



CiTiZEN VOICES CURATED AND AMPLIFIED

Charting the Path to
Accountability in Uganda

Report on #UgandaParliamentExhibition

February 25, 2024 - March 17, 2024



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ity eating
ng #UgandaParliament
sed so much rot within the legislature, but
to attract action from the State.
witter.com/Sgg3w28ICr

Daily Monitor  @DailyMonitor

Speaker [@AnitahAmong](#) today halted an attempt by Lwemiyaga County MP Theodore Ssekikubo to ignite debate on corruption allegations that were recently unearthed on social media during the #UgandaParliamentExhibition, in order to allow MPs handle serious issues like the 2024/25 ministerial policy statements for some agencies.

"By the time I leave my house very early in the morning, I have come for serious business. Let us dispose of some Ministerial

Jim Spire Ssentongo  @SpireJim

Samwise Gamgee
@Sambamnnz

In just 2 days, Ugx 1,635,000,000 was wired to a one Kaaya Rajab but meant for the speaker's CSR activities. #UgandaParliamentExhibition And you think Banks involved weren't enablers of these scandals?

Jim Spire Ssentongo  @SpireJim
pic.twitter.com/5oyZPB5feu



and all citizens to demand the exhibition. It's not only a DUTY for every citizen to demand for accountability from those who are in charge of our public affairs, and to

Parliament Watch  @Parlwatch

Parliament has asked for extra, over Shs105Bn for the payment of salaries, travel costs & per diem for; Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Leader of Opposition & MPs, in order to evaluate their attend all the local & international events they are invited to. More funds are required for payments of MPs to conduct oversight activities within Committees.

The details were contained in the report for the 2024/25 ministerial policy statement for Parliamentary Commission that indicated that Ministry of Finance had tried to reduce its contribution to Parliament's budget, reducing by Shs7,000,000, a decision that has been rejected with calls to have the Ministry of Finance to restore Parliament's budget to the current operating level in order not to stifle the institution's operations.



Samwise Gamgee
@Sambamnnz

State house wants Ugx 14,400,000,000 to refurbish Entebbe state house to international standards and 23 upcountry state lodges. - Ugx 83,000,000 to clear pending donations. - Ugx 6,500,000 to buy new vehicles - Ugx 4,800,000 to roll out model villages pic.twitter.com/SeINTGCB2S



SCW-WNA  @SCW_WNA

In Uganda under Museveni, there have been numerous instances for corruption that has consequences targeted at them. Inadequate other hand, the corrupt are safe.

I believe we stand here because we have faced challenges in the past, corruption and these make us seek for accountability for their corruption in our country. #UgandaParliamentExhibition

Godwin Toko, we stand on this platform to demand #UgandaParliamentExhibition

Jim Spire Ssentongo
@SpireJim

BACKGROUND

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition, which started on February 25th, 2024 predominately on the renowned social media platform X (formerly Twitter) sought to look into what transpires in Uganda's Parliament. The exhibition highlighted prevalent issues of corruption, financial mismanagement, and a lack of accountability within the Ugandan Parliament.

Led by the esteemed journalist and social justice activist Ms. Agather Atuhaire, University professor Dr. Jimmy Spire Ssentongo, and Ugandan Lawyer Godwin Toko, the online campaign brought to light the lack of transparency and accountability within Parliament. The #UgandaParliamentExhibition was just one of the initiatives led by this group. They also spearheaded campaigns such as the #KampalaPotholeExhibition, #UgandaParliamentExhibition, #UgandaNGOExhibition, and the #UgandaHealthExhibition. Reports

on these exhibitions, as compiled by the Evidence and Methods Lab, delved into and exposed potential issues across various sectors in Uganda. <https://evidenceandmethodslab.org/transparency-and-accountability/>

Revelations from the #UgandaParliamentExhibition included allegations of questionable fund allocations to the Speaker of Parliament, instances of unexplained irregular expenditures, corruption, and abuse of office by various public officials. As a result, there was a strong call for institutional reforms and increased scrutiny to ensure integrity and public trust in Uganda's parliamentary operations and processes. The campaign highlighted the urgent need for thorough investigations into suspected corruption while stressing the importance of formally and transparently addressing these issues to restore public confidence in Parliament.

CONTEXT

The [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) is situated within a larger context of restricted civic freedoms, where public demonstrations are severely limited, and corruption is rampant despite several campaigns to end corruption in Uganda. [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) sought to explore new and innovative approaches in fighting incidents of corruption and alleged mismanagement of public funding, demanding public accountability, and driving toward a transparent Uganda. While relying on documents that were made public, the lead exhibitors exposed controversial expenditures within the Parliament, including allegations of excessive spending on overseas trips by the Speaker of Parliament and payment of substantial allowances to the former Leader of Opposition. This exhibition exemplifies a growing trend of citizens employing digital media and the internet, such as X platform (formerly Twitter), to voice dissatisfaction and demand transparency and accountability from government officials in a challenging political environment where traditional forms of protests such as public demonstrations are constrained. What makes this approach notable is its innovative approach to activism in the face of constrained political freedoms. Traditional forms of protest may be restricted, but social media campaigns offer an alternative avenue for citizens to voice their dissatisfaction and demand accountability.

Campaign
Reach
3.7M
2,730 TWEETS

 **660K**
Total Mentions

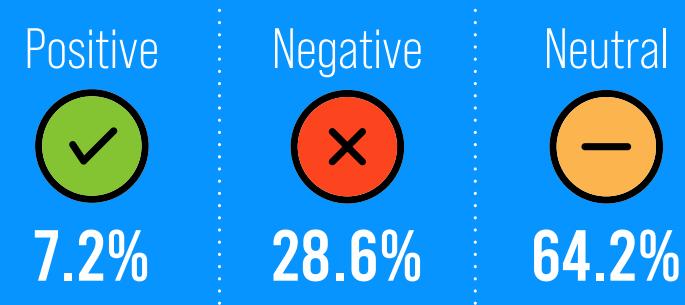
 **81,395**
Likes

 **768.4K**
Engagement

The campaign's mentions
unveiled a diversity of
reactions

METHODOLOGY:

In preparing this report, we utilized data scraping and analytical tools to analyze tweets from the X platform (formerly Twitter). Our comprehensive analysis involved examining a total of 2,730 tweets including retweets and quoted tweets made for three weeks starting from February 26, 2024. The total engagement from these tweets amounted to 768.4K with social reach of 3.7M and total mentions of 660K. Additionally, the number of likes received was 81,395.



1. EMERGING ISSUES

The [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) was a powerful online movement that exposed corruption in the government. It gained traction on social media, shedding light on the pervasive culture of corruption in the Ugandan Parliament. The revelations sparked public outrage and demands for accountability. Citizens and activists united to push for transparency and ethical leadership. The campaign highlighted the urgent need for systemic reforms. As the [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) unraveled the layers of corruption and waste in Uganda, it catalyzed change, ignited conversations, mobilized citizens, and called for a new era of accountability and good governance in the country.



1.1 Nepotism:

During the [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#), it was revealed that John Baptist Nambeshe an MP of Manjiya County in Bududa district currently serving as the Chief Whip of the Opposition in Parliament had employed his children as his support staff. This practice not only undermines the principles of fair and merit-based recruitment but also raises concerns about the potential for favoritism and nepotism within the organization. What's more, Mr. Nambeshe himself admitted to this practice, which suggests a lack of awareness or regard for the negative impact it can have on the perception of the organization as a whole.

Furthermore, it was shocking to hear @JNambeshe justify their nepotism, citing "safety" concerns as the reason for hiring their children in @Parliament_Ug. This explanation not only fails to address the underlying issue but also suggests a lack of accountability and transparency in the recruitment process.

These revelations underscore the need for urgent institutional reforms to address these deeply ingrained problems. A merit-based recruitment process that is fair and transparent should be implemented, and clear guidelines should be established to prevent nepotism and other forms of favoritism. It is crucial to ensure that all staff members are hired based on their qualifications, skills, and experience rather than personal relationships.



@97fmRadiocity

#TheJam97fm CITY TALK

HOW CAN WE MAKE PARLIAMENT GREAT AGAIN?

The latest online awareness campaign dubbed #UgandaParliamentExhibition has unearthed shocking revelations about various things in Parliament including the recruitment process, nepotism, payments, relatives getting lead cars e.t.c



3:49 PM · February 27, 2024

3 Retweets 16 Likes



BOBI WINE
@HEBobiwine

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition has so far unearthed some shocking, but not surprising revelations about the grand corruption, nepotism and the sheer mismanagement of our nation's affairs.

A big THANK YOU to the organizers and all citizens who are taking part in the exhibition. It's not only a right but a DUTY for every citizen to demand for accountability from those who are in charge of our public affairs, and to expose all wrong doing.

#Labisa

10:15 PM · February 26, 2024

744 Retweets 4.3K Likes



@GodwinTOKO

So, it's actually true that the Speaker got about 500,000,000/= as per diem for 30 days leave in January? Never mind that @AGgather says she didn't travel!

My biggest fear is that it seems to be getting worse by the day. Each time I think we've hit rock bottom, these people scream "you ain't seen nothing yet!" at us!

How is it okay - how is possible - that the Speaker - the very person taxpayers buy a house for, cars, pay for her fuel, security, travel tickets, and give such a fat salary must be paid an additional half a billion shillings for leave at a time school girls are using coil to manage their menstrual hygiene? How does she, a mother, a lady who didn't grow up with much herself comfortable sleeping at night with these contradictions?

How are we, as a country, indifferent to the fact that the streets of Kampala, Mbale, Jinja, Soroti etc are filled with street kids and mothers, tens if not hundreds of thousands of them seen as far as Bulabira Road and Buwate - and yet, we have so much for one individual and her spouse?

If Amin's dictatorship worked by giving leeway to anyone with a gun to do as they please, the Museveni dictatorship has matched it by giving anyone with power the right - more like a duty - to bleed the taxpayers for their pleasure. So, people misuse public resources with impunity, they do as they please and give no damn what damage it causes the country.

Of course, if Museveni wanted this end he could end it in a flash. But, for a man that blows 3 billion shillings every 24 hours, maybe such is good company for him - the presence of someone else doing what he does to give him a sense of comfort!

Weep, Uganda!



8:49 AM · February 23, 2024

528 Retweets 1K Likes

1.2 Financial Mismanagement, Misuse of Public funds and Corruption

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition shone a spotlight on past practices of financial mismanagement within the Ugandan Parliament, sparking public outrage and demands for reform. Concerns centered around a perceived lack of transparency and potential misuse of resources. Tweets like @GodwinTOKO highlighted discrepancies in MPs' per diem allowances for official trips, prompting questions about how public funds were being spent. This focus on per diems exposed a potentially wider issue of weak accountability mechanisms that had existed surrounding parliamentary expenses. Furthermore, allegations surfaced of attempts to silence critical voices like Hon. Ssemujju, suggesting past efforts to stifle dissent and evade scrutiny for potential financial mismanagement. The public reacted with outrage, as evidenced by tweets like @gunsnrosesgirl3's humorous yet pointed comment about excessive spending. Similarly, tweets by @pwatchug and @othieno12 reflected the widespread perception of corruption and financial malpractice that had been festering within the Parliament. The exhibition fueled calls for reform and accountability from parliamentary leaders, including Speaker Anita Among and Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa. Public pressure, coupled with the fear of further exposure as suggested by @pwatchug "With statements like these making headlines, it's clear the state mafia, feeling the heat from the #UgandaParliamentExhibition corruption exposé, are clawing back with a vengeance." and @othieno12 of "This kifesi parliament can steal you dry" further highlight concerns about corruption and financial malpractice within the parliamentary system. There have also been reports of significant expenditures on unnecessary overseas travel, raising doubts about the

legitimacy of these expenses. Specific instances of alleged corruption have emerged, with reports of MPs receiving over 1.9 billion Ugandan shillings in just six months for various purposes. Mathias Mpuuga has been singled out for reportedly receiving 18,432,000 Ugandan shillings per diem for a six-day visit to Ssegitinya Muhammad at Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi. Troubling allegations of exploitation within vaccine management have also surfaced, suggesting corruption and malpractice in healthcare resource management.

Despite attempts to intimidate whistle blowers, tweets from @TonyNatif and @One_PiusJadwar continue to highlight the persistence of exposing corruption within the parliament. There is a pressing need for transparency and accountability to address these serious allegations and uphold the integrity of public offices. For instance, @SpireJim emphasizes the urgency of addressing corruption, stating, "It's getting more hotter for our Looters." Meanwhile, @GNzeuganda criticizes Speaker Anita Among for alleged corruption, urging Ugandans to wake up to the reality of governmental theft.

Calls for investigations into specific incidents are growing, with @GabrielBuule asking, "In whose Interest is the use of money as a tool to silence parliament?" @KakwenzaRukira tweeted, "According to media reports, the Speaker's donations are excessive. Tayebwa has not donated more than 10 million in any way." This tweet raises concerns about the purported excessiveness of Speaker Anitah Among's donations, especially compared to Tayebwa's reported donations, which allegedly have never exceeded UGX 10 million.

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition served as a crucial platform for exposing these past issues and demanding a more transparent and responsible approach to public funds within the Ugandan Parliament.

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition shone a spotlight on past practices of financial mismanagement within the Ugandan Parliament.

1.3 Critique of Political Leadership:

The issues raised during the exhibition criticized political leadership in Uganda, with specific scrutiny directed towards individuals holding positions of power, such as Members of Parliament, the President, and other government officials, for their perceived involvement in the abuse of public offices and lack of action concerning governance issues. For instance, a tweet from @AAgather, "Your Excellency Mr. Y.K. Museveni, your silence on this matter is deafening!" directly addresses President Yoweri Museveni, highlighting his silence on a particular matter raised under the hashtag #UgandaParliamentExhibition. @kyalisiimajose2 called out the speaker in a tweet, "@AnitahAmong are you the Governor of @Bankofuganda stop wasting taxpayers' money", suggesting that they are wasting taxpayers' money and should resign from their position. Criticisms have also been directed toward Parliament's involvement in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), a practice typically associated with businesses. This has raised questions about the institution's role and responsibilities, as highlighted by @CKyobutungi. These tweets exemplify the sentiment of discontentment and frustration among citizens towards political leaders, urging them to be more accountable and responsive to the needs and concerns of Ugandans.



TOKO

@GodwinTOKO

In Rubanda, voters are up in arms against Prossy Akampurira Mbabazi, an NRM commissioner and recipient of 400,000,000/= as part of the 1,700,000,000/= shared between four commissioners. They describe her actions as a "betrayal of trust".

#UgandaParliamentExhibition
pic.twitter.com/KuPGESAQpO



Jim Spire Ssentongo

@Spire.Jim

Some time in 2014 ...
#UgandaParliamentExhibition
pic.twitter.com/optYzABnHl

MTN Uganda AFRICELL 19% 18:09am



Chris Obore

December 18, 2014 at 1:31pm ·

My message to Parliament. Today as you break off for Xmas know that your role in Uganda has diminished over time. We will get trust in you when you start boxing and kicking each other in the House over problems affecting the majority of the





1.4 Demand for Accountability and Transparency:

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition campaign has raised serious concerns about accountability and transparency within the Ugandan Parliament. Exhibition participants have called for transparency, with @observerug urging the disclosure of the names of opposition MPs alleged to have received 50 million Ugandan shillings. This has led to calls for thorough investigations into suspected corruption incidents. Various examples have been cited, with some even suggesting the dissolution of Parliament due to its tarnished reputation, as articulated by @KampalaJournal.

In response to Members of Parliament implicated in the #UgandaParliamentExhibition, @PhillipKarugaba has offered a template resignation letter as a gesture of accountability. @AgoraCFR has advocated for debunking and exposing falsehoods aimed at evading public accountability within the exhibition. Demands have also been made for a forensic audit to verify parliamentary expenditures and hold those responsible for misusing public funds accountable. It is clear that there is a pressing need for greater transparency and accountability within the Ugandan Parliament, and these issues must be addressed promptly and effectively.



Samwise Gamgee
@Sambannz

"Corruption, bribery and financial mismanagement have become pervasive issues within @Parliament_Ug, casting a shadow over its integrity&functionality. These malpractices are orchestrated by top leadership." In today's @observerug writing about #UgandaParliamentExhibition pic.twitter.com/DIGzkAY86R



The Kampala Journal
@KampalaJournal

"Uganda's mainstream media houses with nearly 100 journalists accredited to cover Parliament all couldn't sniff the stench from what appears to be fictitious expenses payouts until volunteer digital warriors exposed it in the ongoing #UgandaParliamentExhibition.... pic.twitter.com/2e2irvyF5i



1.5 Ethical Considerations

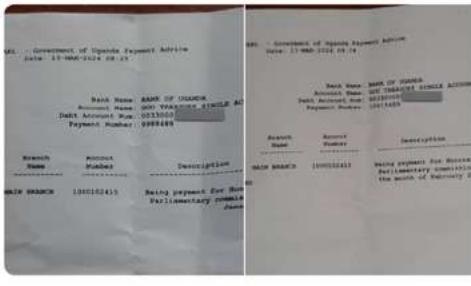
The Uganda Parliament Exhibition sparked discussions about ethical leadership, underscoring the critical importance of integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making in evaluating leaders' conduct. During the event, tweets from @AgoraCFR came to the defense of individuals like Joel Ssenyonyi, the current Leader of Opposition, against allegations of nepotism that highlighted the necessity of basing judgements on factual evidence. This demonstrated a commitment to fairness, integrity, and accountability in evaluating leaders' conduct and ensuring they are held to appropriate standards.

In addition, @spireJim tweeted a reminder about the crucial role of ethical behavior, even when faced with temptations that may lead to irrational actions. This underscores the need for leaders to prioritize ethical decision-making over personal gain or short-term benefits. It also recognized the challenges and complexities of leadership roles and emphasized the moral obligation to uphold ethical standards, even in the face of adversity or pressure.

Overall, these tweets emphasized the critical role of integrity, honesty, and moral rectitude in effective governance and public service, stressing the need for a principled approach to leadership that prioritizes the common good and fosters trust, credibility, and accountability among leaders and the broader society.

Jim Spire Ssentongo  @SpireJim

Hon. @JoelSsenyonyi, could you help us understand these monthly honorariums. They could be legal, but now we want to go beyond legality to understand, in the context of Uganda and our circumstances. Is this 6,300,000/ a monthly allowance for Commissioners beside MP salary? In payment for what? How often does the Parliamentary Commission sit? Help the lay person understand this and it's justification #UgandaParliamentExhibition



Agora Discourse  @AgoraCFR

Friends, while we understand the betrayal you feel over the seeming complicity of the opposition (we expect better from them - at least - an alternative to what we have faced in the last 38 years of NRM) in what has been exposed in the ongoing #UgandaParliamentExhibition...

1/9 pic.twitter.com/QVboSjfoXh



11:50 AM · February 28, 2024

81 Retweets 301 Likes

justice hunter  @hillarytaylorv1

@joelssenyonyi, leader of opposition has refunded the additional 4 days per diem @parliament_ug paid him for a one day trip to Kenya .

ssenyonyi urges speaker @anithahamong to refund all the per diem she received for trips that were not undertaken.

#ugandaparliamentexhibition pic.twitter.com/1i1ZWddfZG



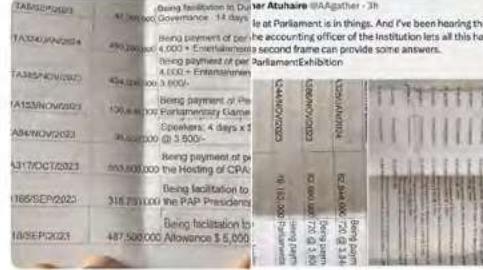
Gabriel Crispus Buule  @GabrielBuule

As we continue to preach morals, the #UgandaParliamentExhibition gave us evidence that can lead to the impeachment of the Speaker but no opposition MP will attempt to move a motion. This would have been a great opportunity to prove that they are working for the people 😊

pic.twitter.com/3HX2ejpUPQ

Ver Atuhire  @AAtuhire · 3h

is at Parliament to in things. And I've been hearing this the accounting officer of the institution lets all this happen. The second frame can provide some answers.



10:14 AM · March 4, 2024

212 Retweets 973 Likes

1.6 Skepticism of Political Parties and Opposition Figures:

There was a growing lack of trust in political parties and opposition figures in Uganda, with some people questioning their authenticity and alignment with the interests of the public. According to a tweet by @godwintoko, certain opposition figures, particularly Hon. Ssemujju, came under scrutiny regarding their statements about the [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#). The tweet suggested that some individuals within the opposition might be more aligned with the ruling party, National Resistance Movement @NRMOnline, rather than representing a genuine opposition voice. The phrase "If they're doing the same bad things with @NRMOnline honchos, are they really 'opposition'?" highlighted the suspicion that some opposition figures might be engaging in similar practices as those in power, raising concerns about their authenticity as opposition voices. This tweet reflected a broader skepticism among Ugandan citizens about political parties and opposition figures and their ability to serve the public's interests.



The tweet suggested that some individuals within the opposition might be more aligned with the ruling party, National Resistance Movement @NRMOnline, rather than representing a genuine opposition voice.

1.7 Demand for Institutional Reforms:

There is a growing consensus among various stakeholders in Uganda calling for comprehensive institutional reforms within the Ugandan Parliament to effectively address the prevalent issues of corruption, nepotism, and the lack of accountability. The severity of these challenges has prompted widespread demands for transformative changes to the parliamentary system. Some advocates even propose the dissolution of the Parliament as a necessary measure to combat the deeply rooted culture of corruption and mismanagement. For example, a tweet from user @BMKGiftSnrl questioned the Parliament's commitment to addressing the urgent issues highlighted by the [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) campaign. Alliance for National Transformation Winnie Kiiza, as reported by @Mozeserugo, has emphasized the importance of curbing entrenched corruption within Museveni's government through constitutional means.



1.8 Advocacy for Alternative Governance Models:

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition highlighted serious challenges and deficiencies within the country's governance and societal structures. The mention of alternative governance models, such as the suggestion of adopting a style of governance similar to that of Muammar Gaddafi in Uganda called Jamahiriya, reflected sentiments of disillusionment and dissatisfaction with the current democratic system -. The tweet stating, "Uganda needs Gadaffi style of governance, not western democracy," under the [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) expresses a desire for a governance approach that diverges from the Western democratic model. Muammar Gaddafi, the former leader of Libya, was known for his autocratic rule, which was characterized by centralized authority and strict control over political institutions.

Advocating for alternative governance models like Gaddafi's may have perceived Western democracy as ineffective or inadequate for addressing Uganda's socio-political challenges. There was a debate about whether a more authoritarian style of governance could offer stability, efficiency, and decisive decision-making. However, it's essential to note that such a perspective overlooks potential human rights abuses, suppression of dissent, and lack of political freedoms that often accompany autocratic regimes.

Additionally, a tweet made "The current @Parliament_Ug exhibit paints a bleak picture of Uganda's current state. The evidence presented makes Uganda appear to be a failed state." suggests that the exhibition on the Ugandan Parliament serves as a revealing portrayal of the country's current condition, painting a grim picture of its state of affairs. The term "bleak picture" indicates a situation characterized by desolation, despair, or hopelessness. This prompted a broader conversation about the most suitable political system for Uganda's development and stability, with some advocating for strengthening democratic institutions, promoting transparency, and enhancing civic participation as essential elements for sustainable governance.

The call for Jamahiriya, a governance model, reflected a broader debate about the most suitable political system for Uganda's development and stability. While some may argue for a more authoritarian approach, others advocate for strengthening democratic institutions, promoting transparency, and enhancing civic participation as the foundation for sustainable governance.

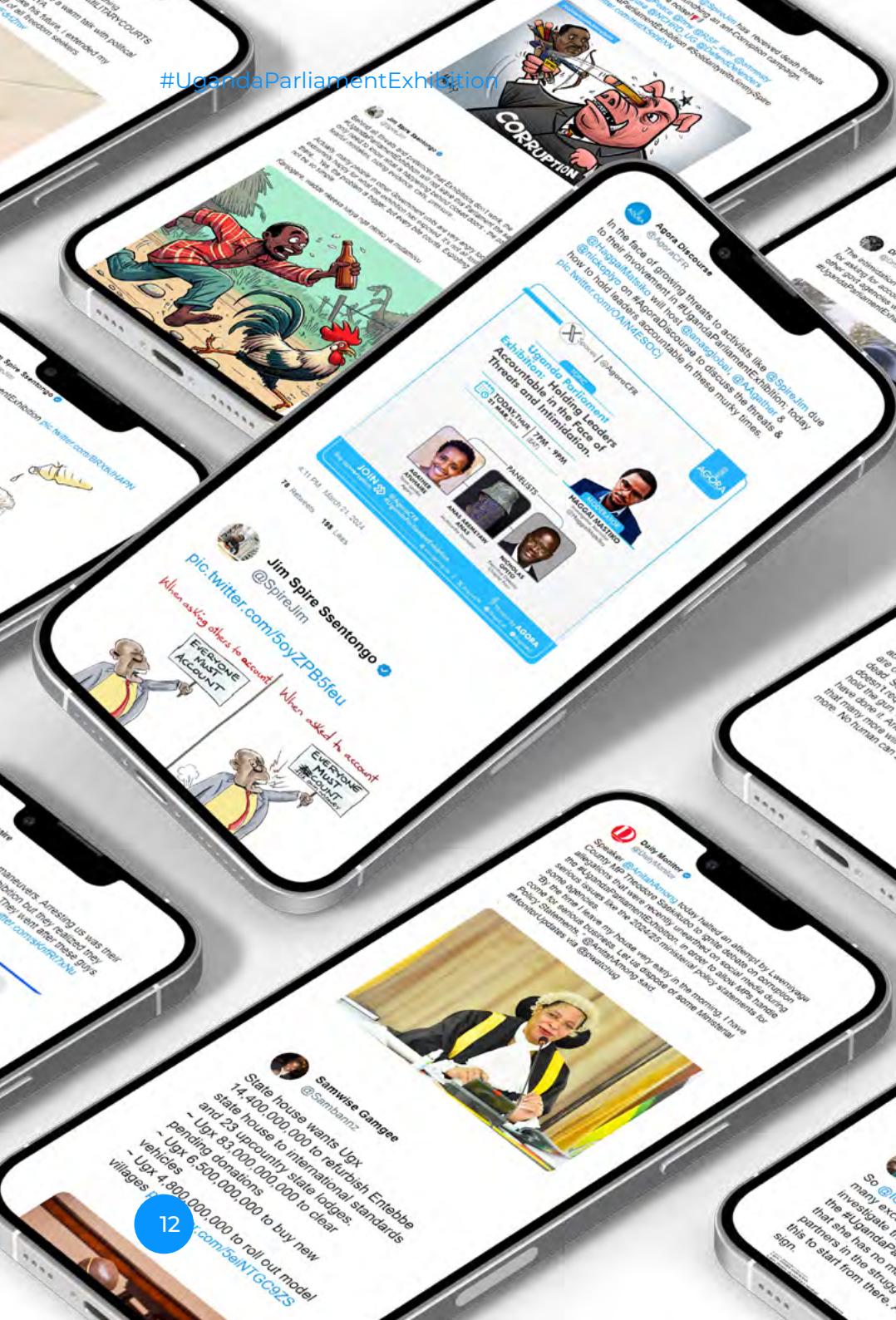


2. THE EVOLVING NATURE OF ACTIVISM

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition has not only sparked conversations on corruption and accountability but has also shed light on the evolving nature of activism in today's society. Once seen as a singular pursuit, activism has transformed into a multifaceted movement encompassing diverse voices, strategies, and approaches. The concept of activism has evolved beyond traditional boundaries. From grassroots movements to online campaigns, activism now thrives on inclusivity, adaptability, and a deep-rooted commitment to social change. The narratives shared in the #UgandaParliamentExhibition underscore the shift towards a more holistic and inter-sectional approach to activism, where individuals from different backgrounds and communities come together to advocate for justice, equality, and sustainability online.

2.1 Political Activism and Advocacy:

The tweets under #UgandaParliamentExhibition underscore a genuine spirit of political activism and advocacy among Ugandan citizens, resonating with calls for action against corruption and a vigorous demand for systemic change. One tweet from @HajjatiSmart emphasizes the urgency of addressing corruption, stating, "When it comes to corruption, silence is never golden. Corruption affects all areas of society and costs billions, usually at the expense of the most vulnerable." This sentiment echoes a broader sentiment across social media, where citizens express their discontent with corrupt practices and their determination to hold accountable those responsible for misusing public funds. Such expressions of civic engagement reflect a growing movement aimed at fostering transparency, accountability, and reform within Uganda's political landscape.



2.2 Digital Advocacy

Amid this environment, digital platforms, particularly social media, offered a platform for individuals to express these sentiments and amplify their voices beyond conventional avenues. Through hashtags such as #UgandaParliamentExhibition, digital activists mobilized communities, raised awareness about social issues, and garnered support for advocacy endeavors. Lumbule's words paint a vivid picture of silent suffering juxtaposed with the potential for transformative change, indicating that breaking the silence necessitates achieving victory over oppressive forces

The words of Sergie Lumbule from his National Student Anti-Corruption Challenge 2023 (#NSAC223) poem, "Ugandan only hopes the Silence breaks with Victory," holds deep meaning. The phrase "Loud is the silence of souls suffocating with easily ignited anger" captures the frustration and underlying discontent experienced by many Ugandans witnessing injustice, corruption, and political oppression in their society. Despite this simmering anger, there's often a feeling of powerlessness due to various constraints like political repression and limitations on free speech.

In this context, digital advocacy emerged as a powerful tool for breaking the silence and giving voice to the marginalized and oppressed. By utilizing online platforms to share narratives, coordinate campaigns, and hold those in authority accountable, individuals contributed to a collective movement for justice, transparency, and societal transformation. Lumbule's poignant words underscore the potency of digital activism in challenging established norms and fostering a more just and democratic society.

2.3 Targeted Harassment of Exhibition Leaders

At first, activism in Uganda was mainly physical, but with the country's harsh political landscape, where people are tear-gassed and killed, digital activism has evolved as a new form of protest. However, this also brought new threats for the digital warriors leading these campaigns. They faced the same risks that the street activists before them encountered, such as surveillance, deactivation of social media accounts, threats of arrests, and other forms of intimidation.

It is crucial to note that online activism should not be viewed as a replacement for traditional forms of protest. As Dr. Ssentongo argued when he appeared on Robert Kabushenga's #360Mentor X Space in April last year, it should not be an either-or-question. "Those who can organize online should and those who can organize (through) other means should also do so," he said.

In summary, while digital activism provides a valuable tool for advocacy and mobilization in Uganda's political environment, it's crucial to maintain a balance between online and offline forms of protest to maximize effectiveness and reach.

Dr. Meddy
@dr_meddy

Ugandan cartoonist [@SpireJim](#) has received death threats in Uganda after launching an anti-Corruption campaign. let's make some noise! 
[@CartooningPeace](#) [@hrw](#) [@RSF_inter](#) [@amnesty](#)
[@amnestyusa](#) [@NCHRD_UG](#) [@DefendDefenders](#)
[#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) [#SolidaritywithJimmySpire](#)
[pic.twitter.com/mldX5nh6XN](#)



AGORA
Agora Discourse
@AgoraCFR

Statement from [@ug_lawsociety](#) on the threats on Activists involved in [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#)
[pic.twitter.com/2AsmUthzPT](#)



STATEMENT BY UGANDA LAW SOCIETY ON THE SAFETY OF DR. JIMMY SPIRE SSENTONGO, AGATHER ATTIAJARE, AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISTS

The Uganda Law Society expresses grave concern over the threat to the lives of Dr. Jimmy Spire Ssentongo, Agathe Attiajare, and Glebrie Tukir, among other social media activists.

In any democracy, citizens are entitled to demand accountability of their leadership and Uganda is no exception to this. The team of Dr. Jimmy Spire Ssentongo, Anthony Naaf, Agathe Attiajare, and others are social media activists who have been demanding accountability from our leaders in Parliament through [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) on their social media platforms especially X (formerly Twitter).

We, therefore, condemn the threats and intimidations to silence citizens' urge for accountability of the leaders of public offices. We call for a swift investigation of the threats made and the linking to book of the perpetrators.

The Uganda Law Society once again calls upon leaders to always be open to criticism and accountability and to respond to citizens' concerns where legitimate as this is one of the tenets of democracy.

Endorse
Reviewed Onward

Anthony Natif
@TonyNatif

True. Exposing corruption in this country is met with death threats and friends/ family frantically calling you to back off coz "those people are deadly, they can kill". They're saying this about their own "elected" leaders. It's a mind bender.

#UgandaParliamentExhibition

PK Snr @wa_Kabwohe · Mar 6

The biggest irony of this decade has got to be how exposing corruption is considered unpatriotic.

Think. About. That.

5:54 PM · March 6, 2024

16 Retweets 55 Likes

Dr Otile Jacob
@DrOtileUg

The intimidation and threats to arrest or harm [@joshjeje2](#) for asking for accountability from not only parliament but all other govt agencies will only add salt to the wound [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#) [pic.twitter.com/on1nJoiQu6](#)



3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The “Parliament Exhibition” is a novel and innovative approach to addressing corruption and promoting public accountability in Uganda’s political landscape. This digital-based intervention represents a significant departure from traditional forms of activism and demonstrates the evolving nature of civic engagement in the digital age.

Novelty of the Digital Exhibition:

- 1. Leveraging Social Media:** The exhibition predominantly utilized the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to expose issues of corruption, financial mismanagement, and lack of accountability within the Ugandan Parliament. This digital approach allowed the organizers to reach a broader audience, amplify their message, and facilitate real-time, interactive engagement with citizens.
- 2. Utilization of Digital Tools:** The report highlights the comprehensive analysis of over 2,730 tweets, including retweets and quoted tweets, made during the three weeks of the exhibition. This data-driven approach, facilitated by social media analytics, enabled the organizers to identify and document the emerging issues, trends, and public sentiment surrounding the exhibition.
- 3. Adaptability and Innovation:** The exhibition showcases the ability of activists to adapt and innovate in the face of constrained political freedoms. Traditional forms of protest, such as public demonstrations, are limited in Uganda, but the exhibition demonstrates how digital platforms can be leveraged to voice dissatisfaction and demand accountability from the government.





Implications for Uganda's ZTC Policy and NACS:

1. **Strengthening Public Accountability:** The exhibition's emphasis on exposing corruption, financial mismanagement, and the lack of transparency within the Ugandan Parliament aligns with the objectives of Uganda's Zero Tolerance to Corruption (ZTC) Policy and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS). The digital platform provides a powerful tool for citizens to hold their elected representatives accountable, contributing to the realization of these policy objectives.
2. **Promoting Transparency:** The exhibition's calls for enhanced transparency and the public disclosure of parliamentary financial transactions and expenditures directly address the NACS's focus on improving transparency and access to information. The digital format allows for the widespread dissemination of information and encourages proactive disclosure by the government.
3. **Fostering Civic Engagement:** The exhibition exemplifies the potential for digital activism to mobilize citizens and foster greater civic engagement in the fight against corruption. This aligns with the NACS's emphasis on enhancing citizen participation and promoting a culture of integrity and accountability.

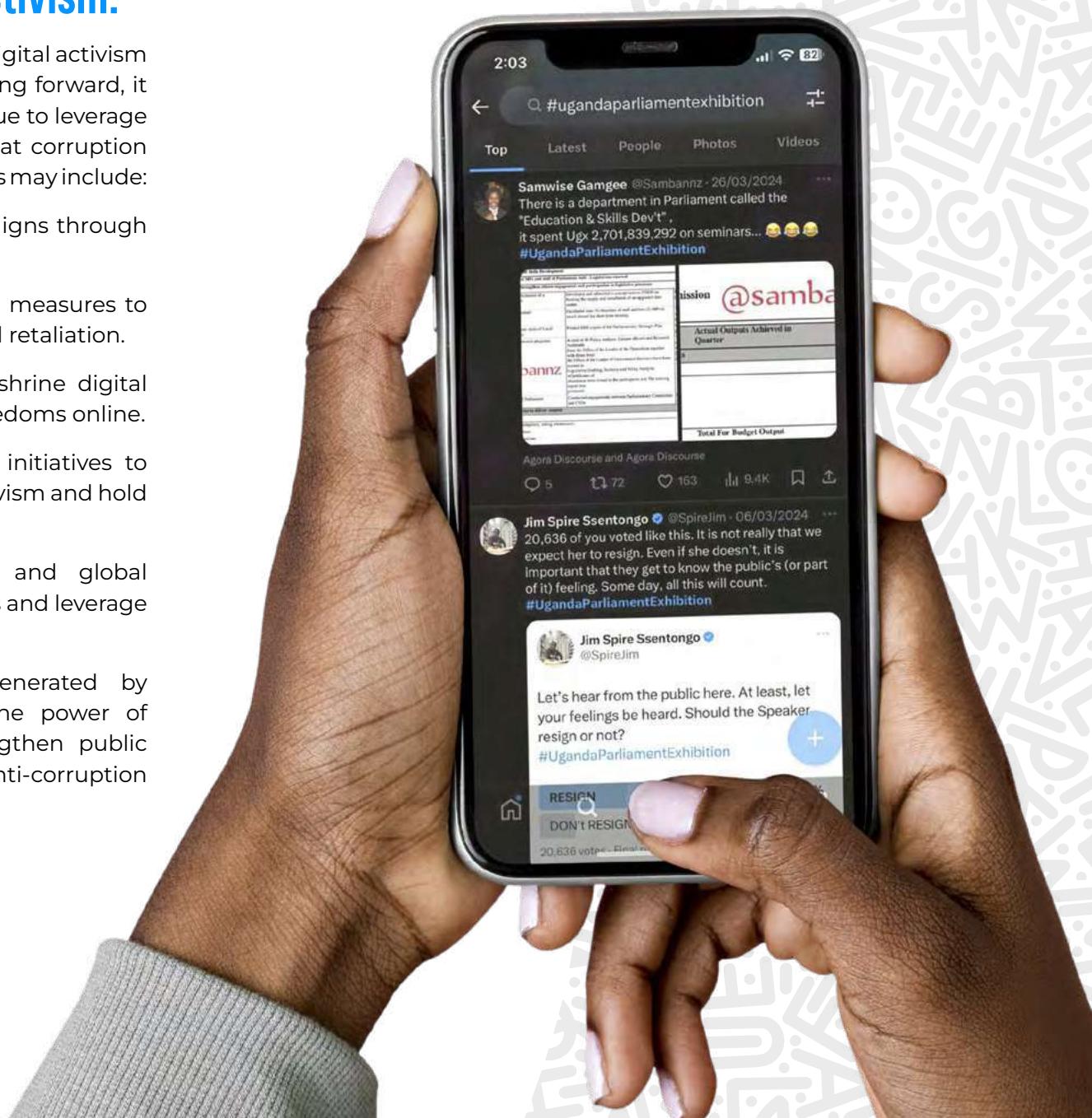
4. **Harnessing Lessons for Improved Public Accountability:**
 - a. **Leveraging Digital Platforms:** The success of the Parliament Exhibition highlights the value of incorporating digital tools and social media platforms into anti-corruption and public accountability efforts. These platforms can be effectively utilized to raise awareness, coordinate campaigns, and amplify the voices of citizens.
 - b. **Fostering Whistleblower Protection:** The report emphasizes the need for robust whistleblower protection mechanisms to encourage individuals with information on corruption to come forward. This is a critical element in uncovering wrongdoing and promoting accountability.
 - c. **Engaging with International Stakeholders:** The report suggests that seeking support from the international community, including foreign governments, multilateral organizations, and civil society groups, can be a valuable strategy in pushing for reforms and upholding democratic principles in Uganda.
 - d. **Defending Civic Rights and Liberties:** Advocating for the protection and promotion of fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression, association, and access to information, is essential in creating an enabling environment for digital activism and civic engagement.

5. Forward Direction for (Digital) Activism:

The Parliament Exhibition showcases the potential of digital activism to drive change and foster public accountability. Moving forward, it is crucial to build upon the lessons learned and continue to leverage digital platforms and innovative approaches to combat corruption and promote transparency in Uganda's governance. This may include:

1. Expanding the reach and impact of digital campaigns through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts.
2. Developing robust digital security and encryption measures to protect whistle blowers and activists from potential retaliation.
3. Advocating for legal and policy reforms that enshrine digital rights and enable citizens to exercise their civic freedoms online.
4. Enhancing digital literacy and capacity-building initiatives to empower more citizens to participate in digital activism and hold their leaders accountable.
5. Collaborating with international organizations and global networks to amplify the voices of Ugandan activists and leverage international pressure for reforms.

By harnessing the lessons and momentum generated by the Parliament Exhibition, Uganda can harness the power of digital activism to drive meaningful change, strengthen public accountability, and realize the objectives of its anti-corruption policies and strategies.





6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition boldly exposes the deeply ingrained corruption and mismanagement within Uganda's Parliament. The emerging recommendations from this campaign are poised to revolutionize Uganda's governance landscape, demanding transparency, integrity, and ethical leadership. These recommendations, fueled by public outrage and a collective demand for change, are set to challenge the status quo and push for tangible actions to combat corruption and guarantee responsible governance. As citizens and activists unite behind these recommendations, the #UgandaParliamentExhibition stands as a powerful catalyst for reform, driving conversations, mobilizing support, and advocating for a new era of accountability and good governance in the country.

6.1 Enhance Transparency and Accountability:

The government must take immediate and concrete steps to enhance transparency and accountability within the Parliament. This can be achieved by ensuring that all financial transactions and expenditures are made public and subject to thorough accountability. A tweet by @CitizenVoiceUG "Speaker Anita Among needs to show proof of official duties for the billions picked as per diem for foreign travel. We demand accountability! #UgandaParliamentExhibition" is just one example of the public's demand for greater accountability.

To achieve this, the government must conduct regular audits, transparently report expenses, provide citizens with access to information on parliamentary activities, release detailed financial reports, and implement stronger oversight mechanisms to ensure that MPs and parliamentary officials are held accountable for their actions. The government must act now to restore the public's trust in the Parliament and its representatives.



6.2 Enhancing Public Engagement and Participation in Decision Making:

The public discourse using the hashtag called for more engagement and participation from Ugandans in the country's political and social issues. For example, one tweet by @CitizenVoiceUG suggested, "The exhibition at Uganda Parliament should be used as an opportunity to educate the public on the legislative process and encourage their participation in decision-making." another tweet by @TransparencyUGI "it's time for Ugandans to take an active role in shaping the country's political trajectory." The government can encourage greater civic engagement and participation in governance processes by creating avenues for citizens to voice their concerns, provide feedback, and hold elected officials accountable. This can involve public consultations, town hall meetings, grassroots movements, and platforms for citizens to report corruption anonymously.



6.3 End Corruption and Wastage of Public Funds:

By analyzing tweets using the hashtag [#UgandaParliamentExhibition](#), it is evident that there was a significant outcry against corruption and the wastage of public funds within Uganda's Parliament. One specific tweet highlighted the shocking revelation that Shs 500m of taxpayers' money was pocketed by a Commissioner of Parliament in a controversial financial scheme. The tweet called for transparency and accountability from key figures such as Bobi Wine and David Rubongoya, urging them to address concerns about the matter.

The tweet was posted by @ActivistUG, who directly tagged @HEBobiWine and @DavidRubongoya in their message demanding transparency and accountability within Uganda's Parliament. This tweet reflected a broader sentiment among activists and concerned citizens who are pushing for an end to corruption and financial misconduct within governmental institutions.



6.4 Calls for the Resignation of some Members of Parliament:

Exhibitors of the #UgandaParliamentExhibition called for the resignation of the Speaker of Parliament and the former leader of opposition from their positions in Parliament. A tweet by Remmy Bahati highlights the reasons for the urgent impeachment and resignation of the speaker of Parliament of misconduct, including abuse of office, excessive allowance spending, defiance of court decisions, misuse of public funds, lack of responsible conduct, violation of ethical standards, and contradiction of national budget priorities. @JoelSsenyonyi, who is the leader of opposition has been called upon to introduce an impeachment motion. There is a pressing need for transparency and accountability to address these serious allegations and uphold the integrity of the institution. In addition to this there are calls for the resignation of the former Leader of the opposition by the National Unity Platform in a tweet "NUP Demands MP Mathias Mpuuga's Resignation Over Corruption Scandal Involving 500M Shillings".



6.5 Reform of Parliamentary Procedures:

Push for reforms within the parliamentary system to ensure that ethical standards are upheld and that the interests of the public are prioritized over personal gain. This, as highlighted by a tweet from @andrewkatabs, exposed a deeper systemic issue within the Ugandan Parliament. In response, calls emerged for a two-pronged approach to reform, focused on ensuring effective service delivery to the people. These revisions would ideally establish stricter codes of conduct for MPs and officials. The aim would be to prioritize ethical behavior and ensure the public interest remains paramount over personal gain. Stronger ethical standards are crucial to prevent practices like handouts, which often serve as temporary fixes rather than addressing the root causes of need within communities.

By implementing these recommendations, Uganda can take significant steps towards addressing the issues raised by the #UgandaParliamentExhibition and fostering a culture of accountability, transparency, and good governance within the August house.

7. CONCLUSION

The #UgandaParliamentExhibition sheds light on the pressing challenges confronting Uganda's parliamentary landscape. It calls for reform and accountability in response to the prevalence of corruption and mismanagement of public funds. These issues serve as a stark reminder of the critical need for ethical leadership and transparency. Citizens are employing innovative strategies such as social media campaigns and grassroots activism to demand for change and ensure that elected officials are held accountable for their actions. However, it is important to note that these endeavors encounter barriers due to constraints on civic freedoms and deeply ingrained corruption. Looking ahead, stakeholders need to persist in advocating for transparency and democratic principles. They should also engage with international allies to amplify their voices and exert pressure on the Ugandan Government to implement substantive reforms. Only through sustained collective action can Uganda address these obstacles and forge a more just, equitable, and democratic society.





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