

“Valuing and Managing Diversity in Uganda”

Report of a one-day conference held in Kampala on 27.4.2009



The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda



On 27th April, the Cross-Cultural Foundation, with HIVOS and the Kosmopolis Institute organised a one-day regional conference on the theme “Valuing and Managing Diversity in Uganda”.

This is a brief report of the conference, which brought together 70 participants from NGOs, universities, religious institutions, traditional institutions, and the media.

A. Background

In 2008, HIVOS and the Kosmopolis Institute in the Netherlands invited the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda to coordinate a *Pluralism Knowledge Programme* in our country, to complement similar initiatives in India and Indonesia. The overall objective of the programme is to support civil society and academic institutions develop strategies and create spaces to promote pluralism. To start the programme in Uganda, five mapping studies were commissioned to explore various aspects of pluralism, how these have evolved, and what has been done to address them. (See summaries in Annex 2)

By virtue of our nation’s ethnic, political, and religious composition, valuing and managing diversity is deemed necessary for equitable and sustainable development. This demands the recognition of differences, engagement with these differences and creation of equal opportunities for all to be productive.

It was expected that, during the conference, stakeholders interested and engaged in addressing pluralism issues would discuss the findings of the mapping studies and other salient issues. The outcomes of these discussions would inform the focus of the Pluralism Programme in Uganda for the next two years, including identifying practical action and the respective roles of organisations that were present.

B. Conference proceedings

The one day conference programme consisted of presentations on the mapping studies and the Pluralism Knowledge programme in India and Indonesia; and of group discussions on a possible way forward for the programme in Uganda.

1. Welcome, introductions and objectives

The Conference opened with a welcoming word from the Director of the Cross-Cultural Foundation, Emily Drani. She particularly welcomed participants from afar (from India and the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore; from the Netherlands – HIVOS and the Kosmopolis Institute – University for Humanist Studies); from Uganda (representing national and district NGO networks – Karamoja, Luweero, Gulu; from academic institution (Gulu University, Mbarara University, Makerere University etc.); from civil society organisations addressing



issues of pluralism and human rights; from faith-based organisations, traditional institutions and ethnic minority groups. A special mention was made of those already involved in activities linked to the Programme: those who have attended (and those who will soon attend) its International Summer School, the members of Temporary Working Group, and the researchers.

By way of background, the Promoting Pluralism Knowledge Programme was presented as expressing the aspiration of collaboration between academicians and civil society organisations to search and generate knowledge aimed at developing new insights into the appeal of fundamentalism and understand different experiences and views on pluralism. Pluralism is recognised to contribute to socio-economic development, guard against conflict; enhance participation; foster respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms across our different identities. The programme thus aims at developing civil society based strategies to increase spaces for pluralism in practice. It hopes to intensify linkages between development practitioners and academic researchers – to enrich their knowledge with new perspectives, insights and skills (for further details, see Appendix 2)

Emily then introduced the moderator, Richard Ssewakiryanga, Executive Director of the Uganda National NGO Forum, who outlined the proposed programme (see Appendix 1) and the objectives of the day as follows:

- To enhance our understanding of pluralism and tolerance in Uganda, how these have evolved and what has been done to address them, based on the outcomes of 5 mapping studies.
- To generate ideas on practical action and possible stakeholders to address issues of pluralism in Uganda
- To establish a foundation for the Pluralism Knowledge Programme in Uganda for the next two years

Introduction to the subject

An “interview”, in which Richard Ssewakiryanga, the facilitator, Caroline Suransky from the Kosmopolis Institute and Sitharamam Kakarala from the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society in Bangalore set the scene. This was a conversation that attempted to “unpack” terms such as pluralism and diversity in local contexts. The main points raised included:

- All societies are diverse, but how is diversity treated? Thus, taking the example of languages, how does a language become ‘official’ (in Soviet Union there was 1, in India 15); how does ethnicity mesh in and correspond (or not) within the nation state?
- Pluralism as an achievement (especially in a context or rising



fundamentalisms): seeing diversity as a strength, not a source of conflict; as a way to better understand others, to understand oneself and our respective changing identities.

- While embracing pluralism does not entail giving up one's identity, co-existence and identity are increasingly becoming issues across the world; whether identity is ascribed by others or self-assumed.

The Programme in Indonesia

Caroline Suransky, on behalf of the Indonesia team, presented the programme there for illustrative purposes. Indonesia was flagged as a country of extreme diversity, notably because of history, geography (with 17,000 islands), and religion (Government officially recognises 6 religions; not others).

The Indonesia Programme brings together academics and NGO staff and focuses on understanding the many differences between people; which differences matter; and the numerous inter-related perspectives on these. In particular, it centres on religious pluralism and diversity within Islam: how different Islamic communities interpret their faith, their different opinions on the role of religion and their co-existence; and how can NGOs promote such co-existence. Activities include studies (e.g. on practices of pluralism in the daily lives of citizens; on the role of the state in creating the possibilities for diversity to exist). The programme is constituting a database on civic pluralism and produces an annual report on religious pluralism. Capacity-building activities include the international summer school, public lectures and research workshops), with knowledge shared through websites and a short film.

Two presentations of mapping studies followed, both situating Uganda's experience of diversity and pluralism within the wider African context:

1. Presentation on “Managing Diversity: Perspectives from Algeria, Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda”

Tabitha Naisiko, from Uganda Martyrs University, presented a paper drawn from a study of eight country reports linked to the African Peer Review Mechanism. The reports indicate that managing diversity appears as a crosscutting issue, with the rationale for managing diversity given as nation-building, unifying people within the state, so that it remains politically stable. Managing diversity is however also seen as a challenge in all countries.

The presenter identified two main implications for Uganda from her study: (i) to avoid conflicts, issues of ethnicity in national development cannot be taken for granted; and (ii) managing diversity is essential in sharing national resources and services equitably. This calls for inclusiveness in building people's potentials to become productive members of the community and to contribute to its sustainability.

2. Presentation on “National identity development: reflections on the cases of Uganda and Tanzania”

Christopher Tumwine from Makerere University then highlighted “low levels of national identity among Ugandans” compared to Tanzanians and explored the reasons for the apparent success in “nation-building” in Tanzania, although both countries are similarly diverse.

Factors include the uniting role of the political party in Tanzania, Pres. Nyerere's visionary leadership and a high percentage of indigenous beliefs; while in Uganda ethnicisation of the army, the special position that was accorded to Buganda at independence; and the struggle for livelihood manifesting itself in religious, ethnic and racial intolerance were underlined.

The presenter felt that a useful ‘intervention focus’ in Uganda would be to support having Swahili as a national language.

Discussion

After these presentations, conference participants were given an opportunity to react. They expressed appreciation in the opportunity to debate issues of pluralism afforded by the conference, especially given the dearth of other such opportunities. Other main points that arose included:

- Recognising identity and diversity as both familiar and elusive; their source both in exploitative mechanisms and in the existence of ascribed and ‘natural’ identities.
- The need to understand diversity as a collective endeavour and the apparent lack of political good will and trust in Uganda (as expressed in skewed distribution of resources, corruption, etc.) as opposed to how trust was built in Tanzania.
- The importance of an ‘African’ cultural dimension (looking at those closest to us) to understand identities and distribution of resources. The role of capitalism and whether it can accommodate pluralism was also noted, given its focus on the survival of the fittest; as well as other policies that promote divisions and intolerance (e.g. exploitation of some districts resources; district-centric decentralisation, etc.)
- Managing diversity at personal and community levels were felt to be different: in this respect the problem of minorities and the current electoral system were noted, the general need for tolerance, respect and to build capacity to deal with differences. A common language was not seen as necessarily the solution (especially if imposed; and as the example of Rwanda had shown), but education (curriculum, non-formal, civic) and ‘visionary leadership’ were agreed to be important, recognising that, in Uganda, the leadership does not currently seem to address issues of diversity and pluralism.



Two further presentations on mapping studies were made after this initial discussion. Both attempted to look more in-depth at diversity issues in Uganda:

1. Presentation on “The Politics Of Identity: Assessing The Influence Of Ethnicity, Regionalism, Religion, And Gender In Uganda”

Fulgencio Kayiso took the participants through a literature review of different aspects and forms of identity and its impact on human development. From this, an essential finding was that “the politics of inclusion and exclusion are central to understanding the politics of identity”.

The presenter noted that these have continued to reproduce themselves over time: as in the colonial and post colonial ‘divide-and-rule’ policy; forced political integration into the nation-state; skewed access to resources; and authoritarian government). Forms of identity that impose limits to people’s access to resources were listed as numerous, principally ethnicity and nationality, but also political affiliation, class, religion, education, language and gender.

The presenter also noted the consequences of this state of affairs, such as the ‘over-centralisation of power’ in Uganda; the development of a ‘personality cult’; the emasculation of national institutions and the lack of political will to effect changes and become accountable. He suggested that the APRM process should become a compulsory mechanism to be acceded to by all AU states and recognised by the G8 countries, the U.N, its agencies and international financial institutions.

2. Presentation on “The Role of Patronage in Shaping Uganda’s Economic, Social And Political Spheres”

Emmanuel Maraka presented another literature review and explained how patronage, in addition to the politics of identity, influences access to resources in Uganda, while managing patronage can also facilitate the management of diversity.

The presentation indeed included a review of both positive and negative connotations and effects of patronage; how it is ingrained in the culture of Ugandans, having been present from pre-colonial times and having a continuing effect on identity, development and state formation. The positive aspects of patronage included a force for inclusion and care of the weak and the poor and, more broadly, for managing social, economic and political affairs. On the negative side, patronage and clientelism were recognised as hindering poverty eradication when relationships are hierarchical and power sharing unequal. In Uganda, it is entrenched

“from top to bottom”, helps to access and distribute jobs in government, as well as in civil society. Its effects on culture are pervasive (such as in the notion that “politics is the way to get rich” and in fostering paternalistic values among the country’s leaders).



The researcher thus saw an opportunity to also use patronage to fight poverty. He also suggested studies of values that are common among the peoples of Uganda to help develop a shared national identity. In particular, he identified a need to study how patronage functions in Ugandan society and how this can be used as a force for positive change.

Discussion

A second discussion followed these presentations, the main points being:

- The issue of ethnicity is fundamental to explain a prevailing ‘winner takes it all’ attitude that divides the nation, feeding on prejudices that originate in our communities.
- The family should also feature as an important institution (as tolerance within it wanes, so does national tolerance)
- Diversity needs to be promoted as a source of wealth and to forge a national identity, rather than a source of stereotypes and prejudices.
- While patronage is essential to understand the distribution of resources, and will in all likelihood persist, procedures need to be developed to “manage it” but its “positive aspects” need to be treated with caution. Strong, independent, democratic institutions are needed to deal with patronage



To conclude the morning sessions, participants learnt about the programme in India, to complete their understanding of the programme in Indonesia and Uganda:

The pluralism knowledge programme in India

Sitharamam Kakarala introduced the context by highlighting India’s great diversity (in terms of languages, religion, castes, ethnicity), resulting in citizenship becoming less “Indian”, but mirroring multi-cultural identities. This is also reflected in constitutional provisions (secularism, minority rights, legal pluralism – civil matters under religious laws). However, instances of communal violence are frequent, the constitution and the secular state are not sufficiently effective; there is exhaustion of civic strategies.

In India, the programme, aims at re-energising the constitutional route; to identify and analyse various social responses to pluralism challenges; and to create opportunities for dialogue on controversial issues outside the dominant political discourses. The programme is engaged in mapping studies (on new civic layers of identity; secular action; practices of co-existence; engagement with youth); documentation to inform dialogues; in-depth studies and thematic papers to help advocacy work

To start the afternoon session, a final presentation was made so that conference participants could better grasp the nature of current civil society engagement in Uganda on diversity issues.

Presentation on “An Inventory of Civil Society Initiatives for the Promotion of Pluralism and Tolerance in Uganda”

Ivan Amani presented a brief inventory of relevant NGOs, faith-based organisations, cultural institutions and media houses.

Their activities span a wide range of activities, ranging from advocacy (for inclusion), capacity building, protection of human rights, awareness and sensitisation, peace building, and developing national values. While these activities have resulted in some change (such as contributing to building a broader knowledge base about democracy and civic consciousness; and stimulating constructive debate), the presenter outlined several challenges, including the increasingly contested space for NGOs and the media, an unsupportive policy and legal regime, sporadic funding, and often negative attitudes towards pluralism, reflecting low levels of civic education.

To further the pluralism agenda, the presenter felt that building cohesion within civil society was important, as well as capacity building for Civil society engagement – in the areas of advocacy, law reform, budget analysis, other policy processes and re-orienting the country towards constitutionalism

Group presentations and emerging issues

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to group work, focusing on two questions: (i) How do we want to manage diversity in Uganda? and (ii) what could be proposed practical action/strategies and respective roles – civil society, academic institutions)

Key issues that emerged included the following:

- Affiliation in the determination of unequal access to resources, especially ethnicity, politics and access to resources and their inter-linkages; the issue of ethnic minority



rights and access to resources; patronage and regionalism; power centralisation; ethnicity and the “politics of distrust”.

- Pluralism and democratic deficit: the right to be different is not guaranteed, minority rights are poorly protected; legal frameworks and practices are inadequate. Gender inequities and sexual minorities were not discussed. This also reflects the limited capacity of local people to challenge the status quo; a deficit in civic education; dialogues and other communications channels are rarely open enough; and civic competences remain unutilised. This allows a deficient leadership to survive - with no desire or competence to manage diversity – as well as weak institutions.

- National identity: Ugandans still need to recover from their trauma (hence the perception of politics as “dirty”) and history is often misrepresented. There are few shared values; a decline in moral values, no shared vision; no national official language.

The several suggestions made by the various groups and in the final discussion included:

- Legal frameworks: we could translate and popularise the constitutional provisions that foster pluralism; protect and operationalise the Equal Opportunities Act; better address minority issues and extend the scope of affirmative action.
- Education is key: civic and moral education is needed in schools; the leaders too need training on tolerance; NGO networks need to engage on such issues.
- Distribution of resources: we need to advocate for a more equitable distribution of resources (and an effective policy on this), according to documented prioritisation; lobby parliament to stop creating more districts and to strengthen existing institutions.
- Vision: nation-building must be consciously undertaken: we need to contribute to developing a shared vision (by opening political space for people to participate in this); including capacity-building for people to demand accountability.
- Possible research themes: current civil society strategies that are effective to foster pluralism; different understandings (values and perceptions) of the distribution of resources; documenting best practices.
- A common front: the media must be actively involved in civil society work’s to promote pluralism and vice versa.

In the course of the conference, participants were encouraged to share their thoughts and questions on wall charts...

... with regard to diversity:

- “Natural vs. artificially motivated diversity”
- “Diversity: familiar yet elusive term”
- “What we do will soon be emulated – leadership is key”
- “Doesn’t everything boil down to education – at home, community school – and exposure – values and beliefs?”
- “What is legal versus what is right?”
- “Can we politicise pluralism or is it already politicised?”
- “The family as an institution that instigates diversity”
- “How would you compare Somalia and Uganda on diversity?”
- “What about the east!!!! [of Uganda] Not part of the North vs. South discussion”

... with regard to identity and other matters:

- “What is the role of imagination in the construction of identities?”
- “Could we learn more about caste and traditional identity?”
- “I don’t agree with political patronage being positive”



Conclusions

To conclude the afternoon, John De Coninck from CCFU shared brief remarks: he first noted that the debates of the day had been engaging – many participants contributed and remarked on the relevance of the theme.

Secondly, the Uganda situation presents a paradox: while on the one hand much was said during the day about the difficulties the country is facing in managing diversity, one can easily forget the more tolerant aspects of society and its remarkable track record in surmounting grave crises that threatened national unity. Uganda was, for instance, until recently one of the countries in the world with the largest numbers of refugees.

Nevertheless, there are many signs that fundamentalist tendencies are spreading in many spheres, such as the way the person looks at her/his neighbour or a shrinking political space to freely express dissent. One can find reasons for these intolerant tendencies in a skewed access to resources, but also in the current absence of a “nationalist building project”, amidst fractious identities. For the future, therefore, effectively managing diversity appears inescapable and it is hoped that the pluralism knowledge programme will make a contribution in this respect.

C. Agreed next steps

Subsequently to the conference, the programme Working Group met. Practical action steps will be developed in June and July to inform the next phase of the programme, to 2010.



D. Annexes

1. Conference programme

- 8.00 – 9.00 Registration and breakfast
- 9.00 – 9.20 Welcome and introductions of participants
- 9.20 – 9.35 Overview of the Pluralism Knowledge Programme and objectives of the regional conference
- 9.35 – 9.55 Introduction: an interview of “Ram” Sitharamam Kakarala (Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, India)
- 9.55 – 10.05 An illustration and lessons learnt: the case of Indonesia
- 10.05 – 11.00 Presentations on studies 1 and 2 (Managing Diversity: Perspectives From Eight African Countries – Tabitha Naisiko, Uganda Martyrs’ University); National Identity Development: Reflections On The Cases Of Uganda And Tanzania – Christopher Tumwine, Dept. of Sociology, Makerere University). Followed by 30 min. discussion.
- 11.00 – 11.30 Break
- 11.30 – 12.30 Presentation of mapping studies 3 and 4 (Literature Review On The Politics Of Identity: Assessing The Influence Of Ethnicity, Regionalism, Religion And Gender In Uganda – Kayiso Fulgencio; The Role Of Patronage In Shaping Uganda’s Economic, Social And Political Spheres – A Literature Review E. Maraka). Followed by 30 min. discussion
- 12.30 – 12.45 Observations from an Indian perspective and progress on the India programme
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch
- 14.00 – 14.10 Presentation of An Inventory of Civil Society Initiatives for the Promotion of Pluralism and Tolerance in Uganda (Amani Ivan Bazaakabona)
- 14.10 – 15.25 Discussion and consensus on priority areas for the Pluralism Knowledge Programme’s focus in Uganda (Group work – 1 hour). *2 key questions for discussion – i) How do we want to manage diversity in Uganda? ii) Proposed practical action/strategies and respective roles – civil society, academic institutions)*
- 15.25 – 16.45 Maximum 4 group presentations, plenary sessions (12 min presentation for each group and 30 minutes for discussions)
- 16.45 – 17.00 Concluding remarks and next steps forward
- 17.30 Break & departure

B. Summaries on the programme and papers presented

1. The programme

The Promoting Pluralism Knowledge programme is a joint project of a number of organisations¹, initiated by the Humanistic Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (Hivos). The initiative was taken after a number of its partners, CSOs in the South, signalled a growth of various forms of intolerance, often manifested as fundamentalisms rooted in religion, ethnic affiliation, nationalism, social class, gender and other identities or value systems. It seemed increasingly difficult to mobilise local communities to deal with the complexities of diversity and co-existence, rather than the more accessible but divisive issues of difference. These organisations expressed a desire to rethink their strategies and reinterpret their understanding of local situations. Responding to this, a group of academics and civil society-based actors decided to cooperatively search and generate knowledge aimed at developing new insights into the appeal of fundamentalisms and comprehend divergent experiences and views on pluralism.

The programme brings together academics and practitioners, with the aim of developing civil society based strategies to increase spaces for pluralism in practice. The Kosmopolis Institute and HIVOS asked the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) to coordinate the initial phase of the programme, which is expected to run to 2010. An 8-person working group from academia and civil society has been formed to provide guidance and focus to the programme in Uganda.

The outcomes of the discussions at today's conference will inform the focus of the Programme in Uganda for the next two years, including *defining practical action and the roles of organisations that are present*.

2. Pluralism vs. diversity

The Promoting Pluralism Knowledge Programme believes that processes of civil society building that are aimed at the ability to live creatively in a pluralist society should be worked out in different directions, as a matter of (personal) attitude and identification, at the social or communal level through initiatives of civil society based organisations, the business world, by religious - and other institutions, in particular in the field of awareness raising, media and in public debate.

The celebrated Indian scholar, A. Sen described pluralism as the principle that people should be respected for what they have reason to value in their lives. Eck (2006) offers salient points to orient our thinking: first, pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity. Diversity is a given, but pluralism is not; it is an achievement. Mere diversity without real encounter and relationship will yield increasing tensions in our societies. Second, pluralism is not just tolerance, but the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference. Tolerance is a necessary public virtue, but it does not require people to know anything about one another. Third, pluralism is not relativism, but the encounter of commitments. Pluralism does not require us to leave our identities and our commitments behind, for pluralism is the encounter of commitments. It means holding our deepest differences, not in isolation, but in relationship to one another. And fourth, the language of pluralism is that of dialogue and encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism. Dialogue does not mean everyone at the "table" will agree with one another. Pluralism involves the commitment to being at the table -- with one's commitments.

It is believed that if the above values were heeded to by our leaders, our diversity and its associated benefits will accelerate socio-economic development, guard against the eruption of conflicts and wars, ensure participatory planning and decision-making and foster the respect of fundamental human rights and freedoms irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, social class, sex or physical abilities.

¹ Hivos, a globally active, non-governmental organisation, rooted in the Netherlands and inspired by humanist values, works together with the Kosmopolis Institute of the University for Humanistic Studies in the Netherlands and in cooperation with the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society in Bangalore, India; the Centre for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) in Uganda.

**Presentation 1: Managing Diversity: Perspectives From Eight African Countries
(Tabitha Naisiko, Uganda Martyrs' University)**

This paper presents highlights of the nature of diversity in the eight African countries of Algeria, Benin, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda and how these countries are managing this concern, as recorded through the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). APRM is a mutually agreed instrument voluntarily acceded to by the Member States of the African Union. The mandate of APRM is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to agreed values in the four focus areas of: democracy and political governance; economic governance; corporate governance; and socio-economic development. In this exercise, each country wrote a Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR) and, based on this, members of a selected panel (the Country Review Mission) held consultations to supplement the CSAR.

Managing diversity appears as a cross-cutting issue in the APRM reports, reflecting a challenge in all the countries, although the reports do not explicitly give a definition of “managing diversity”. However, among the dimensions of diversity mentioned in the reports are differences in terms of gender, age, race and ethnic groups, religion, political affiliation, and particular groups, such as the unemployed, the urban and rural poor, refugees, immigrants, the disabled, those with HIV/AIDS, social deviants, the landless, as well as gays in the case of South Africa. In the Ugandan, Kenyan, Nigerian and Rwandese reports, managing diversity is presented as a strategy for nation building. It is acknowledged in these reports that colonialism has contributed to contemporary crises associated with diversity: in all the reports but one a recent history of political unrest is mentioned, linked to the marginalisation of sections of the population and making managing diversity a critical issue. The reviewed countries attempt to manage diversity, with varied degrees of success, through legal frameworks, programs of action and institutional frameworks:

1. Constitutional Supremacy and the Rule of the Law (constitutional and other reforms).
2. Subscription and Ratification of International Conventions (rights of women, minorities, etc.)
3. Protection of Ethnic Minorities.
4. Affirmative Action (especially to promote women and enhance their participation in public offices).
5. Press freedom and ICT
6. Universal Primary Education
7. Restorative vs. retributive justice. (e.g. ‘traditional’ reconciliation mechanisms)
8. Provisions for vulnerable groups
9. Recognition of traditional rulers

The author identifies two major implications for Uganda:

1. Managing diversity and sharing the “National Cake” Managing diversity is essential to share national resources and services equitably and to avoid exclusion leading to conflict. It requires inclusiveness in building people’s potential to become productive members of their community and to contribute towards its sustainability. To avoid conflicts, the issue of ethnicity in national development cannot be taken for granted. In Uganda, where the CSAR expressed fears related to people’s allegiance to ethnic, religious and other social divisions, and their implication for the national economy and politics, there is therefore a need to tackle issues of equitable distribution within and across the diverse groups, to ensure peace and sustainable development.

2. Ethnic minority groups and ‘modernity’. The issue of minority ethnic groups (e.g. the Batwa, Benet, Karimojong) remains a challenge to government, in view of ineffective or absent measures to address their plight. This calls for an anthropological approach to development and special initiatives. Similarly, the issue of traditional rulers was reported as contentious although not much is reported on how this issue is being handled in spite of its importance in eliciting emotional responsiveness, which can be tapped for human development through social mobilisation and to foster unity in diversity.

With the value of managing diversity intimately linked to nation building, the government of Uganda is faced with a task of strengthening democratic processes and institutions. This should be done with the aim of enhancing equitable shares in the production and distribution of services and resources among the various categories of the people as a way of promoting a harmonious country.

Presentation 2: National Identity Development: Reflections On The Cases Of Uganda And Tanzania (Christopher Tumwine, Dept. of Sociology, Makerere University)

The author attempts to compare the development of national identity in Tanzania and Uganda. Although both countries are economically poor and culturally diverse nations, they have had different fortunes in terms of the stability that has been enjoyed by their citizens since independence.

Nationalists see nations as an inclusive categorisation of human beings –assigning every individual to one specific nation. But human beings do not only identify themselves with the nation but belong to other collectivities, such as religious groups, ethnic/racial groups, regional groups etc. The idea of a nation has obtained emphasis in the recent past with nationalists working to ensure that the nation state comes first before all the other collectivities/groups that individuals belong to. National identity refers to the shared heritage of a given group, to the shared attributes around which citizens of a nation coalesce. These can include a common descent, common culture, common language and a common religion. Social identity theory points out that, in addition to having a personal identity, each person has a number of group or social identities. It further points out that there is always a tendency for an individual to evaluate one's in-group positively in comparison with relevant out groups. Members of a given group tend to regard their own group as somehow special, with any out-group less worthy and potentially to be treated with hostility. Thus, each ethnic, racial or religious group in a country is bound to evaluate itself positively in relation to the next ethnic or racial or religious group. In varied countries, such as Tanzania and Uganda, forging a sense of national identity would therefore require that the country in question overcomes or minimises the differences that emanate from having many different ethnic/racial/religious groups.

Why the difference in the fortunes of Tanzania and Uganda? Although Ugandans can identify with national symbols such as the national flag, the coat of arms, the currency, the geographical territory and so forth, a strong sense of national identity is lacking amongst most of them. This in turn undermines a strong sense of nationalism, and explains the numerous problems of insecurity, ethnic clashes and high levels of corruption prevalent in the country. Most former Ugandan presidents have fled the country after being overthrown by the military. Other factors include the ethnicisation of the army; the special position that was accorded to Buganda at independence; the strong British influence in Uganda compared to Tanzania, and the struggle for livelihood manifesting itself in form of religious, ethnic and racial intolerance.

The author points out that the active construction of a sense of national identity by the African Socialism initiative implemented by the Nyerere government explains the higher level of national identity in Tanzania. The values that the initiative stood for, and values of those who spearheaded it, kept the culturally diverse nation of Tanzania united. The education system that Tanzania implemented after the Socialist revolution took root was an education that emphasized basic values of loving one's nation, honesty, and never to be driven by material desires but by moral uprightness. Other factors include the high involvement of Tanzania in the anti colonial struggle, including in neighbouring countries; and a high percentage of indigenous beliefs in Tanzania. A number of qualities are strongly shared amongst Tanzanians such as the ability to speak Swahili –which is spoken by the young, and the old, women and men, educated and non-educated, Zanzibaris and the mainlanders, Southerners and the northerners, Christians and Muslims, all over Tanzania. The strong moral values that were emphasized in Tanzania's education system and through the political mobilisation programmes by the Nyerere government are still a characteristic of the Tanzanian people.

Presentation 3: Literature Review On The Politics Of Identity: Assessing The Influence Of Ethnicity, Regionalism, Religion And Gender In Uganda. (Kayiso Fulgencio)

This review covers scholarly work on different aspects of identity and its impact on human development in Uganda. One of the most important considerations raised by many commentators is the politics of inclusion and exclusion that have assumed different manifestations and have limited access to resources over recent decades. During the colonial era, foreign religions compounded intra- and inter-ethnic factionalism, which was aggravated by ethnic tensions caused by a forceful integration of people of different cultural backgrounds into the same administrative units. Pre-colonial antagonisms promoted by the colonial policy of divide-and-rule fed into a pattern of collaboration and resistance to colonialism that kept religious divisionism and ethnic consciousness alive. The north-south divide in Uganda is one of the most enduring legacies of these policies.

Autocratic rule of post-colonial governments since 1962 has reproduced rather than deconstructed ethnicity in Uganda. To many ethnic groups, the 'independent' state is an instrument for the advancement of their own interests, mainly under the principle of 'winner takes all'. While successive governments have accepted ethnic diversity, they have also oppressed particular ethnic groups to promote the interests of the political leader's group. Indeed, all the historical factors determining the development of identity in Uganda are still relevant today. This validates what several commentators have termed the reproduction of the colonial state by post-colonial administrations, as with the current divide and rule stance of Government towards the traditional kingdoms, and the balkanisation of the present administrative units, which increases ethnic tensions as each group attempts to scheme for a territorial rearrangement that will enhance its control over resources.

Another dominant theme discussed by a number of commentators is institution-building: it is suggested that the break-down of institutions by the Obote I government was largely the cause of Uganda's political troubles. This introduced militarism and 'personalized rule' in Uganda's politics which are symptoms of authoritarianism. Further, the 'excessive centralization of power' in a multi-ethnic political context is/was a major origin, cause and effect of political and social conflict in Uganda.

Today, ethnicity, political affiliation, class, religion and gender thus remain strong forms of identity to determine individual and group access to resources. On the side of education and limited opportunities, the 'old boy' syndrome is still strong. Amongst the most vulnerable to exclusion are persons with a disability; the elderly; internally displaced persons and refugees. The Civil Service; the Army and security forces; Parliament; Civil Society Organisations are all institutions that play a part in the imposition of limitations on people's access to resources and opportunities. Although most cases of social injustices can be linked to state action, even NGOs are often controlled by the elite and some commentators question how they claim to complement government efforts when they fail to extend services to categories of people who are left out. As for the gender factor, much has been done to promote gender-balance and sensitivity but equally much needs to be done, especially to operationalise gender policies and programmes.

Why do people identify and attach themselves with the religious, ethnic or political projects that they do, and why do these allegiances change? The author has identified patronage, allegiance to parties (people join political parties as a form of identity or belonging, along ethno-political and religious considerations) and the Churches (where people join religious organizations for a variety of reasons) as important in this respect.

What, then, has to be done? Uganda has put in place good policies and laws, and signed a number of regional and international instruments that have remained unoperational. This is attributed to lack of political will, and of resources to implement them. On the side of the citizenry, active participation is limited by political intimidation, ignorance, conservative cultural mind-sets and poverty. Recommendations by various authors include the promotion of good governance, deepening political pluralism and inclusiveness by recognizing the restoration of multi-partyism so that it exists 'in fact' and not 'in name', the promotion and protection of rights to the standards spelled out in International Conventions and Constitutional provisions; Strengthening institutions (Parliament, the military and

security forces, public service) ; the Prevention, reduction and management of conflicts (a comprehensive framework to conclusively deal with post-conflict (alternative) justice and peace issues); operationalising the Equal Opportunities Commission Act; and enhancing the role of civil society in national development. Creating a literate and well-informed society and a God-fearing nation also appear. The author further suggests that adhering to APRM standards should be made mandatory.

Presentation 4: The Role Of Patronage In Shaping Uganda's Economic, Social And Political Spheres - A Literature Review (E. Maraka)

This study provides an inventory and analysis of the main academic research that has been carried in the past 5 years on the role of patronage in shaping Uganda's economic, social and political spheres. Understood as social capital, patronage may be regarded as a key asset in the overall portfolio of resources drawn upon by the poor and rich, powerful and disempowered, as they manage risk and opportunity and seek to gain access to resources and decision-making processes.

The literature traces the roots of current forms of patronage (neo-patrimonialism, political patronage, clientelism, cronyism, and presidentialism) to the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Patronage and clientelism were used in the establishment of the colonial administration in Uganda.

Political patronage in Uganda is said to be currently manifested through the neo-patrimonial rule of the NRM government that has continued to capitalise on ethnic and religious identities, and the use of the military. Political patronage and clientelism has affected the political values of the people of Uganda. Politics is seen as the way to get rich quickly and a means to redress social and economic imbalances created by the past governments. Political patronage and clientelism is entrenched, therefore, in Uganda to-day. It helps to access jobs and distribute political appointments, reflecting nationality and religious affiliations. Patronage is having negative effects on society: fuelling corruption, responsible for misuse and loss of public funds, and perpetuating chronic poverty. The attitude and moral commitment of public officials is reported to have not only an effect within state institutions, but also on how the general population perceives services provided by the state. Some government policies have been described as entrenching patronage. These include the decentralisation policy, privatisation policy and the land policy. Patronage is however not the preserve of government institutions: it is also apparent in the private sector and within civil society, in spite of the latter's drive to respond to political patronage and clientelism, mainly through anti-corruption work.

When political patronage and clientelism were introduced into Ugandan society by colonialism, conflict arose and persists between patronage as a force for social inclusion and development (e.g., addressing poverty), and patronage as a force for political influence to control power. This conflict extends to the way culture is understood. The culture of the peoples of Uganda is despised, blamed and neglected but also acknowledged and respected, the past is despised and denied but it is also revered and cherished; Western culture is accepted, admired and promoted but it is also despised and rejected.

Patronage is therefore a phenomenon that is here to stay. It is infused in the culture of the peoples of Uganda, understood as African culture with its principles of respect, reciprocity and responsibility. Patronage supports the peoples of Uganda to survive in times of adversity caused by nature and the failures of the state to protect and provide for the people. The value of responsibility provides the opportunity for those who are in need to be cared for by those who are strong physically and/or better resourced. The cultural values of responsibility linked with other values such as reciprocity, make patronage networks an asset that could be used to address community problems including poverty.

This view may be critiqued. It highlights the positive aspects of patronage for members of associations, but remains largely silent on the possibility that patronage may not benefit the weak, the poor and society, and that group membership may entail exclusion and significant costs. Consequently another view of patronage is suggested that recognizes its positive and negative effects by broadening the concept to include vertical associations, where relationships among members may

be hierarchical and power sharing unequal. It is then possible to assess the extent to which patronage results in inclusion or exclusion, tolerance or intolerance and has positive and/or negative effects.

Based on the findings of this study, the author recommends that we further study common values among peoples of Uganda and utilize these to develop a shared identity of being Ugandan. In particular, there is a need to study how the positive aspects of patronage function in Ugandan society and how these can be used as a force for good.

Presentation 5: An Inventory of Civil Society Initiatives for the Promotion of Pluralism and Tolerance in Uganda (Amani Ivan Bazaakabona)

The report inventories some Civil Society (CS) efforts in advocating for and strengthening pluralism, and inculcating a culture of tolerance. Time constraints did not allow the inventory to cover all work undertaken, especially in districts outside the central region, and by CSOs (civil society organisations) that are not NGOs.

Nevertheless, the results indicate a considerable number of CSOs focusing on pluralism and tolerance. Many have mission statements and values reflecting a collective aspiring to promote equality, justice, rights and to lobby for policies that promote inclusion, participation, pro-poor budgeting and in some cases address the needs of specific marginalised groups. Initiatives are mainly exhibited according to the following themes:

- *Civil Society networking as a form of pluralism:* Civil Society has come together as a collective force beyond differences in structure and specialty, religion, and origin of founders to benefit from its diversity. Alliances, coalitions and networks have been created not only to implement activities and create impact, but also to build a culture of tolerance. UJCC, NGO Forum, the Land Alliance, DENIVA, and district NGO fora provide examples.
- *Rights of the disadvantaged or marginalised:* Human rights and, in particular, gender responsiveness inform the work of many CSOs. A number have initiated actions to strengthen the involvement of the marginalised, including the disabled, children, women, people living with HIV/AIDS, and ethnic minority groups.
- *Inclusion/Participation:* Actions have been initiated to foster inclusion and participation at all levels of planning, decision-making and implementation. Some initiatives have focused on people with disabilities, the inclusion of women, community empowerment in monitoring government programmes and influencing policy processes. Some media houses have created space to foster debate on the subject of inclusion.
- *Peace building:* with CS action has focused on promoting peaceful coexistence, moral and spiritual integrity, and inter-faith cooperation; conflict resolution and peace building; mainstreaming conflict sensitivity into existing and planned interventions; tackling regionalist tendencies and the conflict in the North; facilitating the transition to multi party politics; and pluralism within the media.
- *Developing national value systems:* CS has made an input into the fight against evils such as patronage, paternalism, dependency, and selfishness. Initiatives include *The Civil Society Minimum Agenda* (with the “cherished values” expected of leaders, including of integrity and accountability; active citizen participation; peaceful coexistence, tolerance and reconciliation; effective sharing and separation of powers; and openness to change/willingness to negotiate); and *‘The Uganda we want’* (to spearhead an advocacy campaign for a united Uganda in its diversity, with the values of accountability, inclusion, transparency, and tolerance as requisites for sustainable development). Some CSOs believe that lack of ethical standards can be closely related to the country’s corruption levels, hence their anti-corruption focus.

The impact of CS work also relates with imparting skills, building capacity and building a strong knowledge base in their beneficiaries. Civil society however faces a number of challenges in this effort:

- *Weak institutions and uncoordinated initiatives, dominated by sporadic interventions.* There are also signs of intolerance in Civil Society as exhibited in competition that hinders cooperation to

maximise impact. There is no standard measure of impact. Government uses this weakness to take civil society work lightly and to look at them as inconsequential.

- *Contested space for NGOs and the media.* A crisis of legitimacy allows NGOs to be increasingly represented as “trouble makers” in some quarters. The notion of ‘NGO’ is further contested in the new era of the multi-party dispensation. This may explain the recent tightening of the legal environment (the new NGO Act), as well as Government’s ambivalent attitude on what constitutes allowable advocacy activities for CSOs. The Government has also made attempts to diminish space for the media.
- *Unitary ideological set up and negative attitude towards pluralism:* Civil Society initiatives to promote tolerance fall on barren soil because of the mindset of large sections of Ugandans, who have a negative attitude towards pluralism, expressed in religious and political intolerance at community level, and actions of the state against the opposition.
- *Low levels of civic education:* Communities look at their entitlements as privileges and do not know how to engage their leaders to demand their entitlements. The civic education that government is mandated to conduct as a continuous process is confined to voter education. This perhaps explains why rural communities are sceptical about political pluralism, and exhibit intolerance even amongst themselves.
- *Waning unconditional funding for CS work:* there is little funding from the general public and CSOs therefore reflect the priorities of international charitable organizations. Funding for CS work is periodic and dwindling, compromising the achievement of lasting impact.

What can be done to create both an enabling environment for CS to promote of pluralism and tolerance, and operational conditions for the celebration of Uganda’s cultural, spiritual, material and ideological diversity?

- *Streamlining coordination in CS work:* CS activities on pluralism and tolerance need to be coordinated, to amplify the message, especially to Government, building coalitions to engage in a concerted movement. Unhealthy competition among CSOs exists and some CSOs suffer from the lack of a specific focus, and the consequent inability to measure the impact of their work over time.
- *Capacity Building:* CSOs need to invest in capacity building on issues related to pluralism and tolerance, for themselves and their beneficiaries, especially in advocacy skills, budget analysis and capacity to engage in policy processes. The production of “half-baked” products can be used to undervalue the role of CS in the pursuit of their goals.
- *Review of laws and policies:* Legal and policy reforms can help to interpret and implement the constitutional provisions for the celebration of pluralism in Uganda, and CS needs to strengthen their engagement with Government in this respect. The current legal and institutional regime is not supportive to the grounding of pluralism in the country and provides room to protect intolerance.
- *Re-orientation towards constitutionalism:* all stakeholders must appeal to the Ugandan society about constitutional guidance on pluralism and tolerance. We are in a society where individual needs take precedence over societal well-being. Cases of escalating corruption levels in government departments, skewed national and local government budgets, and tribal conflicts over resources among others attest to this fact.

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