



THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Date: 1st March, 2022

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTION OF WOMEN'S COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES FROM VILLAGE TO DISTRICT LEVELS, 2022

1.0 LAWS APPLICABLE

These guidelines shall apply to the election of Women's Councils and Committees from Village to District Level. 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, 18 of 2005 (PPOA) 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.
- h) The Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020 (S1 83/2020)

2.0 SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines shall apply to compilation of 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 of age or above, who are citizens, ordinarily residents in the respective Villages and are willing to be members of Village Women 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division Women's Council (electoral college) shall consist of:

- (i) Members of the parish or ward women's committees in the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division; and
 - (ii) A representative of Women with Disabilities elected from among the female Persons with Disabilities in the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division through their structures.
- (e) The District/City Women Council (electoral college) shall consist of:
- (i) The Chairpersons of the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division 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, City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division Levels.

There is established in respect of each Women's Council at Village, Parish/Ward, Sub-county/Town, Municipal Division or City 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/City Women's Committee (elective positions)
- The composition of the District/City 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/city level.

5.0 THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

5.1 Election Officials

i. District Returning Officer (RO)

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

ii. Sub-county Election Official (SEO)

The SEO shall conduct nomination of candidates, voter education and elections at Village, Parish, City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division level, supervise the Parish Election Officers (PEOs) within the City Division, Sub-county, or Town or Municipal Division, assist in training Village Election Officials (VEOs) and other polling officials, distribute election materials to and collect materials and election results from PEOs and monitoring of electoral activities within the Sub-county.

iii. Parish Election Official (PEO)

The PEO shall conduct voter education on the electoral process within the Parish/Ward, receive and distribute election materials to VEOs in the Parish/Ward, retrieve materials and results from the VEO and submit to the SEO, assist in conducting nomination of candidates for village elections, conduct and monitor electoral 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) to count voters in the line and filling of forms 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.

5.2 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.

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

5.2.2 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 Application ID Number or Voter Number;
- (iii) Age; and
- (iv) Village of Residence.

5.2.3 Materials to be used for registration of residents.

The willing village women residents shall be registered in **register books** provided by the Commission and registration shall be 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. The Sub County Supervisor shall endorse at the end of the list of registered women in each book.

Every Parish/ Ward Election Officers will be issued with a form for compiling Statistics on the number of registered women per Village. This shall be submitted to the Sub-County Election Officers for transmission to the RO who will in turn compile statistics for the District and submit to the Commission.

5.3 DISPLAY OF THE VOTERS 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, 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.

5.4 HANDLING OF DISPLAY 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.

5.5 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** of the Parish/Ward in which the village is located or can download from the Electoral Commission website.
- (c) The Sub-county Election Official shall conduct nominations at the Sub-county/Town/ Division between 9.00am and 5.00pm on each of the appointed nomination days.
- (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 second more than one candidate for nomination for the same office

5.5.1 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 of age 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.

5.5.2 Nomination Procedure

- (a) The nomination paper in duplicate shall be presented in writing supported by not less than two persons qualified to stand for election of the relevant Women's council or committee who are registered voters in the respective electoral area. The Sub-county Election Official shall ensure that no person seconds more than one candidate for the same position.
- (b) The Sub-county/Town/Division Election Official shall check the nomination papers to ensure the aspiring candidate has filled them properly.
- (c) 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**.
- (d) The Sub-county/Town/Division Election Official shall fill the **nomination control form** and the aspiring candidate shall sign/thumb print against her particulars on the nomination control form.
- (e) The Sub-county/Town/Division Election Official shall endorse on both nomination forms, declare the candidate duly nominated and hand over one copy of the nomination form to the nominated candidate.
- (f) If an aspiring candidate does not fulfill the requirements and is not nominated, the Sub-county/Town/Division Election Official 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.**

5.5.3 Submission of Names of Nominated Candidates to Village Election Officials

The SEO 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.

5.6. 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.

5.7 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 members of the Village Women Committee shall be by the electorate lining up 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.

5.8 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 voters; and
2:30 pm – 6:00 pm	: Filling of Forms and Declaration of Results.

5.9 THE VOTING PROCESS AND VOTE COUNTING

- (a) The Parish Women's Council members shall elect the Parish Women's Committee from among their members;
- (b) Under the Multiparty dispensation, a member of the executive elected on a Political Party ticket or Independent shall not change allegiance during progression of Council and Committees elections.
- (c) The Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) shall commence the voting process i.e. verification of voters only after at least five (5) persons who are entitled to vote are present.
- (d) 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
- (e) An election to a Women's Committee shall be conducted between the hours of 9:00 am and 6:00 pm.
- (f) 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
- (g) 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.
- (h) Members of the Village Women Council entitled to vote shall line up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol.
- (i) The Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) together with the Polling Assistant shall count the number of voters lining up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol.
- (j) Voters shall remain in the lines until the Village Election Official (Presiding Officer) declares end of counting for a given office.

- (k) 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 before making the declaration of results if he/she is satisfied that it is not a frivolous complaint.
- (l) 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. A Copy of Form WE 1 will be given to each candidate or candidates' agents present.
- (m) 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**)
- (n) Each candidate may appoint an agent to oversee the conduct of polling and counting of votes.

5.9.1 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.

5.9.2 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 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.
- (g) Fill Forms WE 1 and WE 2 accordingly
- (h) File the duly filled parish/ward Forms WE 1 and WE 2 together with village WE 1 and WE 2
- (i) 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.

5.9.3 Election of Members of the City Division, Sub-County/Town or Municipal Division Women's Committee

At the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division in the file folder provided by the Commission
- (c) Compile a City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division level.
- (f) Conduct nomination of candidates at the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division level and fill the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division Nomination Control Forms for each elective office.
- (g) File the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division Nomination Forms and Nomination Control Forms in the file provided by the Commission.
- (h) Conduct voting by members of the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division Women's Council (Electoral College) lining up behind each candidate or representative or portrait or symbol for the five (5) positions in the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division women's committee at the City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal Division level on voting day. **The elective positions are described in paragraph 4.0 of these guidelines.**
- (i) Fill Forms **WE 1** and **WE 2**, accordingly.
- (j) File the duly filled City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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.

For avoidance of doubt, nomination of candidates from village to city division/sub-county/town/municipal division level shall be conducted by the SEO assisted by the PEOs.

5.9.4 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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 City Division, Sub-county/Town or Municipal 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.

6.0 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) against the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic

The SOPs incorporate measures and guidelines put in place by the Ministry of Health and the outcome of consultations made by the Commission to prevent and combat person to person, person to object and object to person spread of the COVID-19 during the management of registration, display, nominations, campaigns and voting for women committees.

6.1 The Electoral Commission COVID-19 Task force in conjunction with the Ministry of Health Team will supervise and remind the participating parties to ensure that the Ministry of Health (MOH) guidelines and SOPs are abided by for the Safety of Electoral Commission officials and participating political players.

The following shall be observed;

- (a) Wearing of face masks shall be a must for everyone accessing the various venues to be used for the above mentioned activities;
- (b) Social distancing shall be observed – keep at least a 2 metre distance from others;
- (c) Cover coughs or sneezes with bent elbow or tissues;
- (d) Soft copies of nomination forms shall be uploaded on the Commission website for ease of access by aspirants;
- (e) Under exceptional circumstances where the aspirant is unable to download the forms, they may be picked from the offices of the District Election Administrator;
- (f) All facilities at the various venues that shall be used shall be regularly disinfected to mitigate the spread of COVID-19;
- (g) A participant with symptoms of fever, cough, flu and sneezing should be assisted to leave the activity venue early to minimize contact with other stakeholders.

NOTE: Stakeholders are reminded that the elections are taking place in a Covid-19 environment and therefore, we are all required to observe the Ministry of Health (MOH) guidelines to combat the spread of the virus.

7.0 OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

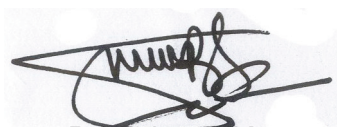
The offences and penalties applicable to the election of Women's Councils and Committees are prescribed under Regulation 28 of the National Women's Council (Councils and Committees) (Elections), Regulations, 2011.

7.1 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 a voter 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 a voter in order to induce any voter 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