

“The people of Africa – the people of Uganda – are entitled to democratic government. It is not a favor from any government: it is the right of the people of Africa to have democratic government.”

- President Museveni’s swearing-in address, January 29, 1986¹

“Democracy means the people support you. If they don’t support you, you don’t win. That’s all”

- President Museveni at Presidential Debate live on Ugandan TV, 13.2.2016²

The Impact of Elections: The Case of Uganda

Svein-Erik Helle and Lise Rakner

Abstract

The comparative democratization literature is divided on the effects of multiparty elections in non-democratic regimes. Early analyses assumed that elections would lead to democracy, yet more recent studies highlight that elections may serve as a stabilizing tool, enabling incumbents to distribute patronage and coopt the opposition. Analyzing the case of Uganda and the National Resistance Movement (NRM) rule from 1986 through Uganda’s third multiparty elections February 18 2016, we argue that multiparty elections may have both a stabilizing and destabilizing effect on non-democratic rule. During its 30-year rule, NRM and President Museveni have presided over three different institutional arrangements. The decision to introduce multiparty elections in 2005 was a response to decaying no-party rule. Through three electoral cycles (2006, 2011, 2016) multiparty elections have stabilized the regime in the short-to-medium term, in particular through tight control of rural voters and manipulation of local government structures created and maintained in a “no-party” setting. However, the same mechanisms that have contributed to this stability have also resulted in institutional erosion and decay as the NRM struggles with succession politics and the changing nature of the electorate. While the effect of voluntarily institutionalizing multi-party electoral competition might be to stabilize the regime, the long-term consequences might be opposite.

Introduction

In February 2016, President Yoweri K. Museveni and his ruling National Resistance Movement-party (NRM) were re-elected for a fifth time through national elections in Uganda. The official electoral count showed that Museveni won 60 per cent of the vote in the presidential

race and NRM 70 per cent of the seats in parliament. While the results for Museveni dropped slightly compared to the 2011 electoral race, the 2016 elections signal the continued challenges involved in defeating an electoral authoritarian regime at the polls. Observers have pointed to different factors when accounting for the continued electoral successes of Museveni and the NRM after 30 years in office. Some attribute the electoral success of the incumbent to a disorganized and uninspired opposition and satisfaction with improved growth and security (Conroy-Krutz and Logan 2012). Others link the repeated incumbent victories to massive pre-election spending, vote buying and intimidation (Carbone 2008, Izama and Wilkerson 2011). Both explanations of the NRM's electoral victory fail to provide a convincing explanation of *why* or *how* it transpired, because the singular focus on opposition weakness or incumbency advantages do not address the underlying structures that enable the authoritarian incumbent—the NRM under President Museveni – to minimize the institutional uncertainty that multi party election poses. As we will explain, under Museveni's leadership, NRM has been able to entrench and routinize their powers through multiparty elections by shaping the playing field to their advantage.

The understanding of electoral authoritarian regimes and the ways that institutions such as elections are employed to maintain control has increased significantly over the past two decades as the number of these regimes has multiplied. The literature concludes that institutions in general – and elections in particular - can be drivers of both democratization and autocratization processes and that we need to be more specific in terms of scope conditions for our theories in order to identify when, where, and why they play these roles (Brancati 2014, Cassani 2014, Haggard and Kaufman 2016, Morgenbesser 2014, Morse 2012). We contribute to this debate with a case study of Uganda, a regime that has voluntarily and strategically formalized the role of elections over time, a strategic decision that has stabilized the regime and prevented potential crises. Our analysis of electoral policies in Uganda under NRM rule shows how elections can be employed to strengthen the power of the incumbent, and that the underlying conditions that enable this can be found in already established institutions catering to the demands of the incumbent. The incumbent's continued –and in some cases increasing - use of a superior state-supported organization and monetary advantage effectively creates an uneven playing field that undermines the opposition's ability to compete. NRM's catering to rural demands through the manipulation of local government structures created and maintained in a “no-party” setting illustrates how a persistent rural bias in African politics creates formidable barriers to political transitions via elections. NRM's entrenched electoral hegemony is achieved through systematic use of the local government

structures that have not been restructured to accommodate multiparty electoral competition.

The Ugandan case highlights that rural constituencies continue to offset the electoral weight of urban populations (Boone 2013, pp 47). In Uganda, a largely urban-based opposition has limited space to mobilize support when facing a regime with a formidable ability to maintain its electoral base in the rural areas. However, as our analysis will demonstrate, the same mechanisms that have contributed to this stability may lead to possible erosion and decay in the longer term through changes in what can be considered quasi parameters endogenous and exogenous to the regime. The NRM's continued success in multiparty elections depend on their ability to maintain and strengthen control over state and party structures, not least by successfully managing the question of succession. At the same time, changes in opposition strategy and demographic developments may challenge the stabilizing effect of multiparty election and contribute to deinstitutionalization.

We begin our analysis with a review of the literature on elections in non-democracies before we turn to analyse the role of elections in Uganda from the start of the NRM rule up until the decision to reintroduce multiparty elections in 2005. We then turn to compare the electoral strategies and success of the incumbent and the opposition in three subsequent multiparty elections (2006, 2011, 2016). We show that NRM and President Museveni instituted a number of formal and informal reforms between the 2006 and 2016 elections that closed the space for the opposition to establish party organization and mobilize resources. The combined processes of recentralizing power away from local councils, and at the same time increasing the number of administrative districts, has enhanced the executive power over resource distribution and made it more difficult for the opposition to mobilize resources and votes. A concluding section finalises the chapter.

Electoral competition in non-democracies: stability or crisis?

The jury is still out on the effect of elections in authoritarian and hybrid regimes. A substantial literature understands elections as an institutional tool in the hands of the ruling regime serving to stabilize their rule through providing tools for legitimation, co-optation and/or repression (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009, Gerschewski 2013, Schedler 2013). Another strand of literature highlights that elections, despite taking place in a context of informal autocratic practices, provide opposition forces with unprecedented opportunities if certain preconditions are in place (Bunce and Wolchik 2010, Howard and Roessler 2006, Hadenius and Teorell 2007). Some conclude that elections contribute to democratization (Lindberg 2009), some that they ensure

autocratic stability (Bogaards 2013, Magaloni 2006). Other works again find that elections in and by themselves have little effect (Wahman 2013). A range of other, intermediary, variables conditions the effect of elections in hybrid regimes (Donno 2013, Kaya and Bernhard 2013, Seeberg 2013). The diverging scholarship is attributed to flawed conceptualization resulting from a failure to understand the underlying dynamics of institutions under authoritarian rule (Brancati 2014, Haggard and Kaufman 2016, Morgenbesser 2014, Morse 2012, Pepinsky 2014). Pepinsky (2014) holds that since much of the literature claiming that institutions have an independent effect on regime stability and crisis is premised on institutions put in place with the consent of the rulers in order to stabilize their rule by constraining actors' choices, they cannot at the same time have a destabilizing effect as the ability of institutions to constrain choices depends on the goodwill of the ruler. Institutions such as multiparty elections must therefore be seen as epiphenomenal to regime interests and wider societal issues, and as a result, studies of authoritarian regimes and their institutional underpinnings should be expanded to include a wider range of variables.

We acknowledge Pepinsky's fundamental points about institutions in general but find that this perspective overlooks a central aspect introduced by Gerschewski in the introduction to this volume: the purpose and function of institutions might change as a result of flawed design or contestation over the role and meaning of the institution. This is particularly important in regard to the institutions of multiparty elections because, as argued by Schedler (2013), by definition institutions entail an element of uncertainty. For Schedler, elections in authoritarian systems should be understood as asymmetric games, which are defined by "the unequal distribution of power: one of the players (or teams of players) holds the power over rule definition, rule application, or dispute adjudication. Such asymmetries of power ... are bound to subvert the "spirit of the game," the spirit of fair competition among equals" (2013, pp. 113). In other words, elections serve a clear purpose for the incumbent. But, this does not mean that once introduced, elections serve the interest of the incumbent forever. Since the electoral game is voluntary and the incumbent depends upon having an opponent in order for the game to be seen as real, the incumbent cannot manipulate the process to the degree that it is rendered meaningless to participate for the opposition. As a result, authoritarian regimes cannot remain electoral and at the same time totally eliminate uncertainty (Schedler 2013, pp. 132). This element of uncertainty may open for deinstitutionalization, or electoral situations where the original intentions of the institutions are rendered void. Whereas formal institutions in democracies work as a constraint on power in that they set the rules of the game and are binding for all actors, in a non-competitive autocracy, the opposite is the case: formal institutions are

epiphenomenal to the interests of key actors, and therefore do not work as effective constraints on power. But, what makes competitive electoral authoritarian regimes “hybrid” is that we do not know if and when formal institutions will work as a constraint on power and when it does not. In order to identify how elections and electoral competition contribute to regime stabilization or crisis (deinstitutionalization), a range of quasi parameters may be identified that may contribute to elections serving a stabilizing or destabilizing role.

The diverging arguments regarding the effects of the election are further linked to the level of framing theories. In separate reviews, Brancati (2014), Haggard and Kaufman (2016) and Morse (2012) all argue that the literature focuses on case universes that are too broad, and that it is necessary to move beyond the focus on generalizability to focusing on either mid-range theories and scope conditions or equifinality and combinations of causal factors and effects. This chapter follows the former approach by focusing on regimes where multiparty elections were introduced voluntarily by an incumbent regime in control of the process, and largely without foreign interference. The effect of the form of political transition for post-transition politics is well documented (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986, Przeworski 1991). In the case of Africa, van de Walle (2002) points to diverging short-term outcomes and long-term effects when transitioning from single-party to multi-party politics. In cases where the incumbent regime was able to control the transition to multiparty politics, it was typically also able to maintain control of the state apparatus, hereunder the electoral process (van de Walle 2002, pp. 76-77). Regimes remaining in control of the transition to multiparty elections could therefore be expected to use elections as an autocratic tool – at least in the short run.

Illustrating a case of elections introduced and formalized in a controlled “top-down” fashion, Uganda offers an interesting example of how and why elections serve a both stabilizing and destabilizing effect. The incumbent NRM regime believed that introducing multiparty elections would strengthen their hold on power in a situation where the previous system was decaying at an alarming rate (Makara et al. 2009). Uganda also represents a case of gradual adoption of formal institutions as the NRM-regime and President Museveni have ruled in an autocratic fashion for 30 years, through *three* different institutional arrangements that have featured an increasing formalization of political competition. The institutional landscape in Uganda under NRM-rule has evolved at least partly as a response to institutional decay, ending up in a multiparty system. Multiparty elections have stabilized the Museveni/NRM regime in the short-to-medium term, in particular through a local government structure created and maintained in the “no-party” setting. However, the same mechanisms that have contributed to

the stability of Museveni's autocratic rule, can lead to possible erosion and decay in the longer term.

From inclusiveness to decay: The crisis of the no-party model in Uganda (1986-2003)

Yoweri K. Museveni was sworn in as President of Uganda in January 1986 after emerging victorious from a five-year guerilla war where his National Resistance Army (NRA) defeated both the civilian regime of Milton Obote, who came to power through fraudulent election, and the subsequent military regime that briefly replaced Obote in 1985. In his inauguration speech Museveni announced that one of the primary objectives of the "Bush War" had been to restore democracy in Uganda, and that this was therefore one of the primary goals of his new regime (Museveni and Kanyongonya 2000, pp. 3). The solution he proposed was not a standard democracy where parties and party candidates competed for votes through elections: Museveni blamed the previous political conflicts and political violence that had plagued Uganda since independence on sectarianism that "divide people along ethnic and religious lines" and laid a large part of the blame on the old political parties, the Democratic Party (DP) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC) (ibidem, pp. 6). He advocated for a gradual approach to building a new, democratic Ugandan state that would replace the old, corrupted state institutions. Formally, the system created was a bottom-up approach to democracy, with the backbone of the state anchored in the local, rural councils modeled on the Resistance Councils (RCs) established by the NRA in occupied territories during the war. The system, which was legalized by a government statute as early as 1987, established elections at the local level, but the national level remained in the hands of the unelected ruling NRM-elite and President Museveni (Carbone 2008, 31-32, 36). The elections for the RCs were hostile toward alternative political organizations: elections were to be conducted based on the principle of individual merit and no party affiliation was allowed. Political parties, while nominally allowed to exist, could not practice party politics outside their own party headquarters. Instead, all Ugandans were declared as members of one non-partisan political organization called the "National Resistance Movement" (NRM-S). While it was *de jure* a no-party system, *de facto* the system separated between "official" candidates and those who did not possess such credentials (Carbone 2003, pp. 487-88). The system has therefore been described as a single-party system (Oloka-Onyango 2000, pp. 55), a dominant party system (Kasfir 1998, pp. 58) and hegemonic party system (Carbone 2008, pp. 105).

Initially this system was popular with the Ugandan population. The decentralized RC system provided the Ugandan population with unprecedented opportunities for political participation, and the local presence provided by the RCs gave access to state institutions that was also unprecedented. In the words of Rubongoya: “during the first years of NRM rule, the LC system was without question the most important legitimizing strategy” (2007, pp. 69). The system, combined with continuous economic growth and a general fear in the population of returning to war, provided the NRM with sufficient legitimacy to build the foundations of the regime without experiencing undue criticism. The system carried additional advantages as it effectively barred the opposition parties from building organizations, and it exposed them to the dangers of co-optation (Carbone 2008, pp. 135-36). Precisely because the NRM depicted itself as an all-inclusive “movement” rather than a partisan organization, it was effectively protected from political attacks from actors outside the organization, and made it rewarding for potential challengers to work inside the structures. With no separation between the state of Uganda and the NRM, the movement utilized its non-partisan state apparatus to build a wide-reaching network of local government organizations that were *de facto* party structures (Tripp 2010, pp. 115-116).

Institutional decay 1996-2003

Elections to the local councils (LCs) constituted the grass-root foundations of the governance system in Uganda up until 1996, when the first presidential, parliamentary and local elections were held. The decision to open up for electoral competition for executive as well as legislative offices came partly as a result of institutional decay within NRM-S. By the early 1990s, participation in local councils had reduced significantly (Tripp 2010, pp. 115), and attention had shifted to the national arena where elections for an assembly that was to debate a new draft constitution had created clear divisions between those in favor of a return to multiparty politics and those in favor of keeping the movement system (Carbone 2008: 37-38). The movement supporters in the Constituent Assembly, backed by Museveni, were able to defeat the multiparty supporters backed by the old political parties (Carbone 2008, pp. 36). The constitution therefore established a no-party system at the national level as well, and Museveni subsequently defeated “multipartyist” Paul Ssemogere in the first presidential election. The NRM formalized no-party competition at all levels once they were confident that they could win over their opponents who were forced to be legally undefined “outsiders” inside the NRM-S.

TABLE 1: NATIONAL ELECTIONS UNDER NRM-S

In 1997-98 NRM took further steps towards formalizing the NRM as a party within a no-party system through the Movement Act that specified the nexus between state and the official NRM faction (Carbone 2003, pp. 487), and by establishing the NRM caucus in parliament (Muhumuza 2009, pp. 31). But, as the process of institutionalizing the NRM movement as a party gathered momentum, the early emphasis on inclusion and the all-encompassing nature of the NRM coalition gave way to internal elite struggles and institutional decay (Carbone 2003, Makara et al. 2009). Towards the late 1990s, several internal conflicts emerged exposing the movement to factions that challenged the leadership of president Museveni. Central NRM politicians began to openly question the government about corruption, and the leadership of Museveni (Tangri and Mwenda 2001). The 2001 elections marked a turning point in Ugandan politics as former regime-insider Colonel Kizza Besigye mounted a very personal campaign against the president. While Museveni gained 69.3 per cent of the vote, Col. Besigye's strong electoral performance exposed a rift in the NRM (Carbone 2003, pp. 497-498). The internal weaknesses of the movement system exposed in the 2001 elections showed clear signals of deinstitutionalization, as the system provided opponents with the opportunity to attack it from within. The role of ideology had declined, and incidences of corrupt behavior of key movement politicians became publicly exposed. Assessing the status of the movement post the 2001 elections, the NRM National Executive Committee concluded that the all-inclusive nature of the movement had provided space for opponents bent on destroying the movement system from within (NEC 2002). In 2003, to the astonishment of most international observers, President Museveni announced that the NRM National Executive Committee would meet to discuss the reintroduction of multiparty politics.

Introducing multiparty elections to address institutional decay

The fact that Besigye won 29 per cent of the vote in the 2001 presidential elections sent a strong signal to NRM party leaders and the decision to reintroduce multiparty politics in Uganda must be understood in this light (Makara et al. 2009). Museveni characterized the 2005 referendum on multiparty politics as a housecleaning exercise that would "rid the movement of saboteurs" (*Daily Monitor* July 23, 2005), suggesting that the NRM executive leadership was willing to formalize a multiparty system in exchange for extended executive control. Through its control of the government, parliament, and the public sector, the NRM was able to manage the transition process and minimize the uncertainty of losing power in the transition process (Makara et al. 2008, pp. 263). The NRM used its government status to shape the electoral rules

to its favor and its incumbency position to tilt the playing field to its advantage. By reintroducing multiparty elections, NRM and President Museveni were able to prevent the deinstitutionalization of the NRM-S, caused by endogenous change agents and popular apathy, to lead to a regime crisis. By linking multiparty reforms to the removal of term limits from the constitution, Museveni and the NRM-regime not only took away the ability of their opponents to mobilize on popular disenchantment with the forced inclusivity of the NRM-S, but also to delay and overcome the critical issue of leader succession within NRM. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, electoral authoritarian regimes have been challenged as a result of failed attempts to remove term limits, either through popular uprisings as in Burkina Faso in 2014, or through electoral losses under a new Presidential candidate as in Kenya in 2002. With President Museveni still in power, the formalization of multiparty politics in Uganda in 2006 prevented two potential sources of regime crisis.

The routinization of incumbency rule through elections: Uganda 2006-2016

The joint decision of linking the return of multiparty politics with the removal of presidential term limits ensured an important electoral advantage for NRM and Museveni in subsequent elections (Makara 2010, pp. 93). In the immediate aftermath however, this also carried some costs for the regime. By explicitly linking the return of multiparty politics to his continued rule, the first multiparty elections in 2006 became a contest about the popularity of the regime, rather than a regular electoral contest (Makara et al. 2009). As a result, Besigye and the opposition were able to campaign on the basis of being advocates of democracy, at least in the presidential race. Museveni and NRM won the majority vote in the presidential and parliamentary elections, but the opposition gained support in both races (see table 2 and 3) despite a campaign characterized by fraud and violence to the degree that it was a 3 against 2 decisions in the Supreme Court to uphold the election results (Gloppen et al. 2006). The 2006 experience led to important changes in the electoral strategies of the incumbent regime (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2016, pp. 607-8).

Poor governance performance and declining support of NRM candidates and President Museveni from 2001 to the 2006 elections led many to believe that the opposition would continue to progress in the 2011 elections, perhaps even forcing a run-off in the presidential race (Conroy-Krutz and Logan 2012, pp. 626, Izama and Wilkerson 2011, pp. 66). But as the campaign gathered momentum, it became clear that the opposition, and particularly the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), were lagging behind the incumbent (de Torrenté 2013).

President Museveni was re-elected for a fourth term with 68.4 per cent of the national vote, while his main opponent Kizza Besigye obtained 26 per cent of the vote. President Museveni and NRM reversed the downward trend of previous elections, and for the first time NRM and Museveni won a plurality of votes in every region of Uganda (Perrot et al. 2014).

The 2016 elections showed many similarities to the previous multiparty contests. The two main candidates were still Museveni and Besigye. The fact that the former Prime Minister and Secretary General of NRM Amama Mbabazi ran as an independent candidate, introduced a new element of uncertainty. While he failed in the election, securing a dismal 1.4 per cent of the vote, Mbabazi's bid attracted attention and raised concerns within the incumbent regime who spent most of their energies in the year leading up to the polls identifying, isolating and re-integrating potential Mbabazi supporters within their own camp. This allowed the FDC and Besigye a freer role than in previous elections at least until the campaigns gathered momentum in November 2015 and Besigye documented his popular appeal. Besigye bounced back in the presidential election, increasing his share of the official vote count by 10 per cent compared to the 2011 electoral race. However, the opposition parties made little progress in the parliamentary elections, as the NRM secured a two-thirds majority and the largest group of non-NRM MPs are NRM-leaning independents. This parliamentary majority may become crucial, because Museveni needs a 2/3 majority in parliament to remove the age limit for presidential candidates specified in the constitution if he wants to run again in 2021. Both the 2011 and 2016 election results signal an entrenchment of the NRM regime under multiparty politics.

TABLE 2 and 3: NATIONAL ELECTIONS 2006-2016

In the aftermath of the 2011 and 2016 elections, divergent explanations have been offered as to why the NRM maintained the momentum in Ugandan politics. The first, advocated in many of the international monitoring reports, claims that the NRM's victory was primarily a result of the extremely uneven playing field between opposition and incumbent (Abrahamsen and Bareebe 2016, COG 2011, Demgroup 2011, EUEOM 2011, EUEOM 2016, Izama and Wilkerson 2011, Perrot et al. 2014). The second explanation emphasises the relative success of and support for the NRM government and the weak options provided by the opposition (Conroy-Krutz and Logan 2012, pp. 627, Vokes and Wilkins 2016). Both observations hold merit as the 2011 and 2016 elections were characterized by a distinctly uneven playing field between the incumbent and opposition as well as a splintered and relatively weak opposition. However, these issues are merely symptoms of underlying structural and institutional factors nurtured by the

incumbent regime since it attained power in the 1980s. In particular, Ugandan demographics and the local government structure created and maintained in a one-party setting have enabled NRM to entrench their hegemonic powers through the strategic use of multiparty elections.

New NRM tactics under multiparty rule in the 2011 and 2016 elections

In the aftermath of the 2006 elections, President Museveni and the top leadership of the NRM conducted a thorough evaluation of the elections, and decided on important reforms. In 2006, NRM candidates were taken by surprise as the citizens blamed them for poor service delivery (Hickey 2013, pp. 196) and the regime lost support both domestically and internationally for their widespread use of detention, direct repression and force to combat their opponents (Murrison 2013, Perot et al. 2014, pp. 30). After the post-election evaluation, their focus shifted to building their electoral organization and offering voters the choice between “the carrot and the stick”. When the 2011 campaigns gathered momentum, the NRM had a cohesive network of cadres in place to protect the NRM’s interest at the local level. In each village area, nine-person campaign committees were responsible for mobilization, mirroring the set-up of the RCs. Before the 2016 elections, these NRM committees were increased to 30 individuals in each village.³ These committees were often headed by heads of the village councils, the lowest level of the decentralized governance system in Uganda. These structures were last elected in 2002 under the NRM-S, and when multiparty politics were reintroduced in 2006, most of them switched loyalty from the “system” to the NRM party.⁴ These local electoral structures effectively provide the NRM with a partly state-sponsored local electoral organization, which in turn makes the NRM a very attractive party for candidates running for office as you can run with the backing of an organization.⁵ The strength of the NRM election apparatus was witnessed in the heavily contested 2010 and 2015 party primaries. While the primaries were criticized for widespread rigging and led to several splits, they highlighted the enormous mobilizing apparatus of the incumbent party.

At the top, President Museveni has centralized control over the state and party apparatus. He wanted to run a more professional campaign in the 2011 elections, with a focus on outreach and modernizing the campaign style (Perrot et al. 2014, pp. 15).⁶ To achieve this, the president and his close circle have gradually centralized control of key aspects of the political process. Control over important government programs such as the agriculture subsidy programme, the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), have been centralized either at State House or in the military (Kjær and Joughin 2012, Nabaho and Kiiza 2013). As an indication of the increasingly more centralized process, the State House and Office of the President budgets have

grown at a higher rate than most other ministries. According to Hickey (2013, pp. 196), centralization and political control was ensured as a “means of mobilizing electoral support”. A large budget for presidential donations, a bloated cabinet, a seemingly endless number of positions as “presidential advisors”, the RDCs, and the sprawling local-government network provide the president with ample positions to distribute as patronage (Awortwi and Helmsing 2014). Starting in earnest in 2014, President Museveni has also asserted his authority and centralized control within the NRM-party structures. Having left the party to languish in the hands of other people for almost a decade after the reintroduction of multiparty politics, the president assumed firm control after Secretary General Amama Mbabazi emerged as a potential challenger to the president’s position in 2013. After a brief and clandestine struggle where Museveni used a younger generation of party cadres to promote a “sole candidature” position for Museveni within the party, Mbabazi and several potential loyalists were ousted from key positions and made to challenge Museveni from outside the party. In return for their loyalty, the younger party cadres received Museveni’s backing to replace Mbabazi’s team and occupy key positions within the party and state. The emerging succession battles witnessed in the run up to the 2016 elections, illustrate once again how Museveni and the NRM regime have utilized the institutions of multiparty elections to strengthen and centralize their control over the “carrots” that are key to ensuring electoral victories: the state and the party.

In addition to these incentives the regime has created a climate of fear by applying selective and premeditative violence and repression against key groups while reminding the population that the regime *can and will* resort to violence and massive repression, if necessary (Perrot et al. 2014, pp. 30-31). At regular intervals between 2008 and 2016, newspapers, TV- and radio stations have been closed because they have reported on issues considered threatening to the interest of the NRM. Journalists and editors are frequent targets of threats when reporting on protests or politically sensitive issues (Grønlund and Wakabi 2014, Human Rights Watch 2016). This has contributed to a widespread culture of self-censorship among Ugandan media practitioners.⁷ Both Museveni himself and army spokespersons frequently criticize the opposition and sow seeds of doubts about whether they will accept an opposition victory.⁸ Finally, the regime has a long tradition of employing paramilitary forces. In the 2001 and 2006 elections, these forces were used directly to harass and frighten opposition supporters and politicians. In 2011 and especially in 2016, the approach has been slightly different, as the NRM government initiated a large-scale recruitment program of so-called “Crime Preventers” – unemployed youth given training by government in order to act as a neighborhood watch at the village level. The presence of such groups has no legal basis, and their mandate is uncertain.

They have been accused of being partisan agents of the NRM, something partly confirmed by the NRM's attempt to use them as polling agents.⁹ Portrayed as a semi-formal institution without a specific mission, the "Crime Preventers" were understood by the public as a potential source of violence *and* as a source of employment for unprivileged youth. Both the positive and negative view of the crime preventers strengthened the hand of the NRM in the elections (Tapscott 2016). Similar to electoral authoritarian machines across the world, in Uganda, the combination of funds and positions as "carrots" and threats of violence as "sticks" fundamentally tilts the playing field against the opposition.

The opposition: The challenge of internal and external cohesion

After the 2006 elections the opposition also conducted an evaluation. They acknowledged that failure to agree on common candidates had hurt them in the presidential race and the parties also saw the need for building stronger organizations in order to increase outreach and enable them to compete in all constituencies.¹⁰ This indicates that the opposition saw the need for both internal and external cohesion. However, while FDC managed to field more candidates throughout the country in the 2011 and the 2016 elections, the opposition did not have sufficient resources to enable their candidates to run efficient campaigns, and were left mobilizing on anti-regime questions, rather than alternative policies or promises of resources. For the smaller opposition parties, the situation was worse. They failed to field candidates in many constituencies across the country, as they have struggled to act as coherent organizations. The two traditional parties, the Democratic Party (DP) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC) have arguably the greatest organizational potential among the opposition parties as they still have latent organizations spread across the country from before the movement era. However, internal wrangles, partly exacerbated by the NRM and FDC, have prevented them from proper functioning as parties. DP has at least two different leadership factions outside the official leadership who lean on either the NRM or FDC, and as a result several high-profile DP-affiliated candidates have run as independents instead of as party representatives, taking part of the party organization and support with them.¹¹ UPC disintegrated as a party after the 2011 election, with one faction of the party pledging allegiance to the last elected party president Olara Otunnu, who pledged support for Mbabazi in the 2016 presidential election. The other faction, led by Obote's son Jimmy Akena, said that he personally would support Museveni. UPC, and to a lesser extent DP, has been paralyzed by internal factionalism. Internal bickering has plagued even the larger FDC. Factions disagreeing on style and strategy emerged both

during the 2012 party presidential and executive elections and the 2015 nomination exercise for the general elections, and the factions have remained visibly divided after the elections.

The opposition's failure to mobilize voters is primarily linked to their lack of organizational capacity: lack of internal and external organizational cohesion, access to key areas of the country, and resources. At the elite level, frequent advances from the NRM threatened the internal cohesiveness of the opposition parties. Defection of high level party officials and opposition MPs were common in the 2011 and 2016 election campaigns,¹² and contributed to the above-mentioned factionalism. Losers in internal party wrangles will not stay and fight for the party, they will leave and run as independents or for another party, often with the encouragement of the NRM and even other opposition parties. This scenario presents the opposition with a dilemma: by participating in the election they legitimize the process and strengthen the legitimacy of the NRM. However, if they do *not* participate in the elections, the parties may not survive as individual candidates had strong incentives for running without the approval of the parties. This illustrates how - paradoxically - multiparty elections in autocratic setting decreases the uncertainty for the incumbent party as the opposition is torn between the dilemma of legitimizing the regime or sacrificing party cohesion.

In the 2011 as well as the 2016 elections, the opposition parties came together to develop a joint platform with the backing of international donors. However, interest in the project faded as donor funding was restricted to the dialogue, cooperation efforts and internal party matters, and could not be used for external mobilization.¹³ The Interparty Co-operation (IPC) that was created with donor funding in the aftermath of the 2006 elections broke down before the 2011 campaigns gathered momentum as the DP and later the UPC withdrew because they feared that the alliance would effectively make them a subsidiary of FDC and that they would effectively lose their independence and privileges.¹⁴ Before the 2016 election, opposition parties came together again under the umbrella of "the Democratic Alliance" in order to agree on joint candidates for presidential, parliamentary and local elections. After lengthy talks and support both from civil society actors within Uganda and external actors, the talks broke down over the issues of candidate selection and use of human and financial resources. The main fault-line was between former NRM-stalwart Mbabazi, who received the support of the smaller opposition parties, and FDC and Kizza Besigye, who felt that Mbabazi offered too little to the other parties for them to relinquish their position as the head of the opposition. The failure to agree on a joint candidate at the presidential level effectively spelt the end of the alliance, as the opposition failed to coordinate at the lower level elections as well.¹⁵ Individual candidacy incentives thwarted opposition cohesion and prevented the opposition from effectively challenging the

NRM. The NRM played a role in orchestrating this, partly through denying donors the opportunity to provide more comprehensive funding, and partly through sponsoring different factions within the opposition parties with diverging interest.¹⁶ In addition, the NRM used their organizational advantage to more directly deny the opposition the possibility of building nation-wide organizations.

How control of rural state structures strengthens incumbents and weakens opposition

The Ugandan opposition parties are vulnerable to internal disagreements. Yet, the main reason for their failure to build nation-wide organizations is that they are denied access to the countryside and to resources, especially between elections. As argued by the party treasurer of the Democratic Party, Issa Kikungwe: “For an election, you need the candidate, the structures, the message and the money. We had the candidate and the message, but we did not have the money and the structures. For us, these two issues are linked.”¹⁷ The story repeated itself before the 2016 election. Both FDC and DP had plans to focus on building structures in the aftermath of the 2011 elections, but were hampered by delays in anticipated donor funding and repeated harassment by local level state structures when they sought to establish party offices across the country.¹⁸

This partly explains the predominantly urban nature of the support for the Ugandan opposition. The opposition parties have managed to mobilize urban citizens in the past three elections (Brisset-Foccault 2013), but they have not been able to reach the population in the countryside outside their traditional strongholds. This is linked to the NRM-structures established at the time of the movement system, and maintained and extended after the introduction of multiparty elections. NRM has always maintained a stronghold in the rural areas of western, central and eastern Uganda (Muhumuza 2009, pp. 26-27, Vokes and Wilkins 2016). Today, NRM controls most of the rural local level government structures in Uganda. In 2011, it won over 90% of the local level elections at the lower levels (LC3 and LC5), as the opposition struggled to field and fund candidates in many races as a result of lacking organizations and resources.¹⁹ Emphasizing how the multiparty constitutional reforms have not translated to institutional change at the local levels, local government elections at the lowest (village, or LC1) have not been held since 2001. This means that leaders elected through the NRM-system run the lowest level of government in Uganda, the village level. While there is no official records that detail how many of the village councils that are intact 13 years after the last election, the NRM are confident that they control most of them, and if they are not intact, they deem it likely that it is a person with ties to the party that has the authority in the village.²⁰

Despite the elections being postponed since 2001, NRM nevertheless held primaries for party candidates for all LC1 councils ahead of the 2016 elections. Since no general LC1 elections seem to be forthcoming, the winners of these primaries are now seen as the legitimate LC1 chairpersons in some areas.²¹ In cases where the opposition manages to win control at the district level, the NRM has other mechanisms to counter this potential power. These include the Resident District Commissioners (RDC), the personal representatives of the president at the district level. These non-elected agents are more powerful than the district chairmen and act as control agents with regards to the activities of the elected representatives (Meyers 2014, pp. 108). In sum: the NRM has ensured that uncertainty in the rural areas is kept to a minimum by controlling important access points through the maintenance of a local government system created during the one-party era.

In the period running up to the 2011 and the 2016 elections, NRM sought to reduce electoral uncertainty in the urban areas through the appointment of administrative authorities that removed much of the power of the elected leaders. An example of this is the Kampala City Authority, which was established in 2010 to counteract the influence of the Kampala mayor, who has continuously been a member of the opposition (Lambright 2014, pp. 40-41). This means that NRM *de facto* control almost all local level government structures in Uganda, and, as Meyers (2014, pp. 100-1) highlights, the NRM has a long history of utilizing the local government structures for partisan purposes.

This advantage has been compounded by a recent trend in Ugandan politics: the vast expansion of the number of local districts. When the NRM came to power in 1986 there were 33 districts in Uganda. This increased to 55 by 2004, and just before the 2006 election 22 new ones were added. The so-called “districtification” gathered momentum after the 2006 elections. By the end of 2010, Uganda consisted of 112 districts (Singiza and De Visser 2011, pp. 4), and 25 new were promised during the campaigns and tabled in Parliament (Meyer 2014, pp. 103). While the social benefits of increases in districts remain unclear, it paid dividends for the NRM and Museveni in the elections. Several analyses have shown that the new districts are usually “granted” by NRM officials, and particularly the President, during campaigns (Green 2010, Tumushabe 2009). This provides significant advantages to the ruling party, both because it creates a large number of new positions that can be used for patronage purposes (Meyers 2014) and because the creations of districts tend to be popular and enables the ruling party to win these seats (Tumushabe 2009). The trend continued in 2016, when government approved the establishment of 23 new districts six months before the election, and over 40 new constituencies were up for grabs in 2016 relative to 2011 elections. The NRM government

claimed that this was done in order to bring representation and services closer to the people. The opposition, however, claimed that the creation of new districts and constituencies was done in order to maximize NRM representation in parliament.²²

The hegemony of the NRM over the local government apparatus has both direct and indirect consequences for the opposition's ability to build organizations and compete effectively in elections. NRM uses this organizational advantage to maintain their hegemonic position in the countryside (Muhumuza 2009, pp. 26-27) and deny the opposition access. When the opposition seeks to conduct party activities between elections, local councils, RDCs, and local police frequently stop them.²³ RDCs, local councils and police also frequently deny the opposition access to local radio stations and other local news media, even though they have paid for access (Makara 2010, pp. 87). Illustrating how nominally democratic institutions in hybrid regimes are employed to entrench the power of the incumbent, infringements on the right to assembly controlled by local structures hinders the opposition in reaching the population between elections, making it unnecessary for the NRM to "get their hands dirty" during the campaigns.²⁴

The local government system further enables the NRM to employ the threat of co-habitation. As highlighted by Singiza and De Visser (2011, pp. 15) and Meyers (2014, pp. 104), local governments receive the bulk of their funding from central government grants. The bulk of the funding is conditional grants, or grants made on the basis of an agreement between central government and local government. Through these agreements the central government effectively controls what the local government can do (Singiza and De Visser 2011, pp. 15). President Museveni and the NRM frequently warn the citizens of Uganda of the negative consequences for their district if they do not vote for NRM.²⁵

Finally, the resources of the opposition in Uganda are stretched by the size of the government system. Opposition parties in Uganda are poor and under-resourced compared to the NRM, who enjoys access to both state and private resources (Acfim 2016). The structure of government and elections in Uganda make it extremely costly for an opposition party to participate meaningfully in electoral politics: More districts mean that the opposition has to find and fund more candidates. In 2011 there were 18,629 elected offices, each carrying a significant nomination fee (Demgroup 2011, pp. 7). In 2016, all nomination fees were increased significantly. The fee for contesting MPs was for example hiked 15 times from roughly 60 USD to 880 USD, meaning that a party running a candidate for MP in every constituency would have to pay over 350,000 USD in nomination fees alone. Given that the opposition generally provides little monetary support for other candidates than their presidential candidates,²⁶ the candidates

need to fund both their own nomination fees and their campaigns, which can often be exceedingly expensive.²⁷ The opposition relies on attracting candidates who can fund their own campaign. At the parliamentary level, 66 new directly elected seats were contested in the 2011 relative to the 2006 election, with 40 more being created between the 2011 and 2016 elections. The winner-takes-all nature of the Presidential competition also drains the meager opposition resources. The opposition parties spend most of their focus and resources on just to keeping their presidential candidate in the field.²⁸ President Museveni can on the other hand utilize the infrastructure attached to the executive office legally during the campaign period.

Potential challenges to the stabilizing effect of multiparty elections

At a rally in Wakiso outside Kampala during the 2016 campaigns, President Museveni argued: “the reason why leaders like UPC’s Milton Obote lost power twice through coup d’états was because they failed to read the situation properly, thereby failing to change accordingly.”²⁹ As has been highlighted above, Museveni has proved adept at both tweaking the institutional setup of his regime when facing challenges of legitimacy and deinstitutionalization, and adapting his electoral tactics to new institutional setups. As a result, the gradual formalization of electoral competition culminating in the establishment of multiparty elections from 2006 onwards has stabilized the NRM regime. However, Museveni and the NRM party are now facing challenges that in the long run may be difficult to contain within the setup of a multiparty regime. Changes in what Gerschewski in the introduction to this volume identifies as “quasi-parameters” might distort their stabilizing effect. These include a parameter that is endogenous to the institution and that therefore might be seen as a birth defect: the financial and administrative costs of maintaining the “carrots and sticks” identified above. However, it also includes an exogenous factor that links to the uncertainty of elections as an institution: demographic changes in the electorate. In time, these quasi-parameters can affect and potentially alter the stabilizing effect of multiparty elections. We briefly discuss each in turn below.

The uneven playing field in Uganda’s elections is key to understanding its stabilizing effect, but it *also* holds within it the seed for change, as it is extremely costly to maintain. The 2011 elections has been dubbed “Uganda’s most expensive ever” (COG 2011), yet, the 2016 elections seem to top them as vast sums of money, material and promises of club goods have been dished out by the ruling party both before and during the campaign (ACFIM 2016). Doing systematic monitoring of campaign spending in 16 out of 112 districts in Uganda, Ugandan anti-corruption organization ACFIM found that two months into the campaign and with 50 days left, a total of just over 40 million USD had been spent by parties and candidates. NRM had

spent 90% of this (ACFIM 2016, pp. 7-8). And this was before the NRM spending kicked into high gear: a week before the election each of the over 60,000 village level branches was given approximately 75 USD for mobilization.³⁰ While the spending certainly works to grease the machinery of the NRM and mobilize voters, it also has two important, and increasingly negative, effects for the regime. First of all, it is increasingly hard for the NRM to get anyone to do anything without having to pay them. The NRM is quickly turning into a money-generating machine, which people see as primarily a vehicle for getting rich, making it increasingly difficult and expensive to administrate the party. People are also demanding increased payments for each election. This means that the NRM has to increase spending for each election in order to mobilize the vote. There is a great worry within the party that this cycle is non-sustainable and that the commercialization of politics in Uganda could make the system break down. In interviews, party- and government officials consistently mentioned the commercialization of politics as the single greatest challenge for the party and regime in power.³¹ Second, the election spending has already created wider economic effects, as the 2011 election was followed by a record-hike in inflation. Public anger at rising food and fuel prices allowed the opposition to mobilize large protests against the regime (“Walk to Work” campaigns, see Goodfellow 2014). While the protests were suppressed heavy-handedly and inflation normalized within a year, they illustrate the potential downstream-effects that the commercialization of politics can have for the electoral authoritarian regime. Arguably, the uneven playing field is an effective mechanism for minimizing the risk of multiparty politics, but, it also carries the potential for creating a crisis. Regimes growing overly reliant on patronage typically break down if facing a disturbance to their income-stream (Magaloni 2006).

The other challenge facing President Museveni and the NRM is the changing demographics of the Ugandan electorate. In addition to the gradually shifting urban-rural divide, another parameter is starting to affect electoral politics: age. Uganda has the second-youngest population in the world, with an estimated median age of 15,6 years (CIA 2016). For each election cycle in Uganda, a new generation of voters in Uganda is becoming an increasing part of the electorate. This generation differs from previous generation having grown up under Museveni and NRM-rule, with no personal experience of social turmoil associated with previous regimes in Uganda. The threat of returning to war and conflict therefore rings more hollow to them than the older generation. Polling data consistently shows that they are more concerned with the high rate of corruption and unemployment, and perhaps most importantly, that they are more likely to support and vote for the opposition (Afrobarometer 2015, RWI 2016). The changing composition of the electorate was one of the drivers behind the change in

leadership within the NRM.³² Despite this, they are not confident that they will be able to contain the youth. Perhaps illustrating, the NRM Secretary General appealed to their parents to keep them away from protests in the aftermath of elections, saying “the state will kill your children if they come to disorganize and destabilize the peace and security in Kampala and Wakiso.”³³ Combined with the increasing cost of winning elections, the changing demographic of the Ugandan electorate suggest that multiparty politics may not stabilize the autocratic regime in the future.

Conclusion

About 30 per cent of the regimes in the world today fall in the category of electoral authoritarian, defined as regimes that allow the opposition to run in elections without allowing them to challenge the hegemony of the incumbent. Paralleling accounts of electoral authoritarian regimes across the globe, the discussion has shown that the NRM regime in Uganda has entrenched its hegemony through excessive use of state resources (hyper incumbency advantages). Fitting the case category, the case of Uganda illustrates how electoral dynamics in at least minimally competitive non-democracies such as electoral authoritarian regimes cannot be understood as fair competitions with certainty of procedures as in democratic regimes *or* as meaningless exercises with certainty of outcomes as in closed authoritarian settings. In electoral competitions, uncertainty is “the name of the game” both in terms of procedures and outcome and incumbents choose strategies that reduce the uncertainty to the extent possible. As our analysis has highlighted, Uganda’s incumbents have learnt to play the game of multiparty elections, and utilize it to reduce uncertainty. Again, reiterating patterns from authoritarian electoral regimes across the African continent, the case of Uganda underscores the persistent rural bias in African electoral policies. The local government structure challenges analytical perspectives that regard the manipulation of the ruling parties in hybrid regimes as ineffective. The NRM has developed a form of “rural” and “regional” populism, linked to re-districtification and patronage. While opposition forces can mobilize support in urban areas and gain legitimacy through protesting against the autocratic regimes, elections are won in the countryside. As highlighted by both Magaloni (2006) and Boone (2013), low urbanization signals that the electoral competition is primarily decided in the countryside.

The case of Uganda illustrates how competitive elections and uncertainty creates possibilities for regime stabilization in the short run, but potential deinstitutionalization in the long run. In Uganda multiparty elections were reintroduced in a controlled “top-down” fashion

by the ruling powers in large parts because the incumbent believed it would strengthen their hold on power in a situation where the “no-party” system was in decay. The NRM-regime and President Museveni have ruled in an autocratic fashion for almost 30 years, through *three* different institutional systems that have featured an increasing number of formal institutions. A conscious decision to reintroduce multiparty elections in 2003 was intended to address the institutional decay that had become evident in the no-party rule. Since the first multiparty elections in 2006 elections, the incumbent regime has used the formal electoral institutions as a mechanism to entrench its legitimacy and power. The 2001 and 2006 elections were marked by overt actions of violence and repression, but the 2011 and 2016 elections were characterized by fewer overt incidents of violence. Instead, the excessive financial muscle of the state-supported NRM and the fear generated by threats of violence and repression ensured that, come voting day, rigging was not necessary.

However, the same quasi-parameters that have contributed to this stability can lead to possible erosion and decay in the longer term. An important insight from the study of electoral authoritarian regimes is that support to the regime is an indicator of regime stability as citizens have an incentive to support the regime only if they expect it to last and continue to distribute benefits (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010, pp. 129). Our analysis of the entrenchment of authoritarian rule in Uganda’s post 2006 underscores this finding. The patronage network created in Uganda is substantial and sophisticated, yet expensive and vulnerable in times of economic recession. As Magaloni (2006) and Greene (2010b) have highlighted, extensive party-based patronage systems are only an advantage as long as the incumbent is able to maintain control of a well-funded state apparatus. Faltering state finances, either as a result of corruption, waste or overspending, may challenge the elaborate patronage network established by the NRM and create openings for opposition parties to mobilize voters and challenge the incumbent at the ballot in future elections. Coupled with external factors such as the changing composition of the electorate, the role of multiparty elections as a stabilizing force in the electoral authoritarian regime of President Museveni and the NRM may well give way to destabilization in the not-too-distant future.

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Authors

Svein Erik Helle is PhD candidate, Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen. Lise Rakner is Professor of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen and senior Research Fellow, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway. Both authors have contributed equally to the article.

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TABLE 1: NATIONAL ELECTIONS UNDER NRM-S

	Executive elections: Museveni share of vote	Executive elections: Largest challenger share of vote (Ssemogerere/Besigye)	Parliamentary elections: Declared Movement-candidates ³⁴ share of total seats
1996	74,33	23,61	56,52% (150 of 276)
2001	69,33	27,82	_35

Source: African Elections Database (2014)

TABLE 2: Executive elections in Uganda, 2006-2016

	NRM (Museveni)		FDC (Besigye)		DP (Kizito/Mao)		UPC (Obote/Otunnu)	
	1000 votes	% Total	1000 votes	% Total	1000 votes	% Total	1000 votes	% Total
2006	4109	59,26	2593	37,39	110	1,58	57	0,82
2011	5428	68,38	2065	26,01	148	1,86	125	1,58
2016	5972	60,62	3509	35,61	-	-	-	-

Source: African Elections Database (2014), Ugandan Electoral Commission (2016)

TABLE 3: Parliamentary elections in Uganda, 2006-2016

	Total seats ³⁶	NRM seats (% total)	FDC seats (% total)	DP seats (% total)	UPC seats (% total)	Independent seats (% total)
2006	284	191 (67,25%)	37 (13,02%)	8 (2,81%)	9 (3,17%)	36 (12,68%)
2011	350	250 (71,42%)	34 (9,71)	12 (3,42%)	10 (2,86%)	41 (11,71%)
2016	Final tally not yet announced					

Source: African Elections Database (2014)

Endnotes

¹ Quoted in Museveni 2000: 3.

² Quoted in Craig (2016): “A First: Uganda’s Museveni takes part in Presidential Debate”. *Voice of America*, 13. February 2016.

³ Interview with high-level NRM-party officials, January 2016.

⁴ Interviews with NRM mobilizers (2) and high-level party-officials (2), December 2013 and January 2016.

⁵ As shown by Wilkins (2016) this state sponsored patronage centrifugal patronage model is not as important in the NRM heartlands, where internal competitions drive local candidates to rely on their own resources to a much larger degree. However, Wilkins and Vokes and Willkins (2016) also show the central role of President Museveni in greasing this machinery.

⁶ Key informant interviews with NRM high-level party-officials (2), December 2013 and January 2016.

⁷ Interviews with 22 radio editors and radio journalists, Uganda, October 2015-February 2016. See also Human Rights Watch (2016).

⁸ Freedom House (2010). For recent example, see Muhereza (2015): “I cannot leave power to wolves, says Museveni”, *Daily Monitor*, 18.1.2015.

⁹ Interview with organizer of nationwide polling agent trainings, Kampala, February 2016.

¹⁰ Interviews with Secretary Generals of FDC, UPC and DP, December 2013.

¹¹ Repeat interviews with three high level officials in DP, December 2011, December 2013, October 2015 and January 2016.

¹² See for example: Mwesigye (2010): “NRM converts work their socks off for Museveni”, *The Observer*, 17. November 2010; Lutukomoi (2013): “Defections are part of politics”, *The Observer*, 6. November 2013. URN (2015): “Bukonya to back Museveni 2016 election”, *The Observer*, 9. October 2015.

¹³ Interviews with Secretary Generals of DP, FDC and UPC, December 2010, as well as interviews with DDP officials, December 2010 and December 2013

¹⁴ Interviews with Secretary Generals of DP and UPC, December 2010.

¹⁵ Interviews with high-level members of DP and FDC who participated in TDA-talks, October 2015 and January 2016.

¹⁶ Interviews with donor and party representatives involved in election process, December 2010, December 2013 and October 2015.

¹⁷ Interview, December 2013.

¹⁸ Interviews with Secretary Generals of DP and FDC, December 2013, October 2014, October 2015, and February 2016.

¹⁹ Interviews with Secretary Generals and party treasurers of DP, FDC and UPC, December 2013.

²⁰ Interviews with NRM mobilizers, December 2013 and interview with high-level NRM-party officials, January 2016.

²¹ Interviews with high-level NRM party officials, January 2016 and October 2016.

²² For quotes, see Atuhairi (2015): “New Districts Debate”. *The Independent*, 31.8.2015.

²³ Interviews with mobilizers and General Secretaries in DP, FDC and UPC, December 2010 and December 2013. Also noted in EUEOM (2011) and Freedom House (2012: 3)

²⁴ It is easier for the opposition to reach the countryside during the campaigns, as the “the local level obstacles that are usually present are not as visible because of the attention the campaigns receive” in the words of UPC Vice President Joseph Bossa. Interview, December 2013.

²⁵ See Okino (2010): “NRM warn Alebtong residents on opposition”, *New Vision*, 4. January 2010, Musoke (2010). “Don’t vote opposition, Museveni tells Masaka”, *New Vision*, 10. September 2010, Nambogga (2010): “Don’t vote opposition, Museveni tells Jinja”, *New Vision*, 20. December 2010, Wandera (2015): “Kick out unproductive leaders, says Museveni”, *Daily Monitor*, 15. October 2015.

²⁶ In 2016 FDC paid the nomination fees for their parliamentary candidates, partly as a result of the government releasing some public funds for parties for the first time.

²⁷ An example: Issa Kikungwe, Party Treasurer of DP, estimated that he spent approximately 30,000 USD of his private money on his own and a few other DP campaigns in 2011. Kikungwe contested and won the Kyadondo South MP seat.

²⁸ Interviews with Party Treasurers of DP, FDC and UPC, December 2013. Note that this changed somewhat in the 2016 elections, as FDC ran a tighter financial ship in their presidential campaign and DP and UPC did not field their own presidential candidate.

²⁹ Quoted in Musisi (2016): “Why Museveni hasn’t kept his promise of retiring”, *Daily Monitor*, 24 January 2016.

³⁰ Interviews with high level officials in NRM, February 2016, See also Rumanzi (2015): “NRM cash splits Ntungamo candidates”, *Daily Monitor*, 13.2.2016.

³¹ Interviews with five different high level NRM officials, December 2010, December 2013, October 2014, February 2016.

³² Interview with high level NRM officials, February 2016.

³³ Quoted in Wesonga (2016): “Lumumba shoot-to-kill threat sparks outrage”, *Daily Monitor*, 1.2.2016. Sound recordings of speech in Luganda are published online.

³⁴ Figures based on African election database (2014). The percentage of candidates that supported official Movement-policy and President Museveni is likely to be higher. Numbers based on directly elected representatives only.

³⁵ No estimates found on percentage of declared candidates at time of election.

³⁶ Directly elected seats only.