22. Respondents repeatedly emphasized that support sent from abroad extends beyond narrow household remittances and often includes assistance to friends, funeral support, faith-based giving, community initiatives, emergency welfare needs, and broader social obligations. It is therefore recommended that Clause 22 expressly exempt remittances and lawful private support transfers, including assistance to family members, friends, community initiatives, faith-based contributions, emergency needs, bereavement support, and other ordinary social obligations by Ugandan citizens residing abroad.

Taken together, these six recommendations seek to preserve the legitimate protective purpose of the Bill while improving precision, fairness, and public confidence. Respondents consistently conveyed that Uganda's sovereignty and diaspora engagement are not competing objectives, and that both can be advanced through law that is clear, proportionate, and responsive to lived realities.

6. CONCLUSION

The consultation demonstrates that Ugandans in the diaspora remain closely connected to national affairs and highly interested in policy developments affecting their rights, responsibilities, and contributions. The strong webinar turnout, continued engagement with the online recording, and substantive survey responses indicate a diaspora community seeking constructive participation, clear information, and meaningful dialogue. Overall, respondents expressed broad support for a balanced approach that protects Uganda's sovereignty while preserving citizenship confidence, encouraging investment, supporting remittance flows, and strengthening national cohesion. The findings suggest that continued engagement between institutions and diaspora communities can contribute positively to policy outcomes, strengthen trust, and reinforce the valuable role the diaspora continues to play in Uganda's development.

*For more information contact: info@ugandaglobal.org
Website: <http://www.ugandaglobal.org/>*