



UGANDA

A COUNTRY REPORT BASED ON DATA
1900-2012

by Tina Bergmann

V-Dem Country Report Series, No. 13

September 2016

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a new approach to the conceptualization and measurement of democracy. It is co-hosted by the University of Gothenburg and University of Notre Dame. With a V-Dem Institute at University of Gothenburg that comprises almost ten staff members, and a project team across the world with four Principal Investigators, fifteen Project Managers, 30+ Regional Managers, 170 Country Coordinators, Research Assistants, and 2,500 Country Experts, the V-Dem project is one of the largest-ever social science research-oriented data collection programs.

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About V-Dem

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a new approach to conceptualizing and measuring democracy. V-Dem's multidimensional and disaggregated approach acknowledges the complexity of the concept of democracy. The V-Dem project distinguishes among five high-level principles of democracy: *electoral*, *liberal*, *participatory*, *deliberative*, and *egalitarian*, which are disaggregated into lower-level components and specific indicators.

Key features of V-Dem:

- Provides reliable data on five high-level principles and 39 mid-level indices and components of democracy such as regular elections, judicial independence, direct democracy, and gender equality, consisting of 350+ distinct and precise indicators;
- Covers all countries and dependent territories from 1900 to the present and provides an estimate of measurement reliability for each rating;
- Makes all ratings public, free of charge, through a user-friendly interface.

With four Principal Investigators, two Project Coordinators, fifteen Project Managers, more than thirty Regional Managers, 170 Country Coordinators, several Assistant Researchers, and approximately 2,500 Country Experts, the V-Dem project is one of the largest-ever social science data collection projects with a database of over 15 million data points. The database makes highly detailed analysis of virtually all aspects of democracy in a country, while also allowing for summary comparisons between countries based on aggregated indices for different dimensions of democracy. Users from anywhere are able to use the V-Dem online analysis tools which can be found at the project's website. Governments, development agencies, and NGOs can benefit from the nuanced comparative and historical data when informing critical decisions such as selecting country program priorities, informing program designs and monitoring impact of their programs.

Methodology:

Unlike extant data collection projects, which typically use a small group of experts who rate all countries or ask a single expert to code one country, the V-Dem project has recruited over 2,500 local and cross-national experts to provide judgments on various indicators about democracy. The V-Dem dataset is created by combining factual information from existing data sources about constitutional regulations and de jure situation with expert coding for questions that require evaluation. Experts' ratings are aggregated through an advanced statistical model that takes into account the possibilities that experts may make mistakes and have different scales in mind when coding. In addition, bridge-coders - experts who code multiple countries - are recruited to calibrate the scales of estimates cross-nationally¹.

¹ For further details and information about the V-Dem methodology, see <http://v-dem.net>.

Introduction

This country report portrays key aspects of the democratic development in Uganda from 1900-2012. It is based on V-Dem data and focuses on the historical development of six central features of democracy. The report is organized as follows: first, an overview of Uganda's political history is provided. Second, there is a description of the longitudinal trends of six V-Dem democracy indices: *electoral democracy*, *deliberative component*, *liberal component*, *participatory component*, *egalitarian component*, and the *women political empowerment index*. Third, an in-depth analysis on the specific aspects of electoral democracy, egalitarian democracy, and women's political empowerment follows. Finally, a brief conclusion summarizes the report and projects the future trajectory of democratization in Uganda.

Overall, an analysis of these V-Dem indices reveals that Uganda has experienced dramatic fluctuations in terms of the health of its democratic system. Over time, these oscillations in democratic stability correlate with major political, economic, and social events that have occurred within the country, such as turnovers of power and the introduction of constitutional amendments. Uganda has achieved substantial progress in terms of its democratic governance. However, the prominence of electoral irregularities and the lack of strong opposition parties have deterred the country from attaining a vibrant multiparty democratic system in its most recent election cycles. In order to advance Uganda's democratic status, the country should make an effort to improve the degree to which its elections are free and fair in addition to maintaining its progress in terms of the other aspects of democracy.

Overview: Uganda's Political History

Since becoming an independent state in 1962, Uganda has witnessed a dramatic political evolution as the country has oscillated between multiparty systems, one-party systems, and military regimes. Following its era of colonialism, this landlocked country has experienced surges and declines in terms of its democratic and political stability. Although the nation possesses great potential to advance its democratic status through developing its multiparty political system, Ugandans have historically suffered through periods of political, economic, and social misfortune as a result of internal conflict, authoritarianism, and corruption.

The British exploration and colonization of Uganda commenced in the early 1860s (Mutibwa 1992). The British colonial strategy of indirect rule was conducive for democracy, as it fostered self-government and civil society (Teorell 2010). For example, the British leaders

recognized the native Ugandans as sophisticated enough to govern their own affairs, which allowed the traditional chiefs to construct laws in a fashion that matched the cultural values of their own people and customs (Kanyehamba 2010). At the onset of Uganda's independence from Great Britain in October of 1962, the nation demonstrated a conscious effort to uphold the fundamental principles of democracy. As a means of establishing a robust democratic system, the ideals of free association in civil society and competition amongst political parties to govern the state were highly valued by the elite members of the ruling body as well as the general citizenry (Kiranda and Kamp 2010).

The founding elections in Uganda marked the transition from a long period of colonial rule to a fledgling electoral democratic government (Lindberg 2006). The National Assembly election of 1962 was the first national election in Uganda subsequent to independence, in which the Uganda People's of Congress and the Kabaka Yekka parties won the majority of the parliamentary seats (Mutibwa 1992). In addition, Sir Edward Mutesa was chosen as the nation's first president and Milton Obote was elected to serve as the first executive prime minister to lead Uganda's first post-independence government. However, in 1966, Obote mounted a coup, made himself president, and seized complete executive control. In an effort to solidify his rule, Obote established a new constitution vesting all governmental power in his position, and he abolished all remnants of federalism in the nation, including the traditional Ugandan kingdoms. As president, Obote was not a representative leader, as he used his power and influence to service himself and fulfill authoritarian bargains with the key military and business elites (Mutibwa 1992).

In 1971, Obote's regime was ousted in a military coup d'état led by the Armed Forces General Idi Amin, and Amin sustained his brutal dictatorship for nine years (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). During this period, Amin ruled Uganda as a military oligarchy, characterized by the suppression of free expression, murder of suspected political opponents, and all state positions being filled by military elites. Furthermore, he instilled fear among the citizens of Uganda, most notably the Asian population. In August 1972, President Amin ordered the mandatory expulsion of Uganda's Asian population within 90 days (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). This ethnic cleansing was conducted in a climate of Indophobia, in which the Ugandan government claimed through the use of propaganda that the Indians were "sabotaging" the national economy by hoarding its wealth. During this period of expulsion, Ugandan soldiers engaged in theft and physical violence against the Asian population without remorse, and the Amin regime and his cronies also accumulated their property and capital resources. As a result of the loss of Asian entrepreneurs and laborers, the economy rapidly declined and Uganda's infrastructure systems deteriorated.

In 1978, the Uganda-Tanzania war erupted in response to the strenuous relations between the two nations. These tensions began in 1971 when Obote was ousted, and Tanzania's president Julius Nyerere offered sanctuary to Obote and his supporters. With the support of Tanzanian forces, these exiles attempted to invade and remove Amin on multiple occasions, establishing an atmosphere of distrust between the governments of Uganda and Tanzania. Ultimately, this war resulted in the successful overthrow of the Amin regime due to the combined efforts of the Uganda National Liberation Front and the Tanzanian People's Defense Forces (Kanyehamba 2010). The removal of Amin, however, led to a series of unstable regimes, demonstrated by the fact that three administrations gained and lost power between April 1979 and December 1980 (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). After the controversial and fraudulent elections of 1980, Obote returned to power only to be removed by another military coup d'état led by General Tito Okello in 1985. Okello immediately proclaimed a military government, but his tenure in office only lasted for six months until the National Resistance Army acquired power in 1986 through seizing the nation's capital of Kampala and forcing Okello to flee north into Sudan.

Since assuming power in 1986, Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) have maintained control over the government to this day. This Movement can be credited with ushering in a sequence of successful and fundamental policy changes associated with democratic governance in Uganda. In the context of growing political stability, Museveni ended the human rights abuses of former regimes, initiated the process of political liberalization, and instituted economic reforms with consultation from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and donor governments (Kanyehamba 2010). For example, there are more Ugandan women actively involved in politics today than in nations with longer democratic histories (Goetz 1998). This achievement is primarily due to the 1989 affirmative action interventions that guaranteed women a minimum of 39 seats, one from each district, in Parliament. Although the 1995 Constitution legalized political parties, it maintained the ban on political activities, which meant that candidates running for office were prohibited from obtaining sponsorship of a political party or attempting to use a party's resources, colors, or slogans. This legislation allowed the NRM to entrench itself into the political context of Uganda and undermine the development of opposing political parties (Kiranda and Kamp 2010).

It was not until a referendum in July of 2005 that the multiparty political system was restored in Uganda, marking the end of 20 years of a "no-party democracy." The Political Parties and Organizations Act of 2005 legalized the activities of political parties, which allowed them to freely organize, solicit funding, and develop party manifestos (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). This

growing freedom in the political arena resulted in national parties forming across the country in time for them to compete in the 2006 general elections. However, Parliament approved an amendment to the constitution in 2005 that removed the presidential two-term limit, which allowed Museveni to be a candidate in the 2006 elections.

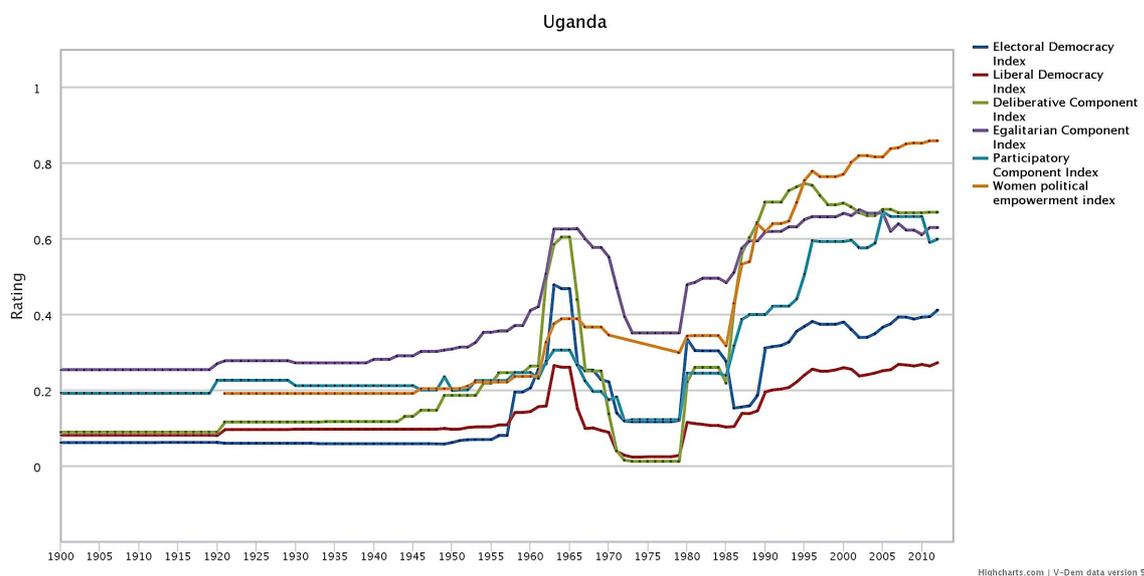
Overall, the introduction of opposition parties in Uganda has resulted in increased pressure for alternative policies, the mobilization of a more diverse composition of voters, and greater accountability for the incumbent's actions. In addition, these opposition parties are promoting improvements in the competitiveness of elections within Uganda's multiparty political structure, as the NRM's share of votes in successive elections continues to decrease. Although Uganda has achieved considerable progress in electoral standards, the dimension of competition persists as a weakness of the democratic system. The NRM dominates the political atmosphere of Uganda, and the nation's party system is characterized by a high degree of imbalance between the governing party and the fragmented, weak opposition parties (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). The NRM and Museveni experience a significant incumbent advantage, which results in this imbalance of power and lack of fairness in campaigns and elections. The absence of an effective separation between state resources and those utilized by the NRM provide Museveni with unlimited campaign resources. Also, the limitations placed on media and the use of the justice system to curb the opposition radically skew the playing field in favor of the incumbent party, the NRM (Rakner, Menocal, and Fritz 2007).

It has been 30 years since President Museveni seized control of Uganda. Since his ascension to power, the electoral process of Uganda has been fraught with undemocratic irregularities, such as the deficit in the supply of substantive political opposition and the altering of term limits for presidential candidates (Ahluwalia 2016). During the past three election cycles, both the domestic and international communities have criticized the absence of free and fair elections. The most recent Presidential elections took place on February 18, 2016, in which Museveni faced off against Kizza Besigye of the Forum for Democratic Change as his major opponent. In response to Museveni winning the election with over 60 percent of the vote, Besigye complained of electoral fraud, which resulted in him being arrested and detained. Although elections are intended to function as a means of legitimizing a leader's power, this 2016 election cycle in Uganda indicates that Museveni is unlikely to voluntarily vacate the Presidential office in the near future. Therefore, this most recent election is not a positive indication for the trajectory of democracy in Uganda, as electoral improprieties and developmental challenges continue to plague the nation.

Longitudinal Trends in the Six Aspects of Democracy

Figure 1 displays the overall trends among the six indices of democracy in Uganda from 1900 to 2012. The development in Uganda over the past century is depicted through the following indices: *electoral democracy index*, *deliberative component index*, *liberal democracy index*, *participatory component index*, *egalitarian component index*, and *women political empowerment index*. All the indices are presented on a scale ranging from a score of zero to one, where the minimum value is zero, signifying the country receives the lowest score on the components constituting that V-Dem measure, and the maximum value for each of these indices is one.

Figure 1. Development of principles of Democracy in Uganda, 1900-2012



Approaching this figure from a longitudinal perspective, Uganda has experienced significant fluctuations in each of these six components measuring democratic performance. Over time, Uganda has accomplished a relatively high degree of equality amongst diverse social groups, as measured by the *egalitarian component index*. This index addresses the distribution of political power across various sub-populations, including social class, gender, religion, and ethnicity, from an egalitarian perspective. Similarly, Uganda has prevailed in significantly increasing women's opportunities for choice, agency, and participation in society, which is demonstrated through the *women political empowerment index*. For example, this index obtained the highest scores in 2012 at a value of 0.859, which suggests that a high proportion of women possess fundamental civil liberties, engage in open discussions of political issues, participate in civil society organizations, and are represented in formal political positions. In contrast, the

liberal aspect of democracy in Uganda, captured with the *liberal democracy index*, has persisted to be one of the most problematic areas. For instance, on this measure Uganda receives the lowest score in 2012 at 0.274. This index emphasizes the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against the tyranny of both the state and the majority.

Although Uganda experiences nominal improvements in terms of all the indicators, on the *deliberative component index* Uganda demonstrates the most significant progress, as the country advances from a score of 0.013 in 1979 to a score of 0.671 in 2012. The deliberative aspect of democracy is also the most volatile in Uganda, with the country experiencing dramatic advancements and regressions over time as numerous regimes have ascended to power, shifted their policy objectives, and collapsed in the face of opposition and conflict. These fluctuations in the history of deliberative democracy in Uganda suggest that the degree to which political decisions are based on public reasoning focused on the common good have changed over time.

Over the past century, the most conspicuous improvement in the six democracy index trend lines occurs from 1958 to 1963, with Uganda showing relatively high nominal levels of democracy for the following two years as well. Specifically, these advancements correlate with Uganda's transition towards independence from its colonizer Great Britain and early dedication to democratic principles. In contrast, Uganda experiences its most pronounced depression in all the indices in the time period lasting from 1965 until 1979, which reflects the political and economic instability as a result of frequent and violent transfers of power during this period. In fact, this nominal deterioration in democracy aligns with the repressive ruling styles of Milton Obote, the first Ugandan Prime Minister who seized absolute control of governmental power, and Idi Amin, the military chief who expelled Uganda's Asian community and engaged in the torturing and killing of his political opponents (Kiranda and Kamp 2010).

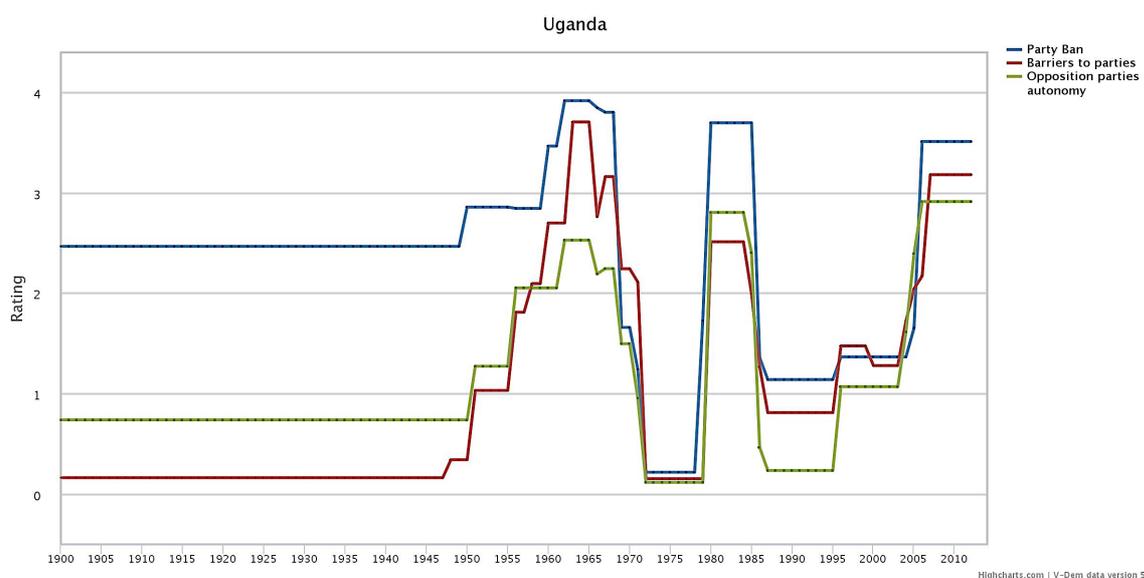
When Amin's reign ended in 1979, Uganda experiences its second major phase of democratic advancements. Since then, Uganda has been achieving progress in its democratic status, as shown through the general positive developments in terms of these indicators. However, Uganda has also encountered occasional setbacks. The most prominent of these impediments occurred in 1986 when Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army acquired power and limited the degree of electoral competition, thus, resulting in a significant deterioration in the *electoral democracy index*. This brief summary of Uganda's democratic components identifies the notable strengths and weaknesses of the country's democratic development over the past century. The following sections of this report will analyze V-Dem data for the aspects of electoral democracy, egalitarian democracy, and political empowerment of

women in order to demonstrate Uganda’s potential for achieving a full-fledged democracy in the heart of sub-Saharan Africa.

Electoral Democracy: The Resurgence of Multiparty Politics?

The analysis of the *electoral democracy index* is important to understanding the overall level of democracy in Uganda over time. The electoral conception of democracy emphasizes the values of freedom of assembly, universal suffrage, and meaningful elections for the chief executive. In addition, this electoral aspect allows citizens to hold leaders accountable for their actions in the political arena. When citizens do not approve of the incumbent’s policies, then they have the power to remove him or her from office through a free and fair electoral process. The variation in the quality of Uganda’s electoral system over time correlates with the nation’s political history, specifically with the transitions of power between different ruling coalitions. Overall, the formal and informal structural mechanisms of the electoral system have prevented Uganda from experiencing high-quality elections. Electoral democracy has the potential to be advanced through increased electoral competition for the electorate’s approval under circumstances when suffrage is extensive, political and civil organizations can operate freely, and elections are clean and not marred by fraud or systematic irregularities.

Figure 2. Development of Selected Electoral Democracy Indicators for Uganda, 1900-2012



A more comprehensive perspective of the variables composing the *electoral democracy index* reveals the magnitude of variation across different regimes in terms of their electoral process, or lack thereof. Figure 2 demonstrates three of the most significant indicators driving the trends in the *electoral democracy index*, and these components include: *party ban*, *barriers to parties*, and *opposition parties autonomy*. All the indices are presented on a scale ranging from a score of zero to four, where the minimum value is zero, signifying the country receives the lowest score on the components constituting that V-Dem measure, and the maximum value for each of these indices is four. Collectively, these three indicators present similar trends in the history of electoral democracy of Uganda in regard to political competition.

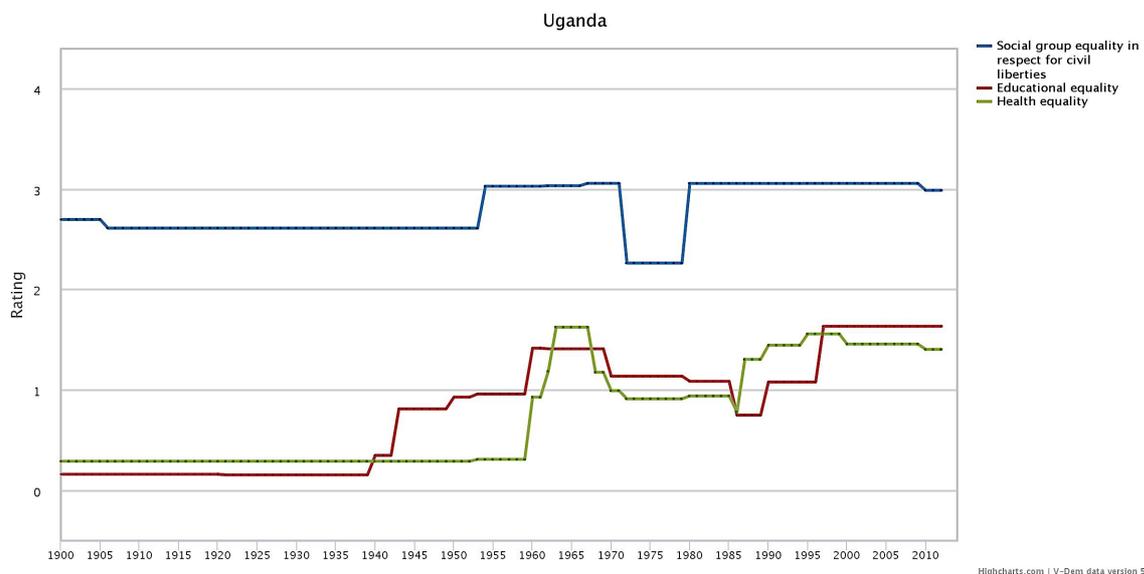
From around 1948 until 1962, Uganda's experience with a democratic electoral system improves as a result of the country's transition toward independence, the formation of political parties, and competition amongst parties for the power to govern the state. As independence approached in 1962, three major parties developed within the political system of the nation, and these included the Bugandan nationalist party of Kabaka Yekka (KY), the Democratic Party, and the Uganda People's Congress (UPC). All of these parties competed in the 1962 post-independence elections, which resulted in KY winning 21 seats in the National Assembly and the UPC's Obote being elected as the country's first prime minister (Kiranda and Kamp 2010).

Also, Uganda's history with a free and fair electoral system deteriorates significantly from 1965 to 1972, and the lack of a robust multiparty political structure persists until 1979. During this period in Uganda's history, the military chief Idi Amin adopted an oppressive ruling style in which he was known to torture and execute his political opponents. For instance, Amin ordered the murders of important Ugandan leaders, such as the Chief Justice of Uganda, the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, Ministers, and public officers including the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University (Kanyehamba 2010). However, a second major period of democratic improvement for Uganda occurs from 1979 to 1980 when Amin's reign ends, and the Tanzanian forces aid Ugandan exiles loyal to the former president Obote to return to power. From 1984 until 1995, Uganda's electoral democratic system experiences a phase of deterioration as a result of the National Resistance Movement seizing power and installing Museveni as president without any form of election or political competition. Finally, the slight progress Uganda achieves in regard to its multiparty system in 1995 could be derived from the new constitution legalizing political parties. Similarly, the referendum in July 2005 that restored multiparty politics resulted in substantial improvements in the competitiveness of the electoral democracy in Uganda.

Egalitarian Democracy: Modest Improvements at Low Levels

In terms of the *egalitarian component index*, Uganda experiences substantial fluctuations over time that parallel the important moments for democratization and democratic reversals in the country's history. This index addresses the distribution of political power across social groups, and it emphasizes the concept that the guarantee of political rights and civil liberties is not always sufficient for equality. Ideally, an egalitarian polity is one that achieves equal representation, participation, protection under the law, and influence over policymaking for all social and political groups. If this equality does not exist within a nation, then it is suggested that the government implement policies to redistribute economic, educational, and health resources in order to enhance political equality. Figure 3 demonstrates three of the most powerful indicators influencing the overall levels of the *egalitarian component index* within Uganda, and these include: *social group equality in respect for civil liberties*, *educational equality*, and *health equality*. All the indices are presented on a scale ranging from a score of zero to four, where the minimum value is zero, signifying the country receives the lowest score on the components constituting that V-Dem measure, and the maximum value for each of these indices is four.

Figure 3: Development of Selected Egalitarian Democracy Indicators for Uganda, 1900-2012



First, the *social group equality in respect for civil liberties* indicator represents the degree to which social groups, as distinguished by language, ethnicity, religion, race, region, or caste, enjoy the same level of civil liberties. From 1900 until 1953, Uganda maintains a relatively moderate

and constant degree of equality between different social groups while under the colonial rule of Great Britain. In 1954, Uganda's diverse social groups experience growing equality in regard to respect for their civil liberties as a result of the foundation of the Democratic Party. Since 1954, however, the country's degree of social equality has been stagnant, except from 1972 until 1980 when social groups did not possess similar levels of civil liberties. During this period, military chief Idi Amin seized power and denied civil liberties to many racial and ethnic groups, particularly Asians.

In August 1972, President Idi Amin required the expulsion of Uganda's Asian population within 90 days (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). Amin justified this mandate through the description of a personal enlightenment in which God ordered him to rid the nation of all Indians. This ethnic cleansing was instigated and propelled through propaganda endeavors that were broadcasted at the national level. Indians turned into the scapegoats for the poor economic performance under the Amin regime, and they were labeled as greedy, cheating, and conspiring. In addition, the Ugandan soldiers engaged in intense actions of brutality and savagery against the Asian population, and the Amin regime accumulated the businesses and property of the fleeing Indians. During this period of expulsion, Indians did not enjoy the same level of civil liberties as other ethnic groups, which accounts for the low degree of equality between social groups.

The *educational equality* and *health equality* indicators capture the extent to which high quality basic education and health are provided to citizens that would ultimately enable them to exercise their basic political rights. Therefore, democratic institutions are inextricably linked to health and education outcomes through the potential alleviation of social disparities that results from greater political voice and participation (Ruger 2005). Uganda has achieved slight improvements in its provision of educational and health services, but the country has failed to implement policies that have established substantial progress in regard to equality. In the early years of the colonial era, education and health equality in Uganda was extremely low. However, the country's expansion and development of its educational and health facilities in rural regions increased the degree of equality until the late 1960s (Kiranda and Kamp 2010). Then, from about 1970 until 1986, Uganda exhibits patterns of deteriorating equality, which is correlated with the frequent and violent turnovers of power. This shifting of control over state resources resulted in a lack of attention to socioeconomic, ethnic/racial, and gender disparities in regard to access to educational and health services. Since 1989, Uganda has gradually been achieving progress due to aid from international NGOs, but the degree of equality still remains relatively low overall.

Furthermore, the Universal Primary Education program was introduced in 1997 as a means of improving the enrollment and attainment in primary schooling, and it was effective

according to the *educational equality* trend line in Figure 3. Originally, the program only provided free education for four children per family, but President Museveni reformed the program to allow all children of all families to have access to primary education (Grogan 2008). The low levels of primary level education attainment that persist in Uganda may be the consequence of the poor quality of education, untrained teachers, improper classroom settings, and low student achievement

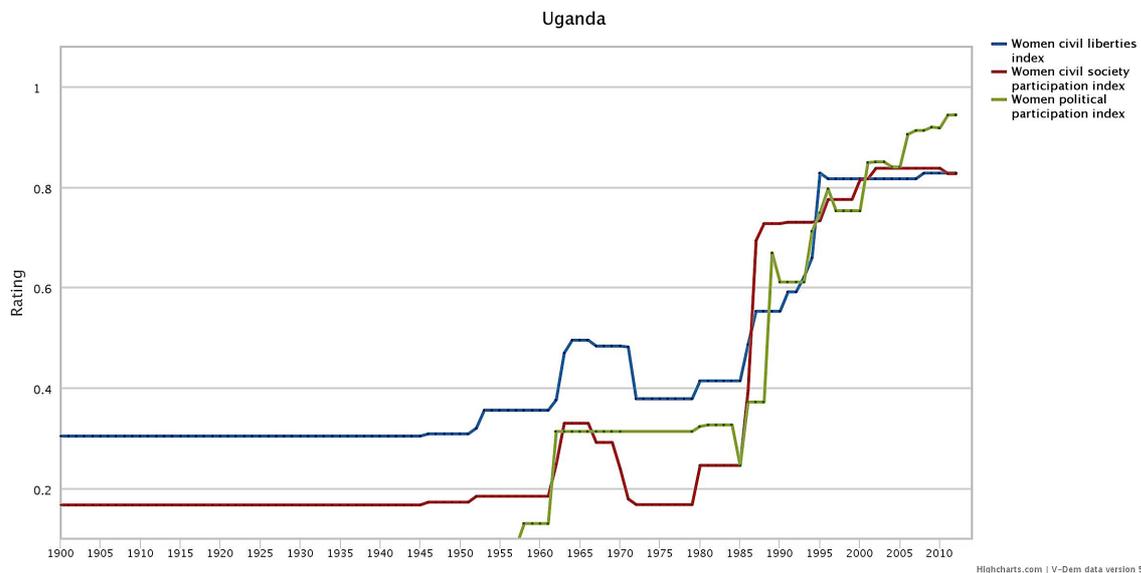
In regard to the *health equality* indicator, it is important to note that the health sector of Uganda has been experiencing major reforms over the past three decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, the government was dedicated to reconstructing the devastated health system through focusing on primary health care services (Kiwauka et al. 2008). For example, the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package was introduced in 2000 with the purpose of improving service access and utilization through providing all Ugandan citizens with an essential health care package, opening new health centers, and increasing drug availability. Although the health system has experienced significant progress in terms of development and the economy has realized positive growth, Uganda has not made significant improvements in providing an egalitarian health system. This inequality in access to services continues to be a prominent concern, as demonstrated by the lack of substantial growth in *health equality* trends in the figure.

Women's Political Empowerment: Exceptional Scores through Fresh Legislation

To gain a deeper understanding of the democratic processes in Uganda, the *women political empowerment index* illustrates the substantial growth in the political capacity of women, leading to greater choice, agency, and participation in society decision-making. This index incorporates the three equally-weighted dimensions of fundamental civil liberties, women's open discussion of political issues and participation in civil society organizations, and the descriptive representation of women in formal political positions. Thus, Figure 4 portrays three variables comprising the *women political empowerment index* within Uganda, and these components include: *women civil liberties index*, *women civil society participation index*, and *women political participation index*. The scales of these indicators range from a minimum score of zero, representing a low degree of women's political

empowerment, to a maximum score of one, representing a high degree of women’s political empowerment.

Figure 4: Development for Selected Women’s Political Empowerment Indicators for Uganda, 1900-2012



Over time, these three indicators illustrate parallel patterns in regard to the overall political empowerment of women in Uganda. The first major period of growth in women’s empowerment occurred from about 1961 until 1965. Historically, women began organizing and exercising their political power prior to independence. In 1960, the Uganda Council of Women national conference passed a resolution advocating for laws regarding marriage, divorce, and inheritance be recorded in a written form. This council also pressed for legal reforms granting women greater equality in terms of social power throughout the first decade of independence (Tripp 2000). However, Uganda experienced a trough in the degree of women’s empowerment lasting from 1966 until 1985 as a result of repeated coup d’états (Tamale 1999). President Amin’s aspiration for absolute control resulted in him crippling or destroying potential opposition groups, including women’s rights associations. For example, Amin passed a formal decree in 1978 officially banning all women’s organizations, such as the Mothers’ Union and Young Women’s Christian Association (Tripp 2000). During this period of violence and frequent turnovers of power, the political and economic instability adversely affected women. While men dominated the political and business arenas, women were subjected to the domesticated private sphere. In addition to being deprived of most of the economic opportunities to men, women

also had to endure the erosion of public services and infrastructure that reduced access to medical facilities, schools, and markets.

The expansion in women's political empowerment returned to Uganda from 1985 until 1989, and this growing degree of women's participation is on a constant upward trend in the nation. This improvement can be attributed to the transition from years of dictatorship under Obote and Amin to the National Resistance Movement's administration and Museveni's emphasis on gender equity as a means of spurring Uganda's development (Tamale 1999). Museveni capitalized on this promise through establishing the Ministry of Women in Development, nominating women for highly visible governmental positions, and increasing women's participation and representation in legislative assemblies. For example, the Ugandan electoral process operates under the quota system of reserved seats in single-member districts, which mandates a minimum number of seats reserved for women in order to improve women's representation. In addition, the 1989 affirmative action guaranteed women a minimum of 39 seats, one from each district, in parliament. Voters in each district elect a woman member of parliament from a list of all-female candidates.

Specifically, the *women's political participation* indicator is important to analyze in order to understand Uganda's history of democracy as it pertains to women. Women play a substantial role in the politics of Uganda, and this achievement is primarily due to the 1989 affirmative action interventions and the quota system that favor women's participation. This is evidenced through the significant escalation in the number of Ugandan women participating in the political arena from 1988 to 1989. Moreover, the Constitution of Uganda of 1995 contains several provisions regarding the principle of nondiscrimination, and the Equal Opportunities Commission was established in 2007 as a means to ensure the equal rights of men and women (International Federation for Human Rights 2012).

Conclusion: Potential for Democratic Progress

Uganda received its independence in 1962 from its colonizer Great Britain, in a period when the majority of African colonies were on a parallel trajectory towards greater autonomy. Escaping British control, Ugandans demonstrated a strong desire to support democratic principles, as the nation's founding elections signified a shift from colonial rule to a promising electoral government. However, Uganda's political history is complex and dynamic due to the government's frequent transfers of power through military coup d'états, which resulted in

military leaders instilling fear amongst citizens, suppressing the democratic rights of free expression and free association, and eliminating the threat of political opposition through extralegal mechanisms.

Uganda has experienced many varieties of autocracy since its existence as an independent state, eventually to construct the limited multiparty political system that exists today. Since assuming power in 1986, President Museveni has maintained control over the state, and his leadership can be accredited with achieving positive fundamental changes to democratic governance in Uganda. Although the nation has attained progress in electoral standards, the element of competition is an evident weakness in the democratic system. As evidenced by the most recent 2016 elections, Museveni experiences a severe incumbent advantage through his ability to access state resources, place limitations on the media, and use the justice system to curb his opposition (Ahluwalia 2016). There exist domestic and international criticisms of Ugandan elections in regard to the atmosphere of intimidation and lack of independence in the nation's electoral body. Overall, as this report demonstrates through V-Dem data, Uganda has suffered through periods of political and economic hardships, but the nation has potential to advance its democratic status through the development of its multiparty political system.

Appendix

Indicators included in Figure 1

Electoral democracy index (v2x_polyarchy)

Question: To what extent is the ideal of electoral democracy in its fullest sense achieved?

Clarifications: The electoral principle of democracy seeks to embody the core value of making rulers responsive to citizens, achieved through electoral competition for the electorate's approval under circumstances when suffrage is extensive; political and civil society organizations can operate freely; elections are clean and not marred by fraud or systematic irregularities; and elections affect the composition of the chief executive of the country. In between elections, there is freedom of expression and an independent media capable of presenting alternative views on matters of political relevance.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the average of, on the one hand, the sum of the indices measuring freedom of association (thick) (v2x_frassoc_thick), suffrage (v2x_suffr), clean elections (v2xel_frefair), elected executive (de jure) (v2x_accex) and freedom of expression (v2x_freexp_thick); and, on the other, the five-way interaction between those indices.

Liberal democracy index (v2x_libdem)

Question: To what extent is the ideal of liberal democracy achieved?

Clarifications: The liberal principle of democracy emphasizes the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority. The liberal model takes a “negative” view of political power insofar as it judges the quality of democracy by the limits placed on government. This is achieved by constitutionally protected civil liberties, strong rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power. To make this a measure of liberal democracy, the index also takes the level of electoral democracy into account.

Aggregation: The index is aggregated using this formula: $v2x_libdem = 45.25 * v2x_polyarchy^{1.6} + .25 * v2x_liberal + .5 * v2x_polyarchy^{1.6} * v2x_liberal$.

Deliberative component index (v2xdl_delib)

Question: To what extent is the deliberative principle of democracy achieved?

Clarifications: The deliberative principle of democracy focuses on the process by which decisions are reached in a polity. A deliberative process is one in which public reasoning focused on the

common good motivates political decisions—as contrasted with emotional appeals, solidary attachments, parochial interests, or coercion. According to this principle, democracy requires more than an aggregation of existing preferences. There should also be respectful dialogue at all levels—from preference formation to final decision—among informed and competent participants who are open to persuasion. To measure these features of a polity we try to determine the extent to which political elites give public justifications for their positions on matters of public policy, justify their positions in terms of the public good, acknowledge and respect counter-arguments; and how wide the range of consultation is at elite levels.

Aggregation: The index is formed by point estimates drawn from a Bayesian factor analysis model including the following indicators: reasoned justification (v2dlreason), common good justification (v2dlcommon), respect for counterarguments (v2dlcountr), range of consultation (v2dlconstl), and engaged society (v2dlengage).

Egalitarian component index (v2x_egal)

Question: To what extent is the egalitarian principle achieved?

Clarifications: The egalitarian principle of democracy holds that material and immaterial inequalities inhibit the exercise of formal rights and liberties, and diminish the ability of citizens from all social groups to participate. Egalitarian democracy is achieved when 1) rights and freedoms of individuals are protected equally across all social groups; and 2) resources are distributed equally across all social groups. The distribution of resources must be sufficient to ensure that citizens' basic needs are met in a way that enables their meaningful participation. Additionally, an equal distribution of resources ensures the potential for greater equality in the distribution of power.

Aggregation: This index is formed by averaging the following indices: equal protection index (v2xeg_eqprotec) and equal distribution of resources (v2xeg_eqdr).

Participatory component index (v2x_partip)

Question: To what extent is the participatory principle achieved?

Clarifications: The participatory principle of democracy emphasizes active participation by citizens in all political processes, electoral and non-electoral. It is motivated by uneasiness about a bedrock practice of electoral democracy: delegating authority to representatives. Thus, direct rule by citizens is preferred, wherever practicable. This model of democracy thus takes suffrage for granted, emphasizing engagement in civil society organizations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies.

Aggregation: This index is formed by averaging the following indices: civil society participation (v2x_cspart), direct popular vote (v2xdd_dd), elected local government power (v2xel_locelec), and elected regional government power (v2xel_regelec).

Women political empowerment index (v2x_gender)

Question: How politically empowered are women?

Clarifications: Women's political empowerment is defined as a process of increasing capacity for women, leading to greater choice, agency, and participation in societal decision-making. It is understood to incorporate three equally-weighted dimensions: fundamental civil liberties, women's open discussion of political issues and participation in civil society organizations, and the descriptive representation of women in formal political positions.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the average of women's civil liberties index (v2x_gencl), women's civil society participation index (v2x_gencs), and women's political participation index (v2x_genpp).

Indicators included in Figure 2

Party ban (v2psparban)

Question: Are any parties banned?

Clarifications: This does not apply to parties that are barred from competing for failing to meet registration requirements or support thresholds.

Responses:

- 0: Yes. All parties except the state-sponsored party (and closely allied parties) are banned.
- 1: Yes. Elections are non-partisan or there are no officially recognized parties.
- 2: Yes. Many parties are banned.
- 3: Yes. But only a few parties are banned.
- 4: No. No parties are officially banned.

Barriers to parties (v2psbars)

Question: How restrictive are the barriers to forming a party?

Clarifications: Barriers include legal requirements such as requirements for membership or financial deposits, as well as harassment.

Responses:

- 0: Parties are not allowed.

- 1: It is impossible, or virtually impossible, for parties not affiliated with the government to form (legally).
- 2: There are significant obstacles (e.g. party leaders face high levels of regular political harassment by authorities).
- 3: There are modest barriers (e.g. party leaders face occasional political harassment by authorities).
- 4: There are no substantial barriers.

Opposition parties autonomy (v2psoppaut)

Question: Are opposition parties independent and autonomous of the ruling regime?

Clarifications: An opposition party is any party that is not part of the government, i.e., that has no control over the executive.

Responses:

- 0: Opposition parties are not allowed.
- 1: There are no autonomous, independent opposition parties. Opposition parties are either selected or co-opted by the ruling regime.
- 2: At least some opposition parties are autonomous and independent of the ruling regime.
- 3: Most significant opposition parties are autonomous and independent of the ruling regime.
- 4: All opposition parties are autonomous and independent of the ruling regime.

Indicators included in Figure 3

Social group equality in respect for civil liberties (v2clsocgrp)

Question: Do all social groups, as distinguished by language, ethnicity, religion, race, region, or caste, enjoy the same level of civil liberties, or are some groups generally in a more favorable position?

Clarifications: Here, civil liberties are understood to include access to justice, private property rights, freedom of movement, and freedom from forced labor.

Responses:

- 0: Members of some social groups enjoy much fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 1: Members of some social groups enjoy substantially fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 2: Members of some social groups enjoy moderately fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 3: Members of some social groups enjoy slightly fewer civil liberties than the general population.

4: Members of all salient social groups enjoy the same level of civil liberties.

Educational equality (v2peedueq)

Question: To what extent is high quality basic education guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens?

Clarifications: Basic education refers to ages typically between 6 and 16 years of age but this varies slightly among countries.

Responses:

0: Extreme. Provision of high quality basic education is extremely unequal and at least 75 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

1: Unequal. Provision of high quality basic education is extremely unequal and at least 25 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

2: Somewhat equal. Basic education is relatively equal in quality but ten to 25 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

3: Relatively equal. Basic education is overall equal in quality but five to ten percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that probably undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

4: Equal. Basic education is equal in quality and less than five percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that probably undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

Health equality (v2pehealth)

Question: To what extent is high quality basic healthcare guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic political rights as adult citizens?

Clarifications: Poor-quality healthcare can make citizens unable to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens by failing to adequately treat preventable and treatable illnesses that render them unable to work, participate in social or political organizations, or vote (where voting is allowed).

Responses:

0: Extreme. Because of poor-quality healthcare, at least 75 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined. 1: Unequal. Because of poor-quality

healthcare, at least 25 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.

2: Somewhat equal. Because of poor-quality healthcare, ten to 25 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.

3: Relatively equal. Basic health care is overall equal in quality but because of poor quality healthcare, five to ten percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.

4: Equal. Basic health care is equal in quality and less than five percent (%) of citizens cannot exercise their basic political rights as adult citizens.

Indicators included in Figure 4

Women civil liberties index (v2x_genc1)

Question: Do women have the ability to make meaningful decisions in key areas of their lives?

Clarifications: Women's civil liberties are understood to include freedom of domestic movement, the right to private property, freedom from forced labor, and access to justice.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for freedom of domestic movement for women (v2cldmovew), freedom from forced labor for women (v2clslavef), property rights for women (v2clprptyw), and access to justice for women (v2clacjstw).

Women civil society participation index (v2x_gencs)

Question: Do women have the ability to express themselves and to form and participate in groups?

Clarifications: Women's civil society participation is understood to include open discussion of political issues, participation in civil society organizations, and representation in the ranks of journalists.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for freedom of discussion for women (v2cldiscw), CSO women's participation (v2csgender), and female journalists (v2mefemjrn).

Women political empowerment index (v2x_genpp)

Question: Are women descriptively represented in formal political positions?

Clarifications: Women's political participation is understood to include women's descriptive representation in the legislature and an equal share in the overall distribution of power.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the average of the indicators for lower chamber female legislators (v2lgfemleg, standardized) and power distributed by gender (v2pepwrgen).

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