



GUIDELINES FOR ELECTION OF WOMEN'S COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES VILLAGE TO DISTRICT LEVELS

1.0 LAW APPLICABLE

These guidelines shall apply to the election of Women's Councils and Committees Village to District Levels. Additional information and clarifications shall be issued from time to time during the course of electoral process.

The election of the Women's Councils and Committees shall be guided by the following main laws:

- a) The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 [As amended];
- b) The Electoral Commission Act Cap. 140 [ECA] (as amended);
- c) The Political Parties and Organization Act. 2005 (PPOA) as amended;
- d) The Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005 [PAR – EA] (as amended);
- e) The National Women's Council Act Cap. 318 (as amended);
- f) The Local Governments Act, Cap 243 (as amended); and
- g) National Women's Council (Councils and Committees) (Elections), Regulations, 2011.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines shall apply to compilation of Village Women's Council Registers; display of the Women's Council Registers; nomination of candidates; campaigns; and voting for Women's Committees.

3.0 COMPOSITION AND HIERARCHY OF WOMEN COUNCILS (THE ELECTORATE)

- (a) This section lists members of Women's Councils who will participate in the elections of Women's Committees. The Ex- Official members are not listed because they do not participate in elections.
- (b) The Village Women's Council shall consist of women of eighteen (18) years or above, who are citizens and reside and are willing to be members of the Village Women's Council.
- (c) The Parish or Ward Women's Council shall consist of all the members of the Village Women's Committees in the parish or ward.
- (d) The Sub-county/Town or Division Women's Council (electoral college) shall consist of :-
 - (i) Members of the parish or ward women's committees in the Sub-county/Town or Division; and
 - (ii) A representative of Women with Disabilities elected from among the female Persons with Disabilities in the Sub-county/Town or Division through their structures.
- (e) The District/City Women Council (electoral college) shall consist of:
 - (i) The Chairpersons of the Sub-county/Town or Division of Women's Council; and
 - (ii) A representative of Women with Disabilities elected from among the female Persons with Disabilities in the District/City through their structures.

4.0 COMPOSITION OF WOMEN'S COMMITTEES

- (a) Composition of Women's Committees at the Village, Parish/Ward and Sub-county/Town or Division Levels.

There is established in respect of each Women's Council at Village, Parish/Ward, Sub-county/Town or Division a Women's Committee (elective positions) which shall consist of the following:

- (i) Chairperson;
- (ii) Vice Chairperson;
- (iii) Secretary;
- (iv) Publicity Secretary; and
- (v) Secretary for Finance.

(b) Composition of the District Women's Committee (elective positions)

The composition of the District Women's Committee shall consist of the following:

- (i) Chairperson
- (ii) Vice Chairperson
- (iii) Publicity Secretary,
- (iv) Secretary for Finance

NB: The position of Secretary is not elective at district level.

5.0 THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

(a) Election Officials

i. District Returning Officer (RO)

The District Returning Officer shall be responsible for all election activities in the district.

ii. Sub-county Election Official (SEO)

The SEO shall conduct nomination of candidates and elections at Sub-county/Town or Division level, supervise the Parish Election Officers (PEOs) within the Sub-county or Town or Division, distribute election materials to and collect materials and election results from PEOs.

iii. Parish Election Official (PEO)

The PEO shall conduct voter education on the electoral process within the Parish, receive and distribute election materials to VEOs in the parish, retrieve materials and results from VEO and submit to the SEO, conduct nomination of candidates for village elections, conduct election activities at Parish/Ward level and supervise the VEOs.

iv. Village Election Official (VEO)

The village election official shall register the willing women residents (citizens), display the compiled Village Women's Council Registers and conduct voting day activities.

He/she shall carry out voter education to the electorate, candidates and/or candidates' agents present on the procedure of voting using these guidelines.

v. Polling Assistant

The Polling Assistant shall assist the VEO (Presiding Officer) on voting day.

vi. Election Orderly Officer

The Election Orderly Officer (EOO) shall ensure that voters line up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol in an orderly way to ease counting, and that polling is peaceful.

(b) Compilation of village women council registers

The Electoral Commission shall designate a period during which willing village women residents will register to participate in women's councils/committees elections. For avoidance of doubt, registration shall be conducted between 7:00 am and 6:00 pm during the designated period.

Eligible and willing women residents shall turn up in person at the registration center within the village to register.

(c) Qualifications for registration on the village women’s council register:-

A person to be registered in the Village Women’s Council Register shall be:-

- (i) willing to be a member of the village women’s council;
- (ii) a female;
- (iii) a registered voter;
- (iv) a citizen of Uganda;
- (v) at least eighteen (18) years of age ; and
- (vi) ordinarily resident in the village of registration.

(d) Information required for registration

Persons appearing for registration shall give the following details to the registration Village Election Official (VEO):

- (i) Names;
- (ii) National ID Number or Voter Number or Application ID Number;
- (iii) Age; and
- (iv) Village of Residence.

(e) Materials to be used for registration of residents.

The willing village women residents shall be registered in **register books** provided by the Commission.

There shall be two registers for the registration of residents compiled as follows:

- (i) the **Village Council Register** for purposes of electing the village chairperson and approval of members of the village executive committee; and
- (ii) the **Village Women’s Council Register** for purposes of electing the Village Women’s Committee.

NB: The willing women residents will register in both registers and participate in both elections. All registrations are free of charge.

At the end of the registration exercise, any spaces left in the register books should be crossed out, counter signed and the total registered residents recorded on the front cover of the register book.

6.0 DISPLAY OF THE VOTER’S REGISTERS

The Village Women’s Council Register shall be displayed for **two days** at the designated public/open place within the village and will be open for public inspection free of charge between 7:00 am and 6:00 pm.

The purpose of the display exercise is to:

- (a) allow voters to verify their particulars on the registers such as names, national ID number, age, sex, village of residence; and
- (b) enable voters to raise complaints that may lead to removal of those who have died; non-citizens; those who do not reside within the village and those below 18 years of age, from the register.

HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS

- (a) The Village Election Official (VEO) shall record the complaints raised on a form provided by the Commission.
- (b) After closure of the display exercise, the VEO shall transmit the form to the Parish Complaints Committee which shall convene to resolve the complaints raised in the respective villages.
- (c) The Parish Complaints Committee shall comprise of the Parish Election Official (PEO) as the chairperson and VEOs of the villages within the parish as members.
- (d) The Commission shall issue a separate guideline for handling of election complaints.

7.0 NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO VILLAGE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

- (a) The Electoral Commission shall publish in the Gazette and the local media nomination days, place and the time when persons who wish to stand for election at Women's Councils shall be nominated.
- (b) Aspiring candidates for election to Village Women's Committees shall pick nomination forms from the **Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer)** of the Parish/Ward in which the village is located.
- (c) The Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall conduct nominations at the Parish/Ward.
- (d) Nomination of candidates may be made by a political party/organization sponsoring a candidate or by a candidate standing for elections as an independent candidate without being sponsored by a political party or political organization.
- (e) Nomination forms for candidates sponsored by political parties/organizations shall be endorsed by the sponsoring political party/organization.
- (f) Political parties/organizations shall furnish the Commission with names of persons authorized to endorse the nomination forms before nominations commence.
- (g) No person shall propose or second more than one candidate for nomination for the same office

8.0 QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE VILLAGE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

- (a) An aspiring candidate for any office on the Women's Committee shall be a female ordinarily resident in the village, aged eighteen (18) years or above and a citizen of Uganda.
- (b) An aspiring candidate shall be registered on the Village Women's Council register.
- (c) No academic qualifications shall be required.
- (d) No nomination fee shall be required.

9.0 NOMINATION PROCEDURE

- (a) The aspiring candidate accompanied by her Proposer and Secunder shall present two copies of the nomination form to the Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer). The proposer and seconder shall be registered voters in the Village Women's Council Register. The Nominating Officer shall ensure that no person proposes and seconds more than one candidate by marking on the register, persons who have proposed and seconded a given candidate.
- (b) The Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall check the nomination papers to ensure the aspiring candidate has filled them properly.
- (c) The Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall check whether the aspiring candidate, proposer and seconder appear on the Village Women's Council Register.
- (d) If the aspiring candidate is standing as an Independent, she shall pick a symbol from the list of symbols approved by the Commission and printed on the nomination control form.
- (e) The Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall fill the **nomination control form** and the aspiring candidate shall sign/thumb print against her particulars on the nomination control form.
- (f) The Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall endorse on both nomination forms, declare the candidate duly nominated and hand over one copy of the nomination form to the nominated candidate.
- (g) If an aspiring candidate does not fulfill the requirements and is not nominated, the Parish Election Official (Nominating Officer) shall write the words **NOT NOMINATED and initial** at the top of the front page of both nomination papers. One copy of the nomination paper shall be returned to the aspiring candidate. **The nomination control form shall not be filled in this case.**

10.0 SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF NOMINATED CANDIDATES TO VILLAGE ELECTION OFFICIALS.

The PEO shall submit the **nomination control forms** which contain the names and other particulars of all nominated candidates for each office and for each village to the VEO of that village before the voting day. The VEO shall keep the forms and use them during the election and return them to the PEO immediately after the election.

11.0 CAMPAIGNS

- (a) A period shall be designated by the Commission during which nominated candidates shall campaign.
- (b) Campaigns shall be conducted between 9:00 a.m and 6:00pm on each of the appointed campaign days.

12.0 VOTING

- (a) The Electoral Commission shall, by notice in the Gazette and local media, appoint a day for elections at each level.
- (b) Election of the members of Village Women Committee shall be by the electorate lining behind the nominated candidates, representatives, portraits or symbols.
- (c) Voting shall take place in a public/open place within the village.
- (d) After declaration of the results for each position on the Village Women's Committee, the VEO (Presiding Officer) shall fill in Form WE 1 for each position.

13.0 VOTING DAY PROGRAM

The following program shall guide the flow of activities on polling day:-

- 9:00 am -11:00 am : Verification of voters by the Presiding Officer;
- 11:00 am -11:30 am : Voter education and briefing of voters on voting procedures by the Presiding Officer;
- 11:30 am -2:30 pm : Voting by the electorate lining up and counting of votes; and
- 2:30 pm – 6:00 pm : Filling of Forms and Declaration of Results.

14.0 THE VOTING PROCESS AND VOTE COUNTING

- (a) The Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) shall commence the voting process only after at least five (5) persons who are entitled to vote are present.
- (b) The Commission shall provide an Official Report Book for documenting receipt of all election materials, complaints lodged and any incidents that may have occurred, and action taken during the voting process
- (c) An election to a Women's Committee shall be conducted between the hours of 9:00 am and 6:00 pm.
- (d) Election for each office of a Women's Committee shall take place consecutively in this order:
 - (i) Chairperson;
 - (ii) Vice chairperson;
 - (iii) Secretary;
 - (iv) Publicity Secretary; and
 - (v) Secretary for Finance.
- (e) The candidates or the representatives or portraits or symbols shall be positioned facing the same direction and in such a way that the distance between any two of them is about two (2) meters.
- (f) Members of the Village Women Council entitled to vote shall line up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol.

- (g) The Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) together with the Polling Assistant and Election Orderly Officer shall count the number of voters lining up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol.
- (h) Voters shall remain in the lines until the Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) declares end of counting for a given office.
- (i) The Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) may order for a recount of the voters (votes) where there is a complaint presented to him/her by a person entitled to vote at that election and he/she is satisfied that it is not a frivolous complaint, before making the declaration at the completion of the counting process.
- (j) The Village Election Officer (presiding officer) shall fill **Form WE 1** by recording the number of votes counted in the line for each candidate and for each office and declare the candidate who has obtained the largest number of votes the winner for the office. Copies of Form WE 1 will be given to candidates or candidates agents present.
- (k) When voting for all the elective offices in a Women's Committee is concluded, the VEO (Presiding Officer) shall fill the Declaration of Election Results (**Form WE2**)
- (l) Each candidate may appoint an agent to oversee the conduct of polling and counting of votes.

15.0 SUBMISSION OF RETURNS FOR THE VILLAGE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE ELECTION TO THE PARISH ELECTION OFFICIAL

After closure of the election at the village, the VEO (Presiding Officer) shall immediately submit the following documents to the PEO:-

- (a) Duly filled Forms WE 1 and WE 2 for the village;
- (b) The Nomination Control Forms for the village; and
- (c) The Village Women Council Register Book.

16.0 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE PARISH OR WARD WOMEN'S COMMITTEE.

The Parish or Ward Election Official shall:

- (a) Receive Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and the Nomination Control Forms from the VEO.
- (b) File Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and Nomination Control Forms for all the villages in the parish/ward in the file folder provided by the Commission
- (c) Compile a Parish/Ward Women's Council register by copying the names and particulars of the Village Women Committee members on each Form **WE 2** into the parish/ward register book.
- (d) Display the Parish/Ward Women Council register at a public/open place within the parish for the two days appointed by the Commission.
- (e) Issue nomination forms to aspiring candidates for elective offices at the Parish/Ward level.
- (f) Conduct nomination of candidates at Parish/Ward level and fill the Parish Nomination Control Forms for each elective office.
- (g) File the parish Nomination Forms and Nomination Control Forms in the file provided by the Commission.
- (h) Conduct voting by members of the Parish/Ward Women's Council (electoral college) lining up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol for the five (5) positions in the Parish/Ward Women's Committee at Parish/Ward level. The elective positions are described in paragraph 4.0 of this guideline.
- (i) Fill Forms WE 1 and WE 2 accordingly
- (j) File the duly filled parish/ward Forms WE 1 and WE 2 together with village WE 1 and WE 2
- (k) Immediately after the election, submit the file containing nomination documents and the file containing election documents for both Village and Parish/Ward elections to the Sub-county Election Official.

17.0 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COUNTY/TOWN OR DIVISION WOMEN'S COMMITTEE.

At the Sub-county/Town or Division level, the Sub-county Election Officer (SEO) shall:

- (a) Receive Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and the Nomination Control Forms from the PEO.
- (b) File Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and Nomination Control Forms for all the parishes or wards in the Sub-county/Town or Division in the file folder provided by the Commission
- (c) Compile a Sub-county/Town or Division Women Council register by copying the names and particulars of the Parish Women Committee members on each Form **WE 2** into the Sub-county/Town or Division register book.
- (d) Display the Sub-county/Town or Division Women Council Register at a public/open place within the Sub-county/Town or Division for the two days appointed by the Commission.
- (e) Issue nomination forms to aspiring candidates for elective offices at the Sub-county/Town or Division level.
- (f) Conduct nomination of candidates at the Sub-county/Town or Division level and fill the Sub-county/Town or Division Nomination Control Forms for each elective office.
- (g) File the Sub-county/Town or Division Nomination Forms and Nomination Control Forms in the file provided by the Commission.
- (h) Conduct voting by members of the Sub-county/Town or Division Women's Council (Electoral College) lining up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol for the five (5) positions in the Sub-county/Town or Division women's committee at the Sub-county/Town or Division level on voting day. **The elective positions are described in paragraph 4.0 of this guideline.**
- (i) Fill Forms **WE 1** and **WE 2**, accordingly.
- (j) File the duly filled Sub-county/Town or Division Forms **WE 1** and **WE 2** together with parish or ward WE 1 and WE 2.
- (k) Immediately after the election, submit the file containing nomination documents and the file containing election documents to the District/City Returning Officer.

18.0 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT/CITY WOMEN'S COMMITTEE.

(a) Elective offices in the District/city Women's Committee

The following are the four (4) elective offices for the District Women Committee:-

- (i) Chairperson;
- (ii) Vice Chairperson;
- (iii) Publicity Secretary; and
- (iv) Secretary for Finance.

(b) Mode of Election of Members of District/City Women's Committee

The mode of elections for District Women's Committee shall be by secret ballot

(c) At the District/City level, the Returning Officer shall:

- (i) Receive Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and the Nomination Control Forms from the SEOs.
- (ii) File Forms **WE 1, WE 2** and Nomination Control Forms for all the Sub-county/Town or Division in the file folder provided by the Commission
- (iii) Compile a District/City Women's Council register by copying the names and particulars of the Sub-county/Town or Division Women Committee members on each Form **WE 2** into the District/City register book.

- (iv) Display the District/City Women's Council Register at a public/open place within the District/City for the two (2) days appointed by the Commission.
- (v) Issue nomination forms to aspiring candidates for elective offices at the District/City level.
- (vi) Conduct nomination of candidates at the District/City level and fill the District/City Nomination Control Forms for each elective office.
- (vii) File the District/City Nomination Forms and Nomination Control Forms in the file provided by the Commission.
- (viii) Conduct voting for the four (4) positions in the District/City Women's Committee at the District/City level by secret ballot.
- (ix) Fill Forms **WE 1** and **WE 2** accordingly.
- (x) File the duly filled the District/City **Forms WE 1** and **WE 2**.
- (xi) Immediately, after the election submit the file containing nomination documents and the file containing election documents to the Commission Headquarters.

19.0 OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

The offences and penalties applicable to the election of Women's Councils and Committees are prescribed under Regulation 28 of the National Women's Council (Councils and Committees) (Elections), Regulations, 2011.

The offences and penalties under the foregoing named sections include the following:

A person who:

- a) forges, fraudulently defaces or fraudulently destroys any election return, records or official mark on any election return or record;
- b) bribes or attempts to bribe any voter in a Women's Council with an intention of soliciting for her vote;
- c) engages in any sectarian practices with intention of soliciting for votes;
- d) corruptly offers to an elector any food, drink, refreshment or provisions for the purpose of corruptly influencing the person to vote in any manner at a Women's Council elections;
- e) makes use of or threatens to use force, violence or restraint, or inflicts physical or psychological injury or harm against any person for the purpose of influencing the person to vote in any manner at the Women's Council;
- f) gives or lends or promises to procure any money, gift, loan, benefit or valuable consideration to an elector in order to induce any elector to vote or refrain from voting;
- g) accepts any money, gifts, benefits, or any valuable consideration from any Candidate for purposes of voting such a Candidate or influencing other voters to vote that Candidate;

commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two (2) years and, in addition to the imprisonment, to be disqualified for five years from the date of her conviction, from holding an office on any Women's Committee or being a member of any Women's Council other than a Cell or Village Women's Council.



Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon
CHAIRPERSON, ELECTORAL COMMISSION