

Expectations and Aspirations (2015-2021)



**A Statement by Cultural
Institutions in Uganda**

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Citizens' Manifesto process, representatives of cultural institutions have developed a statement defining their aspirations and demands for the period 2015-2021.

The Citizens' Manifesto process, spearheaded by the Uganda National NGO Forum, provides for special interest groups (cultural institutions, faith-based institutions, youth, women, etc.) to make their voices heard, especially at the point when the nation prepares to go to the polls. In addition, the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) wished to provide an opportunity for cultural leaders to develop their own strategic paper, as a stand-alone document. This process was facilitated by CCFU to promote the role of cultural institutions in governance.

In August 2015, a smaller group of representatives from cultural institutions across the country therefore took part in a 1 ½ day "write-shop" to draft a statement, which was further developed and later validated by Prime Ministers and other leaders of cultural institutions in Uganda in September 2015.

EXPECTATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS - (2015 – 2021)

A Statement by Cultural Institutions

PREAMBLE

WE, the representatives of CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS coming from the different parts of Uganda, at our sitting at Kampala on the 22nd and 23rd of September 2015 do hereby state as hereunder:

REALISING that the communities of our Cultural Institutions desire to perform to the best of their capacities by engaging in effective wealth creation for the good of the communities across the country,

REALISING that Cultural Institutions are competent and have the potential to harness indigenous knowledge and skills for sustainable development

REALISING that our Cultural Institutions need to engage in meaningful research and documentation for the purpose of promoting their relevance, in accordance with authentic historical records,

OBSERVING that the Cultural Institutions to a great extent lack an appropriate institutional framework and are not adequately accountable to the people,

RECOGNISING the fact that the Cultural Institutions lack the required Code of Conduct to direct them towards best practices

REGRETTING the absence of the much required resources to help direct relevant interventions by our Cultural Institutions in community empowerment and engagement, and OBSERVING the dependency mentality that is associated with most of the Cultural Institutions in the country

RECOGNISING that the Constitution of Uganda (*Objective 2, I; Objective 3, II; Objective 12, II; Article 246; 5th Schedule No.8*) provides for the existence and activities of Cultural Institutions, but FACED by the challenge of the lack of a comprehensive constitutional framework within which to meaningfully carry out their institutional mandates of our Cultural Institutions in promoting the welfare of their communities, and

RECOGNISING the support so far being provided by Government to our Cultural Leaders as individuals, albeit not supporting the administrative structures of our institutions,

WE HEREBY COMMIT our Cultural Institutions to:

1. Promote our cultural values and customs for the benefit of the society, including by sensitising men, women and youth on family roles and responsibilities, and on traditionally rooted family and community leadership mechanisms,
2. Empower our cultural leaders with tools to promote family and community stability, and to enable our communities better appreciate and participate in the preservation of our respective cultural heritage and its value,
3. Integrate in our programmes, aspects of responsible and safe family planning, gender and youth related issues, the fight against domestic violence, as well as children's rights and welfare,
4. Protect, preserve and observe good cultural practices and indigenous knowledge, including that associated with health and diet, traditional food security systems (e.g. through the promotion of traditional family and community gardens and granaries, sustainable harvesting and storage), and strengthen indigenous education, including the use and documentation of mother tongue,
5. Promote cultural expression including art, music and sports
6. Promote peace, manage conflicts and diversity across the different communities and other stakeholders,
7. As the custodians of community and customary lands, effectively manage and regulate the land use, in conformity with the National Land Use Policy, in order to protect it from permanent loss and dispossession, by adopting best practices such as the use of lease arrangements that allow land to revert to the host community, and discouraging land sales that permanently deprive our communities of their land, including the conversion of customary land to freehold tenure,
8. Be directly involved in the sustainable management of cultural sites and other natural resources that directly affect our communities and, in particular promote the constructive use of the institutions' communal and private land for sustainable development,

9. Ensure that families and communities play their role in environmental conservation, such as through traditional methods of soil and water conservation, _
10. Direct our energy to the social protection of those in need and support government to develop and implement responsive social protection policies for the most vulnerable groups (including the elderly, youth, street children, etc.) in a comprehensive manner,
11. Engage and sensitise our communities, including minority groups, to raise their self-esteem, by promoting the positive aspects of our respective cultures and history, including correcting misperceptions of the colonial regimes about our institutions, their structures and their names,
12. Promote institutional development, for cultural institutions with specific attention to good governance, human resource, financial resource, sustainability, external relations, service delivery and management practices,
13. Train and mentor our leaders in administration and accountability skills to ensure the highest professional ethical conduct, both within our respective institutions and towards the general public,
14. Encourage all Cultural Institutions to develop and operationalise Constitutions and Codes of Conduct in keeping with principles of good governance,
15. Take reasonable and timely steps to include and promote women in senior leadership positions within the cultural institutions, through eliminating cultural gender stereotyping,
16. Avoid discriminatory treatment on the basis of sex, age, education, ethnic identity or origin in leadership and in our practices in the community,
17. Work together and establish a National Cultural Institutions' Assembly constituted by heads of all the legitimate cultural institutions,
18. Engage in strategic partnerships with state, religious and other non-state actors to promote the interests of our communities,

19. Embrace government programmes in the community, engage in collective planning with government and seek budget support for sustainable and successful socio-economic development e.g. Youth Livelihood, Immunization, Health Promotion, NUSAF, NAADS, etc., and
20. Review this Cultural Institutions' Statement annually

AND WE REQUEST GOVERNMENT TO:

1. Support Cultural Institutions to co-manage and institute benefit sharing systems related to the natural resources that were formerly under our jurisdiction such as protected areas, forest reserves, and mineral resources,
2. Involve Cultural Institutions in decision making processes with potential developers and investors in our areas of operation for the protection of cultural integrity and resources,
3. Recognise and support the responsibility of Cultural Institutions in land management and build the capacity of cultural leaders, including clan leaders, to administer customary tenure and resolve land related conflicts,
4. Involve and facilitate Cultural Institutions' participation in the development and implementation of bye laws and ordinances enacted by local governments,
5. Work in partnership with Cultural Institutions and provide adequate information on development programmes to foster their effective participation and to draw lessons from traditional knowledge and practice,
6. Involve Cultural Institutions in the design and implementation of social protection measures,
7. Involve Cultural Institutions in local and national government planning mechanisms and to provide budget support to cultural institutions of effective participation in sustainable socio-economic development,
8. Re-establish the National Language Commission and fully incorporate culture in the education curricula

9. Establish a separate and adequately resourced Ministry of Culture,
10. Treat all Cultural Institutions in a non-discriminatory, proportional and impartial manner, through among other measures, (i) operationalise and amend the Traditional Leaders' Act, 2011 (ii) recognise by supporting financially cultural institutions, their agents and operations, (iii) support the Kings and Cultural Leaders Forum,
11. Verify, return or compensate the property and assets of cultural institutions,
12. Review the regional tier as provided for by the Constitution and facilitate the participation of Cultural Institutions in this initiative,
13. Engage neighbouring states to support cross-border cultural activities and harmonize and operationalise cultural policies in respect to cross border concerns,
14. Facilitate the development of cultural tourism in conjunction with Cultural Institutions,
15. Operationalise the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Cultural Expressions,
16. Support the National Cultural Institutions' Assembly constituted by all legitimate cultural institutions.

Developed by representatives of

Tooro Kingdom

Tieng Adhola (The Padhola Cultural Institution)

Iteso Cultural Union

Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom

Buruli Chiefdom

Bunyala Chiefdom

Busoga Kingdom

Uganda Kings and Cultural Leaders' Forum

Nkore Cultural Trust

Inzu Ya Masaaba

Obwa Kamuswaga bwa Kooki

Alur Kingdom

Ker Kwaro Acholi

Obwa Ikumbania Bwa Bugwere

Busongora Kingdom

International Community of Banyakigezi - Uganda Chapter

Summary of selected Legislation on Traditional and Cultural Institutions

In line with 27(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, the **Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995**, states in Article 37 that, “every person has a right as applicable to belong, to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, cultural institution, language, tradition, creed or religion in community with others”, and in Article 21 that, “all persons are equal before the law in all spheres of political, economic social and cultural life [although] no person shall prejudice the fundamental or other human rights and freedoms of others or the public interest”

Pursuant to article 246 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, which highlights the guidelines for operating the institution of traditional or cultural leader, the **Institution of Traditional or Cultural Leaders Act, 2011**, lays out the operational provisions related to the said traditional or cultural institutions.

The **National Culture Policy, 2006** recognises traditional or cultural leadership as one category of institutions that promote culture. The **National Land Policy, 2013**, “... recognises the role of customary institutions in making rules governing land, resolving disputes and protecting land rights”

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