

# From the Wings to the Mainstream

**THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES YOUTH  
LEAGUES IN DEMOCRATIZATION AND REGIONAL  
INTEGRATION IN EAST AFRICA**

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# Foreword

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Africa has pursued regional integration in earnest since the Lagos Plan of Action. Regional integration is seen as a building block for continental integration and unity. However, despite political parties being a key institution of representative democracy and playing critical roles in the democratization process of most countries in Africa, their levels of involvement in shaping integration processes within the continent has been dismal.

Within Eastern Africa, the EAC integration process is the most visible and advanced of the integration arrangements. It currently involves five member countries of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. Despite the Treaty requiring that the integration should be people-centered, the involvement of the people and their institutions has been limited. Political parties have not taken a particularly keen interest in integration. Viewed against the larger state of democratization in Eastern Africa, this trend requires reversal. In attempts to reverse this situation, The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, under the leadership of its offices in Kenya and Tanzania has been exploring the role of enhancing the involvement of political parties in regional integration efforts. Within political parties, young people are expected to provide the intellectual vigor and challenge to enable parties expand and democratize. Working with youth leagues in East Africa, FES has sought to enhance the mainstreaming and institutionalization of young people's participation in democratization and regional integration in East Africa.

This publication based on research, workshops and collaboration with country partners summarizes strategies to increase the influence of young people through political party youth leagues on their mother parties, democratization processes within their countries and integration efforts within the region. It makes a case for greater networking and experience sharing amongst youth leagues. We hope that the initiatives already underway amongst several youth leagues in East Africa will be sustained and result in improvement of the democratic landscape within East Africa.

**Dr. Peter Oesterdiekhoff**  
**Resident Representative**  
**FES Kenya, August, 2010**

## 1.1 Background

Democracy needs strong and sustainable political parties with the capacity to represent citizens and provide policy choices that demonstrate their ability to govern for the public good. With an increasing disconnect between citizens and their elected leaders, a decline in political activism, and a growing sophistication of anti-democratic forces, democratic political parties are continually challenged. This position is especially true in East Africa, where the status of development and democracy generally and specifically within political parties is still nascent.

The East African Region has meanwhile, since the revival of the East African Community, been pursuing integration in earnest. Unfortunately, these efforts have gone on without the involvement and active participation of political parties. This is despite the acknowledged fact that political parties are critical to the democratization of the regional integration processes. They are the institutional prerequisites of participatory democracy. Since the EAC Treaty provides that regional integration will be people-centered, it is imperative that the people's institution in governance and democratic processes, the political party, get involved in the processes.

However, to do so requires that such parties be national institutions, with clear governance structures and with ideologies and programmes. The current status of political parties in East Africa and consequently, their levels of involvement in regional integration have been sub-optimal. Over the last three years, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), through its offices in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania has supported the efforts of the political parties to assess and thereafter upscale their contribution to shaping regional integration in East Africa.

In addition, both at the national level and in regional programmes, efforts have been made to ensure that as the role of political parties is increased, so is that of the young people within the political process. Young people are invariably the most progressive members of society and have a unique role to play in enhancing the profile and performance of political parties. The youth are predominantly organized within the framework of youth leagues in the political parties.

In East Africa, however, youth leagues are not adequately structured and institutionalized. Their mother parties view them, where they exist, with suspicion and disinterest at the same time. To change this perception, FES has continued to engage with Youth Leagues in efforts to strengthen them and their role in the management of their mother parties. In many of these countries, except to some extent in Tanzania, the youth leagues are still in their nascent stages of development and have very minimal influence over the decisions and development of their mother parties.

The youth leagues have therefore organized regional activities in the last few years that have provided a framework that has enabled youth leagues in Eastern Africa to discuss the organization and management of their respective youth leagues, the relationship with their mother parties and develop a strong network amongst them. The network will enable continuation of the discussion of regional integration and greater push for democratization within their mother parties, their countries and in the region.

This would address the view that the process of integration is more government driven than people centered. Concerns have been raised that government institutions are not integrating at the same pace and level as the people. Therefore the fear that the region may achieve various forms and levels of integration is strong and well grounded. The people feel left out or behind in the formal integration process while the governments also feel the people are not patient and do not respect the protocols in their interstate interactions. To create harmony in the process therefore, efforts will have to be made to mobilize the people through political parties, civil society organizations and private sector. Political parties, however, are the most viable avenues of people mobilization.

There have been meetings organized at the national level in some countries and regionally geared towards strengthening youth leagues. The most visible of these were the conferences of youth Leagues and other leaders organized by the Umoja wa Vijana wa Chama Cha Mapinduzi (UVCCM), in Dar es Salaam in August 2009 and the Liberal Democratic Party Youth League in November, 2009 in Nakuru respectively. The main objective of the meetings was to devise strategies of enhancing the participation of young people in the regional integration process. One of the landmark resolutions of these conferences was that the young people must be at the forefront of regional integration if the process is to be legitimate and holistic. Further, the leaders of the political party youth leagues must provide leadership for the mobilization of the young people to fully participate in the integration process.

## **1.2 East African Regional Integration: Process and History**

The end of the twentieth century was characterized by the phenomenon of globalization, whose essence is the closer integration of countries and people, brought about by lowering of transportation and communication costs and removal or reduction of barriers to movement of goods, services and capital. Presently, globalization is multi-faceted and considered to cover such diverse aspects as economic liberalization, financial and consumer markets, health care, information flows, environmental sustainability, culture and language, and political power. It has been predicted that globalization is going to determine the direction and character of world economy well into the twenty-first century.

On the economic front, globalization connotes interconnection and integration of countries' economies, necessitated by elimination or reduction of national barriers, such that it is not possible for any country or region of the world to survive in economic isolation. That is, Globalization of the economy is the liberalization of the economy at the global level. From this perspective, economic globalization is the process of increasing

economic integration between two or more countries, leading to the emergence of a global marketplace or a single world market. This has engendered certain benefits to world economies. These include increased trade, faster movement of goods and ideas, speedier as well as reduced costs of communication and transportation. Increased trade engenders availability of different goods, reduced prices for goods, creates employment and overall, standards of living improve.

However, globalization has not always yielded the much heralded benefits. Developed countries have not eliminated or reduced barriers for sectors in which developing countries have a comparative advantage, for example, agriculture. Ordinarily, developing countries export raw materials and these have much lower economic benefits compared to finished goods. Efforts to further process the raw materials to produce finished goods are mainly being frustrated by higher tariffs that developed countries impose on such goods. Also, economic crisis or problems in a country or region spreads fast adversely affecting other countries. This is typified by the economic crises that hit South East Asian countries, Russia and Argentina in the 1990s and lately, the economic crisis in, respectively, the US (triggered by the sub-prime mortgages financial crisis) and Greece that threatened virtually all the countries under the Euro zone as well as the stability of the Euro itself. The economic crisis in the US and Greece has impacted negatively on the East African region's development as Western countries have reduced external aid and other forms of assistance. Also, certain sectors, for instance horticulture, which are a source of foreign exchange and relied on European markets, are experiencing reduced demand. Analysts forecast that pledges to help developing countries to achieve Millennium Development Goals are unlikely to be met.

The negative consequences of the globalized economy notwithstanding, people have and will continue to always take advantage of advances in information, communication and technology to closely interact and integrate than ever before. Formation of networks and partnerships of like-minded people across countries, for example, to respond to challenges of sustainable environment, enjoyment of human rights, access to quality social services, response to humanitarian crisis and preservation and exchange of cultural values, typify such closer interaction and integration spawned by globalisation. Young people have been in the forefront of extending the frontiers of these cooperation and networks. They have established movements to champion globalization of best practices in governance and have used every opportunity to support the struggles for the same in many countries of the world. It is worth noting that in these efforts, the participation of young people through their respective party organs has not been as strong. This is not to downplay the many attempts to mobilize world young leaders along the party lines which have registered success to varying but limited degrees.

Arising from the fear of domination on account of relative weakness, countries in the developing world have tended to favor closer cooperation amongst them to protect their nascent economies from the vagaries of the stronger capitalist economies of the west. Besides, regional integration allows disadvantaged countries to realize economies of scale, compete on a broader platform and increase overall economic efficiency. This has resulted in emergence and growth of regional integration and cooperation among states, for instance the EAC, which share geographical, cultural and historical heritage.



Most economic experts cite that regional integration allows disadvantaged countries to realize economies of scale, compete on a broader (often global) platform and increase overall economic efficiency.

Within the context of cooperation, the patronage system regrettably has grown bolder in the post cold war era while it was expected to diminish. Many leaders and political elites of African states have largely abandoned the responsibility of building democratic and mass political parties as institutions for fulfilling the bill of rights enshrined in the constitutions of their respective countries and instead have become an elaborate system of patronage. This admission has been missing in the efforts to democratize the African continent including within the African Union (AU) and New Partnership for Africa development (NEPAD). Kunle Amuwo notes that “a major lacuna in NEPAD is its inability or unwillingness, or both, to boldly account for Africa’s underdevelopment as a function of both the epochal consequences of colonialism/structural imperialism and bad politics of many of the continent’s political leaders.”

Thirdly within the contextual analysis is the calamity of headless-ness. Simply put, many African societies are operating on a limping intellectual foundation. There is simply no enduring and systematic intellectual project to offer the compass for the development goal. Since the Lagos Plan of Action to the NEPAD intellectual project, Africa seems to engage the world without its university faculties. The youth leaders of Eastern Africa must deal with this challenge decisively to offer a basis and motivation for networking and cooperation. Even within the EAC scenario, studies have shown that the political leadership operates without paying attention to studies that United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, AU and the EAC and many other think tanks are generating.

Further, cooperation and networking will remain hindered within a context of instability, conflict, insecurity and internal ethnic tensions in most of the nation states of the region. The unresolved ethnic grievances and tensions in Rwanda and Burundi; the involvement of Uganda and Rwanda in the DRC security complex and the persistence of the LRA issue in Uganda; the forth coming Sudanese elections and the instability in the Darfur region as well as the shaky Comprehensive Political Agreement between the North and South in the Sudan; the whole instability and political repression persisting in Ethiopia; the sore thumb-Somalia issue; the Kenya political instability and failed state realities especially after the 2007 election political crisis and violence; the political intolerance in Ethiopia and the entrenched ethnic suspicions in Abyssinia; the simmering tensions and political grievances in Tanzania between mainland and Zanzibar that have been pouring to the surface during every election remain some of the issues that have to be addressed by young leaders innovatively if their messages are to be adjudged fresh and worth listening to.

For East Africa the following chronology of events illustrate the efforts and journey towards integration:

- The Uganda Railway, 1897 – 1901;
- The establishment of the Customs Collection Centre, 1900;
- The East African Currency Board, 1905;
- The Postal Union, 1905;

- The Court of Appeal for Eastern Africa, 1909;
- The Customs Union, 1919;
- The East African Governor s Conference, 1926;
- The East African Income Tax Board, 1940;
- The Joint Economic Council, 1940;
- The East Africa (High Commission) Order s in Council, 1947 – 1961; and
- The East African Common Services Organization Agreements, 1961 – 1966.

The milestone in these efforts was the promulgation of the Treaty for East African Cooperation 1967 which provided for the establishment of, respectively, the East Africa High Commission, the East African Common Services Organization and the East African Community, successive joint organizations of the said countries to control and administer certain matters of common interest and to regulate the commercial and industrial relations and transactions between the said countries and by means of a central legislature to enact on behalf of the said countries laws relevant to the purposes of the said joint organizations. This Treaty was terminated in 1977.

The main reasons that caused the collapse of the East African Community was lack of strong political will, lack of strong participation of the private sector and civil society in the co-operation activities, the continued disproportionate sharing of benefits of the Community among the Partner States due to their differences in their levels of development and lack of adequate policies to address this situation.

The signing of the New East African Community Treaty in 1999 marked the reemergence of formal East African regional integration. The process has since moved successively through a customs union and now to a common market.

## 2 | The Place of Political Parties in Democratization and Integration

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### 2.1 The Rise of the One Party State and Collapse of the East African Community

Political parties by nature and definition are avenues for governance interests to compete for dominance. People who are keen to provide political leadership for their countries are expected to put themselves forward and their suitability for public office are assessed by the citizens. As societies have developed, it has been accepted that political parties offer the best avenue coalescing similar interests to form a manifesto platform around an ideology that is distinct and succinct. The political party platform therefore provides a unique opportunity for people seeking leadership positions to compete peacefully and within a legal framework that is, *a priori*, agreed upon. This is the hallmark of democracy and political parties are seen as the cornerstone of democratization through multipartyism.

Societies that have established multi-partism are stable and socially just. It is therefore not a coincidence that societies that comprised states that were democratic initiated and managed their processes of integration in a manner and character that was participatory and representative. Their citizens were actively involved and decisions were taken through wide consultations. The people were able to participate in the integration processes through their respective political parties and quite often sticky issues of a regional block are put to referenda in the respective national states that constitute such a block. Governments have lost mandate or enhanced their legitimacy on the basis of the results of these referenda. Therefore the regional blocks that have been established by states that they practice multi-party democracies have been more stable than those that did not. This is so because the completion among the various political parties assures citizens of development, good quality life conditions and good governance practices. The European Union is a case in point.

As has been demonstrated earlier on, the process of integrating the states and peoples of East Africa was and has been more state led than people centered. At the onset of independence, the African states were grappling with the threats and effects of the Cold War. The world politics was sharply bipolar and competition between capitalist and socialist leaning ideologies was very fierce. A number of states attempted to play a neutral role at the world stage of politics without much success. The departing colonizing powers were also intent on maintaining a controlling influence over the newly independent states while, at the same time, the national governments were facing the daunting task of making the independence dream a reality. In East Africa, Kenya and Uganda leaned towards the capitalist west, largely on account of their colonial heritage linked to Britain. Tanzania which was initially a colony of Germany before becoming a territory of the UN mandate at the end of the WW I, began as non aligned before moving to the left. Tanzania's position was a result of both ideological and intellectual disposition of the founding president, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. As the governments of the regions moved closer and pushed

the integration agenda, Kenya's patronizing approach was treated with suspicion thereby pushing Uganda to feel more comfortable with Tanzania.

In their respective local countries, the leaders became acutely sensitive to the possibility of external political influences partnering with local opposition forces to destabilize them. Therefore, the move to neutralize the opposition forces and the move towards one party state was hastened. In the middle of 1960s a series of events occurred in quick sequence that cemented the place of the ruling parties and prepared the ground for the collapse of the community. These events happened as if in isolation but the coincidence and similarities demonstrated a pattern. President Obote abolished the independence constitution, promulgated the peoples' charter and installed himself as president sending the Kabaka into exile. Down south, Mwalimu Nyerere united Zanzibar with mainland Tanzania, folded TANU and Afro Shirazi Party and established ujamaa through the Arusha Declaration. In Kenya, Mzee Kenyatta declared Kenya a republic, orchestrated the demise of Kenya African Democratic Union and engineered the removal of his Vice-president who subsequently formed an opposition party, Kenya People's Union, which was subsequently banned in 1969.

Therefore, the regional leaders neutralized opposition in politics by establishing one party states. At the same time, they moved separate ways ideologically. While Kenya strengthened its relationships with west as led by Britain and USA, Tanzania was looking to the east. Uganda, on the other hand, was courting the east while hoping to maintain relationship with its former colonial master. Thus, the East African Community was formally launched in the context of mutual suspicion among the member states and without any tangible people participation to cushion it against the disagreements of the leaders. The competing cold war protagonists were also not happy to see a united East Africa as this posed a threat to both their individual strategic and business interests. It is, therefore, not surprising that while there existed serious and legitimate concerns of imbalance and unfairness in the conduct of the Community business, the reasons that led to the eventual collapse of the Community in 1977, were more idiosyncratic than national or objective. Pundits aver that if political parties existed and played their rightful roles, then may be, the Community would have survived the leaders' differences and grew to come a major player in word economics.

## **2.2 The East African Community Reborn**

The revival of the EAC as per Article 14.02 of the Mediation Agreement stated that countries agreed to explore and identify areas for future co-operation and to make arrangements for such co-operation. This clause provided renewed interest in the viability of regional integration. It created hopes for a renewed economic development and political cooperation. At the core of this debate are two questions: first, are the integration efforts capable of facilitating equitable inter and intra-regional trade flows; and secondly, are they sustainable within the governance framework today? How, therefore, can existing local and regional structures and institutions factor youth roles in regional integration? What is the current balance sheet of performance on regional integration? What lessons have we learnt from the East African Community to-date?

Questions are being asked in the rural side, in urban centres in the region: Regional integration for what? For whom? And how? Are we looking at economic wellbeing, social well being, peace and stability? How do we link it up with today and tomorrow? The youth are the greatest resource in the region and if not engaged then what next? Where is their entry point? What are the available formal linkages of the various institutions that can best serve the growing issues of the youth?

How are the youth organized within the various political organisations in the region? Are they autonomous, semi-autonomous or fused within the party structures? How do they articulate their issues?

The future for a sustainable regional integration in East Africa lies in the promotion of young people's active participation in democratic processes and structures within the relevant institutions, besides taking on deliberate policies that promote equal opportunities for the participation of all young people in all aspects of their everyday lives. These entail further enabling young people to access decision-making processes; citizenship education and participation; and sustaining the role of various youth organisations in the development of democratic participation.

At local, national and regional level, active participation of young people in decision making and actions is essential if we are to build more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies in East Africa. Experience and lessons reveal that young people have been mainly manipulated to suit selfish political interests of various regimes in the region. Post-colonial governments in Africa have been riddled with bad governance and the end result has been channeling youth energies into unproductive ventures like conflict. It should be noted that participation in the democratic life of any community is more than voting or standing for election, although these are important elements. Participation and active citizenship however, is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity, and where necessary, the support to participate in and influence decision making and the engagement in actions and activities in order to contribute to building a better society.

Under the provisions of the EAC Treaty (Article 5, Paragraph 1), the Partner States undertook to establish among themselves a Customs Union, a Common Market, a Monetary Union and, ultimately, a Political Federation. The purpose of this arrangement is to strengthen and regulate the industrial, commercial, infra-structural, cultural, social, political and other relations of the Partner States so that there is accelerated, harmonious and balanced development with sustained expansion of economic activities that will be shared equitably. As we prepare for one political union in the region, the question is how do we prepare for it?

The second operational principle under Article 7 of the Treaty states, "The Partner States undertake to abide by the principles of good governance, including adherence to the principles of democracy, the rule of law, social justice and the maintenance of universally accepted standards of human rights."Therefore the youth need to find ways of engagement within the current framework of the EAC.

However, it should be noted that the push for the formal reintegration of the East African region has largely ignored political parties. In fact, save for Tanzania, there appears a deliberate effort to sideline the political parties from this process. It is for this reason that political party leaders have begun to make demands and cooperate across borders to strengthen their participation in integration. In the process of enhancing their role in the integration, the political parties have been as guilty as the state officials by marginalizing the young people within their ranks. It is for this reason that the leaders of the young people in political parties have responded by establishing partnerships and networks both within their countries and across their borders to demand for inclusion, participation and representation at all levels of integration.

## 3 | Young People In Political Parties And Democratization

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### **3.1 Participation of the Youth Leagues within Political Parties and Democratization**

The concept of participation is central in organization theory and organizational life in general. The concept is also deeply entrenched in the fabric of democratic discourses. In fact the essence of any democracy is to have members in society; organizations, workplaces, etc , participate in decision making or in other transactions affecting their lives. However, effective participation in any organization, including a political system in general and political leadership in particular is not something that is guaranteed. For this to exist, certain preconditions must exist.

The first, and indeed principal precondition, is an understanding of the importance of participation and the willingness to put this into effect. Three broad arguments can be advanced in support of participation in organizational life. The first is humanistic and this means that participation contributes to personal growth, satisfaction, and enhancing human dignity. In more specific terms, participation: Helps satisfy peoples' pecuniary needs including those for creativity, achievement, and social approval; contributes to a sense of competence, self worth, and self-actualization; makes use of the whole person-person feels more open, confident, and generally feels to be part and parcel of the organization. He/she becomes an 'organizational citizen and ; is a necessary antecedent to human psychological and social development and experience in organizational participation may lead to greater participation in the community generally. The second argument for participation emanates from power-sharing and in this context is potentially important in: redistribution of social and other power avenues; protection of members' interests; strengthening unions (which may include youth leagues) and ;extending the benefits of political democracy to the workplace. This in turn promotes workplace humanization and justice. The third argument in favour of participation is that it engenders organizational efficiency. The emphasis here is on the positive impacts of participation on organizational performance and this is associated with the following potentials: participation may lead to better decisions; people may be more likely to implement decisions they helped make themselves than decisions imposed on them from above; motivation is frequently enhanced; participation may improve communications and cooperation and it facilitates organizational learning; participation may enable members to supervise themselves thereby making leaders' lives easier and ;on a personal level, members may learn new skills through participation, leadership potential may be readily identified and developed. Overall, the above ingredients of participation bring about propelling organizational effectiveness and the concomitant benefits. This is germane in view of the fact that some people regard participation with skepticism and, more so in politics, where there is continuous struggles for power. As a cautionary measure, understanding the above ingredients is not helpful if there is no genuine willingness to let participation flourish.

Without both recognition of the importance of participation in organizational life and the genuine willingness to let it be realized, the concepts tend to remain more rhetorical.

The second precondition for effective political participation depends on the prevailing political culture in a political system. Generally, political culture is attitude toward the political system and its various parts, and attitude towards the role of the self in the system. This attitude may be expressed in the context of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations. Cognitive orientation refers to the knowledge and/or belief that people have about the political system. This can range from zero (lack of belief or idea about the system) to any high level. Affective orientation refers to feelings about the political system, its roles, personnel, performance, etc. This also ranges from zero (no feelings at all) to any high level. Such feelings can be positive, negative or indifferent. Last but not least, evaluative orientation refers to normative judgments and opinions that people have toward political objects, often based on a combination of established value standards (norms) and circumstance-induced feelings. Likewise evaluation can be positive, negative or indifferent. The three orientations result in political competence of citizens, one of the most important aspects of a political culture. Competence can be categorized on the basis of subjects and citizens. Subject competence refers to limited or absence of ability or motivation to exert influence on the political system. In this case, an individual becomes a passive beneficiary or victim of routine government actions. The individual may be associated with such behaviours as passive obligation to be loyal to, and respectful of authority. Citizen competence, on the other hand, refers to substantial ability or motivation to exert influence on the political system. In this case an individual actively pursues both rights and obligation and has a role in both the input and output sides of the political system.

Three types of political cultures are discernible: parochial, subject and participant. Parochial political culture is commonly found in diffuse/tribal/traditional political structures and exists mainly in tribal or 'traditional' societies where the political system is not fully differentiated. In a modern society, parochial political cultures exist in the form of exclusivist groups whose main concern is with their narrow interests and identities (e.g. ethnic, class, regional, religious, etc). However, where a substantial number of citizens are politically competent at the national level we get integrative politics of national pluralism (i.e. politics being organized in parties or associations which cut across many identities-class, religious, regional, ethnic, etc). Where most people are only competent in local or parochial arenas, we get divisive politics of plural parochialism or politics of parochial pluralism. Subject (also known as passive) political culture exists where, for historical and other reasons, the majority of the people do not use political institutions (which may exist in weak or latent form) to influence government policies. In general, subject political culture tends to emphasize obedience and obligations over competence and rights. Subject political culture is commonly associated with centralized/authoritarian political structures. Participant political culture is commonly found in political structures which are plural/democratic. In this type of political culture (participant political culture), people tend to be active and are highly oriented on how to effectively interact with the political system as a whole. In general participant political cultures stress rights and obligations, political competence and obedience.



For youth and youth leagues to be effective, it is critical for them to be part and parcel of the efforts that are made towards realization and nurturing of a participant political culture. If this happens, they would contribute significantly to the democratization process in East Africa. As one might recall, most if not all countries that are undergoing democratization need to introduce some elements that participant political culture offers.

The third precondition for effective participation is possession of a variety of resources, tangible or intangible which include: ideas for improving the country; rules and structures (constitution); leaders; members; and resources (financial and in-kind). These will enable youths and youth leagues to engage in various political activities including contesting for political leadership positions.

Besides participation and resources, political party youth leagues also need to have strategies to enable them develop, grow and flourish. Such strategies include: effective internal communications; membership recruitment; explaining and 'selling' ideas to the public; strategic resource mobilization; contest elections; recruit candidates; campaign; and monitor the election process.

The fourth precondition relates to the extent to which leadership and management are prioritized, as these are crucial to organizational success, also important for effective participation. Effective and efficient leadership is essential to both profit and non-profit making organizations. Indeed, many contemporary organizations including states, political parties, political party youth leagues and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) do not perform to their full potential because they ignore critical leadership and managerial aspects.

Just as in other organizations, effective leadership and management is critical for the success of political parties and political youth leagues, be it with regard to maintaining their continuity or status quo or for the purpose of effecting major changes. The type of leadership exercised in a particular political party or political youth league affects the nature of organizational politics in general. If one individual dominates the leadership, then one is likely to notice some of his/her likes and dislikes in the league. Political parties differ in the ways they solicit for members and how leadership positions are secured. Five-election procedures for selecting party candidates can be identified: where the selection procedure is governed by rules and procedures that are operated by the party itself or determined by the state; the degree to which selection is determined by the central body of the party or is left to local units; whether the power to select is done by a few key individuals or is widely dispersed among the members and activists; the number of offices for which aspirants are selected by relevant decision-making organs; and the ease, with which those holding elected public office, can have their selection cancelled, or their reselection.

### **3.2 Tenets of Effective Leadership**

Leaders play an important role in selecting members using any of the several procedures indicated above (3.1). Indeed, some leaders will, from the early beginning of their parties,

exercise the power to nominate people of their choice to run for various positions within the party or influence those who are elected. On account of this, three leadership styles for running political party affairs or political party youth league affairs can be discerned.

There is the autocratic leader – the one who wishes to command others and expects compliance from them. Effectiveness of autocratic leader arises from either awarding rewards or effecting punishment. The democratic or participative leader is the one who consults widely with followers and encourages them to participate in decision-making. Decisions reached are as a result of group consensus. The third style of leadership is referred to as free-rein leader who uses power very little and expects subordinates to use their own discretion in attaining the goals of their party or political youth league. The leader just furnishes leaders with the required information. This style of leadership is rarely used and if used, there is a vacuum in leadership that needs to be filled.

Overall, a political party or political party youth league requires a leader who is inspirational, tolerant, accountable, risk-taking, honest, cooperative, selfless, prescient, rational, and responsive to advice from subordinates.

### **3.3 Engaging the Party Centre: Providing Leadership to the Youth Agenda**

Political parties and political party youth leagues need to prioritize managerial issues as these may either facilitate or constrain effective political participation internally and in the wider political system. Management can be defined as the process of getting things done through other people. Indeed, many political parties and youth leagues are organized and carried out through other people. Political parties are organizations that need the support of people who interact with one another in some way to either advance personal objectives or achieve compatible joint objectives, perhaps different from or related to personal objective.

Party leaders and party youth leagues leaders can be managers in carrying out party activities. Essentially, management involves the following activities:

- Coordinating together the financial, human, and material resources in order to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals;
- Responding to the social needs of the environment surrounding the organization;
- Cultivating an organizational climate so that both individual and collective goals can be achieved;
- Carrying out certain functions of the party that are deemed necessary such as planning, goal setting, organizing, implementing and controlling; and lastly but not least; and
- Party or youth league managers have to be involved in interpersonal, informational, and decision-making roles.

An elaboration of the functions of a manager are in order. The first function is planning. To plan is to choose and to choose is to plan. Planning involves selecting objectives that will

carry one farther than where one is and determining actions to achieve them. It involves making decisions in advance and choosing an alternative from many that will lead one to achieve the selected objectives. The first and foremost thing to do is to be aware of opportunity or opportunities. The second stage is to set objectives or goals. All these and related endeavours need to employ professional planners especially on issues related to politics and management

The second managerial function is organizing. This entails, among other aspects, aligning together the objectives of a party or youth leagues. Doing so makes it easier to organize a party. Undoubtedly, every party aspires to assume leadership of a country by wrestling the party in power. But this does not mean that this is mutually exclusive to other objectives. That is why every party needs organizing as the primary instrument of running party affairs.

Second, in organizing, what is needed is to group together all activities that are thought essential in attaining the party objectives. If one cannot know the different activities, then one has to go back and ask oneself whether he/she is in the right direction in as far as organizing is concerned.

Third, organizing also entails allowing the grouped activities to be assigned a leader or manager to be in charge of the different roles, for example, party propaganda and control of the party's accounts. But only assigning activities to a leader is not sufficient. The individual assigned must be given authority necessary to accomplish what the party needs.

Fourth, in order for managers to be effective, they must be able to coordinate horizontally (on the similar party level) as well as vertically (at every party level).

### **3.4 Role of Youth Leagues in Political Parties and Democratization**

We have looked at the basics of organizing, referred to as setting up an organization structure, which results in a formal organization structure. This delineates the roles of different organs of parties. What structure a party adopts at inception depends on the intention of its founders. Some may prefer centralized structure under which decision-making emanates from a central authority. The corollary is that party headquarters must approve every key decision without necessarily consulting the other lower levels of the party. Yet others may prefer decentralized structures, where decisions involve all levels or organs of parties.

Between centralized and decentralized authority, the latter is preferable as it embodies democracy. Parties as well as youth leagues are expected to make decisions that involve as many people who are in leadership positions as possible. Effective and democratic leaders are expected to also make decisions that involve ideas and interests of lower levels in the party or youth league structure. They should strive to have lower level personnel and members give ideas and participate in most decisions affecting their party or youth league. Decentralization makes parties and youth leagues more flexible and answerable

to people because most decisions are passed with their own consent. An important issue to stress is that political parties should prioritize both leadership and managerial issues as critical issues that if not well handled can constrain effective participation within such associations as well as in a political system as a whole.

Youth leagues, by virtue of their position in party organizational hierarchy and demography, are better placed to promote and protect democratic governance. Indeed, they have played vanguard roles in championing and espousing democratic interests and causes both within their parties and countries. By their sheer numbers, they are able to exact pressure on the mother party leadership to respond to social needs of their respective states. Further, by virtue of youth, they are versatile and amenable to new technology and methods of doing things. On account of their vast skills, they are most of the time more knowledgeable than the older cadres within the party.

The youth have therefore played an important role in developing their respective party manifestoes and policy positions which have greatly shaped the direction of national development and public policy. However, this noble role and contribution is not as celebrated as the traditional roles of providing security and other hospitality services associated with the youth. The lack of recognition of the youth contribution to the successes of their mother parties and the democratization process in general is a function of two factors both of which work in tandem. On the one hand, is the intention of the older cadres to relegate the performance of young people to the periphery. On the other hand, is the inability of the youth themselves to take visible strategic positions and highlight their own contributions. There are exceptional cases where mother parties facilitate the visibility and encourage active participation and representation of the youth leagues in the decision making processes. The case of UVCCM illustrates this to a large extent and to a lesser extent, the youth leagues of liberation movement parties like African National Congress, National Resistance Movement and Rwanda Patriotic Front.

### 4.1 Background

In spite of the seemingly ineffective participation by the young people in political processes and leadership in the region, there have been gallant efforts at positioning the youth in the centre of political activity. These efforts have not been coordinated both within the respective countries and region at large. Rather, they have been ad hoc and haphazard and therefore have not made the much needed impact. The shortfalls should be seen as opportunities for learning how not to conduct political business. All is not lost though. There are cases where leaders of political parties have attained significant successes in involving the youth in party affairs and should be appreciated and used as a template for further and deeper engagement. Against this background, this section highlights case studies of how political parties in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have attempted to galvanize the youth factor in political processes as well as how the youth leaders within these parties have attempted to take advantage of the opportunities afforded them.

### 4.2 The Kenya Experience

Although youth leagues (also known as youth wings) exist in most political parties, they are yet to be fully institutionalized and strengthened so as to play their part in promoting internal party democracy. Most lack institutional structures and infrastructure, such as offices, to run their affairs. In spite of this, since the introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya, youth leagues have contributed immensely to the country's democratization process. There is need to build on this success and encourage them to go farther and even stake a claim to power from the party leaders.

The youth leagues of various political parties like Orange Democratic Party (ODM), Party of National Unity (PNU), KANU, Democratic Party and Ford Kenya operate on ad hoc basis. They are yet to be institutionalized although party constitutions and by laws recognize them. Most political parties do not have a directive principle on affirmative action for the youth in terms of party leadership and governance structures. There is no policy that guarantees youth nomination in local authority or parliament by the political parties.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Youth League and Ford Kenya Youth League in Kenya were arguably the most organized youth leagues before the 2007 general elections. The LDP Youth League, for example, had developed comprehensive constitutions, strategic plans and charters to guide its operations. However, its programmes and those of the party as a whole were torpedoed when the leaders of the party defected to other parties on the eve of 2007 elections. The leaders defected from LDP to Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya (ODM-Kenya) and further, others defected to ODM while still others remained in ODM-Kenya. This political somersault disorganized the LDP Youth League as

some of its leaders were at the crossroads with regard to whether to remain in the party or join the defecting leaders. Just as the LDP Youth League, Ford Kenya Youth League was destabilized when the parent party joined the Party of National Unity (PNU).

Party nominations and elections in most political parties are hardly free, fair and peaceful. As a result of such defective and sometimes undemocratic processes, the youth are more often than not edged out by the rich politicians, who use handouts and other tricks, including purchasing of nomination certificates before the actual party contest. The youth are often hired by the same politicians to engage in violent activities against real and perceived political opponents. This has been the case in all the multi-party general elections held between 1992 and 2007. Prior to the 1992 general elections, the youth were actively involved in political activist geared towards the re-introduction of multi-party politics. They actively participated in the saba saba rallies of 1990 and Forum for Restoration of Democracy (original FORD) rallies organized by veteran politicians like Kenneth Matiba, Charles Rubia, Jaramogi Odinga, Masinde Muliro, George Nthenge and Martin Shikuku. Some of the young people formed a formidable political wing of FORD that was christened the Young Turks.

### **4.3 The Tanzania Experience**

The political situation in Tanzania is quite different from Kenya, Uganda and Sudan. The party political environment is dominated by Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which has been in power since 1961 albeit under different names. The enduring strength and dominance of CCM can be attributed in part to the country's political history and the role that its predecessors, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and the Afro-Shirazi Party (SP) in Zanzibar played in the independence struggle. The fusion of the two parties in 1977 following the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar led to the formation of CCM, a formidable National mass party. Also, the adoption for socialism, Ujamaa, and the personal influence and charisma of Tanzania founding President Mwalimu Julius Kabarage Nyerere played a significant role in entrenching the party in the country's social, political and economic spheres. The CCM stranglehold is comparable to that of KANU under the leadership of retired President Moi. The popularity and dominance of CCM has remained strong even as the country reverted to a multi-party political system in 1992.

As a result of this monopoly of politics by CCM, the youth have often played peripheral roles in multi-party democracy. The youth and women political leaders have often become victims of intimidation and discrimination, most of them lack confidence and demonstrate limited appreciation of their role in CCM and the political environment in general.

It seems as if the high level of civic awareness among the youth in the wider society has not translated into significant participation within political parties. Ironically, CCM has an elaborate recruitment structure targeting the youth and has a well-established youth league with its own separate offices, structures and funding. The situation is, however, different among opposition parties. Indeed, most opposition parties like Tanzania Labour Party (TLP), have provisions for youth leagues within their party structures as stipulated in

their party constitutions and manifestos. For instance, they have youth leaders incorporated within the executive organs of the party at different levels. In practice, however, they do not have any significant influence in the formulation of party policies, programmes, election campaigns and outreach. While many youth league members would like to run their own programmes, they are limited by lack of internal party support, organizational capacity and limited funding.

Currently, Tanzania is witnessing a generational struggle for political leadership and participation in the nation's politics between the youth and the older party stalwarts. This is a recent phenomenon attributed to the increase in information flow and higher levels of education and exposure among the youth. Infact, the young people across political divides in Tanzania are getting restless and all political parties except CCM have a youth problem. The political parties have to deal with an emerging segment of members who are aspiring to become leaders and are demanding generational change. The same phenomenon is also beginning to emerge in Kenya in parties like Ford Kenya, KANU, Democratic Party, Narc Kenya and PNU.

#### **4.4 The Uganda Experience**

In Uganda, there seems to be integration of youth and political parties. Some parties have young leagues, although the level and strength varies. The Democratic party of Uganda (DP) Young League (i.e. Uganda Young Democrats), for instance, is quite independent and relatively strong compared to others. They are able to play an activist role and sometimes hold differing opinions expressed within the party as well as in the media. The Forum for Democratic change (FDC) has a youth wing, but it is not that easy to assess their funding or the amount of power they have within the party. The Uganda People's Congress (UPC) has the youth integrated in its party structures at the grassroots and national levels. The Ugandan Parliament, unlike other countries in East Africa has allocated a fixed number of seats (5 out of 319) to youth as it does to the army, workers, women and people with disabilities.

Research has shown that while the leadership of political parties in Uganda may be seen to be pulling apart, the youth across the party divide seem to share stronger affiliations with each other. This is attributed to a shared history in the sense that almost all youth party leaders across the country were nurtured in the Uganda Young Democratic (UYD) as student leaders at universities and other higher institutions. This is because at its inception in 1995, UYD was a non-partisan platform for all youth who cherished and agitated for political pluralism. There was also the non-partisan, government sponsored National Youth Council (NYC), which helped to induct and hone young people in leadership skills. Unfortunately, the NYC has fallen dormant since the introduction of multiparty democracy and the creation of District Youth Leagues in each party in Uganda.

It cannot be overemphasized that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) that brought Yoweri Kaguta Museveni to power in 1986 was propelled by youth and child soldiers in Lwero Triangle. Some of them lost their lives in the liberation struggle and some were

sidelined from political power, immediately Museveni, ascended to the presidency. Indeed, those viewed to be very ambitious and critical of Museveni's leadership were forced into exile in Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Southern Sudan.



# 5 | Towards the Mainstream

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## 5.1 The Struggles of the East African Youth

### 5.1.1 Achievements

The participation of young people in political processes has suffered mainly on two fronts in the history of the East Africa. First, the deliberate efforts of the older and dominant leaders of the respective parties to constrain the leadership of the youth and, secondly, the inability of the youth to outmaneuver the established leadership order. This may be surprising considering that the independence struggles through political parties were championed by young leaders. The young peoples of East Africa have therefore been engaged in constant struggles to improve their access to political power and participation in political processes. As discussed above, the efforts have borne varied successes and met various challenges. More importantly, the leaders in the respective countries employed different approaches to suit their respective unique environmental conditions. The collapse of the Community led to the rise of leadership strands that were not related or share any similarities within the three dominant member states.

In Uganda, Idi Amin Dada had replaced Obote as president and head of state. He proceeded to establish a diabolic and dictatorial military regime that had to be overthrown by the forces of Tanzania. Most of the dissidents fleeing from Amin's brutality had sought refuge in Tanzania. The second Obote government that came to power after Amin's overthrow lasted barely five years before Yoweri Museveni's guerrilla movement overran the government forces in Kampala in January 1986. The effect of the political landscape in Uganda meant that majority of young people were in the trenches serving in the command of the generals who were either ruling or fighting their way to the national throne. We all know that in military organizations there is no competition for offices and therefore the success of any young person in the leadership of the country depended largely on the benevolence of the generals. But young people in Uganda were resilient in their efforts to have the youth voice count and to this effect, the government allowed and facilitated the establishment of the national youth council, the first of its kind in the region.

In Kenya, the state had been captured by tribal elite that created hegemony to consolidate state power for personal aggrandizement. There was established a de facto one party state for the remaining period of Mzee Kenyatta's life. On assuming power upon Kenyatta's death, Daniel Moi remodeled KANU in the fashion of the Chinese Communist Party. The party became a political tool for the control of the masses at the very grassroots level to an extent that even the legislature became subservient to the party in national governance. This gave rise to dissident opposition activities to which the state responded with alacrity and ruthlessness. The university thus remained the visible only organization of opposition to state oppression. Many young people therefore found themselves in jail or were maimed if not killed in the struggles for the reintroduction of multiparty democracy. The collapse

of the Berlin Wall helped to hasten the return to plural politics and by 1992, the country formally reverted to multipartism. However, the old and dominant political elites of the independence era regrouped to capture the leadership of new political dispensation yet again by forming parties in opposition while some remained in KANU. The young people felt betrayed and short changed but never relented. They sought to influence these parties and state policies and moved to form the youth leagues within the parties and other youth organizations within the civil society led by the Youth Agenda.

The case in Tanzania was more or less similar to Kenya but varied in degree of intensity. Mwalimu Nyerere relinquished power voluntarily having realized that his philosophy of ujamaa could not withstand the capitalist wind that was sweeping across the globe. But CCM remained a dominant political organization even when the country allowed multipartism, having benefited immensely from state patronage during its hegemony in the country. The young people thus continued to participate in politics largely as cadres of CCM and were indoctrinated in party ideology. The opposition forces were not able to make tangible impact as CCM had such an effective organizational structure supported by a large resource base. However, some young leaders were able to break the CCM stranglehold and joined the emergent opposition parties to establish a new political order. Tanzania therefore boasts of having in place a structured system of youth participation in political processes across board. The young people appear to be assured of growth in political leadership so long as the party discipline is observed. Critics have pointed out that the Tanzania experience has robbed the youth of dynamism, activism and robustness normally associated with youth leadership.

In these struggles, the young people have recorded some successes that merit attention. The networks and partnerships established led to the formation of the East African Youth League which sought to harness the efforts of young people in political leadership to establish democratic governance structures both in their countries and across the region. In Kenya and with the support of FES, the young leaders established a leadership training programme to train and mentor young people into responsible leadership. The programme known as Political Leadership Development Programme (PLDP) has recorded remarkable success with many of the graduates managing to access national and local positions of leadership. The youth leagues also established the Inter Parties Youth Council (IYPC) which brought leaders from across the political divide to champion the interests of youth leaders in politics from a national platform. A similar programme had been in operation for over seventeen years in Tanzania called Young Leaders Development Programme (YLDP) supported by the country FES office and has witnessed similar achievements if not on a wider scale. On a larger scale, the leaders from fifteen countries meeting in Dar es Salaam at the invitation of UVCCM, established the Social Justice Network of youth Leagues to promote social democracy, justice and good governance within their respective countries and across the region as well.

### **5.1.2 Setbacks**

The following have been identified as the challenges and shortcomings that youth participating in multi-party politics face. First, most political parties in the East Africa region

have often been ran as personal or private property of a few political leaders. Such parties have not established institutional structures and generally lack internal democracy. The elderly politicians tend to dominate the key political party decision making organs like national executive councils, national governing council and the like. Second, most youth leagues lack financial autonomy and often depend on handouts from individual party leaders. The youth leagues are generally perceived to be vehicles for mobilizing youth and other citizens to support or vote for the party in general and by –elections. They are more often than not viewed as foot soldiers for the party. Very few political parties in the region have comprehensive leadership training or mentorship programmes for the youth or young political leaders. Moreover, most political elites prefer to work with youth who are not controversial but conformist, because of their desire to maintain the status quo. Indeed the youth are meant to believe they are the leaders of tomorrow not today even the regional bodies, especially the East African Community, lacks a directive principle for youth participation in regional governance. In addition, widespread unemployment, especially among the youth has often made many of them to lose focus orientation in terms of aspiration for political leadership. Also, there is lack of rule of law, especially with regard to adherence to party constitutions and democratic principles of governance.

Negative ethnicity and stereotypes have affected the important role played by the youth and young people in multi-party political dispensation as well as democratization in East Africa. These values are inculcated by parents, relatives and siblings in the mind of children as they grow up to become youth adults. The outcome of such socialization was manifested in the Rwanda genocide in 1994, Burundi massacres and Kenya during the post election violence, following the disputed 2007 presidential election results. In all these tragic events, the youth participated actively in the violence from the ethnic stand point. Some took an offensive stance, while others took a defensive stance, under the guise of protecting their ethnic political leaders and community resources against perceived enemies (i.e. other ethnic communities).

Today ethnic grudges, mistrust and suspicion looms amongst the youth and adults of different ethnic communities. Currently, some youth have been engulfed in ethnic jingoism at the expense of the spirit of nationalism and pan-africanism in general. This is compounded by ethnic leadership have been institutionalized in Kenya and other parts of East Africa.

The concept of multiparty politics has somewhat been reduced to multi – ethnic politics with each ethnic community saying “it is our turn” to eat or support one of our own for presidency or premiership. Those ethnic communities who are perceived to be currently holding political power wants to maintain the status quo, while those who have never held it are struggling to see one of their own take over. Unfortunately, the power game hardly benefits ethnic communities, except, a clique of politicians and their sycophants who may not necessarily be from the same ethnic groups.

## **5.2 Overcoming the Challenges**

### **5.2.1 Development and Promotion of a Clearly Articulated Organizational and Ideological Policy**

Some political parties and youth leagues have vague organizational and ideological policy. This should not be the case. Youth Leagues must coherently and lucidly articulate their organizational and ideological policy if their aspirations for leadership are to be taken seriously. By doing so, youth leagues could serve as potential avenues for articulating a similar coherent organizational and ideological policy for political parties that lack or have ambiguous organizational and ideological policy framework.

### **5.2.2 Lobby for Instituting of Democratic Rules of Politics**

Existence of rule of law and democratic culture is critical for multiparty democracy to thrive in parties in general and youth leagues in particular. Multipartyism presupposes having in place rules and regulations that are relevant and viable under such political party system. Rules and regulations governing the conduct of political parties and by extension party-based youth leagues can be categorized into internal and external ones. Internal rules and regulations are of two types, notably those specified in the constitution and those found in other documents containing, for example, rules and regulations governing financial accountability, rules and procedures of reaching decisions, etc. An elaborate youth league constitution is supposed to be a basic document which specifies the structure of the league, power distribution, accountability, rules and procedures of making decisions, how to effect amendments to the constitution or rules and regulations, and how internal conflicts should be resolved or managed.

Adherence to the constitution and other rules of the party by the party leadership as well as the membership is partly a function of the type of the party – whether it is a mass party or a patron party, i.e., whether it is an institutionalized or personalized party. If a party is not well institutionalized, its leadership as well as membership can hardly respect the constitution, the rules and regulations. Consequently, when there is a crisis or conflict, instead of resorting to democratic means through the party organs, the conflict is handled through informal channels using the personal influence of the leaders concerned.

Although sometimes youth leagues may opt for informal means in conducting their affairs, and at times may apparently work effectively, having in place institutionalized and well documented internal rules of the game provides chances of the leagues being more effective and democratic. This is due to the fact that there is organizational predictability of behaviour, it brings high sense of legitimacy and ownership of the organization by organizational members and last but not least, internal accountability may be easily instituted. Moreover, decisions and compromises reached informally do not have strict legal sanctions, they are very difficult to be respected and enforced. There is a tendency for individuals to respect institutional decisions or decisions arrived at through a procedural due process or (even if they are not happy with the content), rather than personal decisions. That is to say, procedures imbue decisions with credibility and legitimacy.

Alongside the effort toward realizing internal democratic rules of the game youth leagues must also endeavour to forge democratic external rules of the game. This means that youth leadership and/or the youth in general should take an active role not only in the struggle for democratic external rules of the game but should also ensure that they have an adequate knowledge of the broad legal and constitutional environment within which they operate. They should be familiar with the basic law of the land such as constitution, statutes and regulations pertaining to the conduct of politics in the country. More important though is the need for youth and youth leagues to actively engage in efforts toward democratic external rules of the game where they do not exist or where they are ambiguously so.

Knowledge of the constitution and other laws as well as forging one where there isn't helps youth leagues reduce their internal conflicts as well as conflict with the state. Some of the internal conflicts within youth leagues may be simply because of lack of proper understanding of the legal context of the issues to the dispute among the leadership as well as the membership. It should be incumbent upon youth leagues to ensure that civic education, which includes some knowledge of the constitution and other laws are imparted to both the leadership and the membership. Youth leagues should also intensify efforts and strategies that would promote the generation of healthy rules of the game internally and externally. These will in turn promote their participation in political leadership as well as in governance in general.

### **5.2.3 Establish Frameworks for Partnership in Grassroots Democracy and Development**

Grassroots democracy and development initiatives are cornerstones of democracy. Democracy and development need to be nurtured at all levels within societal fabric. Youths and the general public at grassroots need to be emancipated and mobilized to take active roles in political leadership as well as in various development programmes undertaken by central government, local governments, donors etc. Youth and youth leagues can as well undertake such programmes.

Active participation of the youth and youth leagues has potential of guaranteeing partnership from grassroots communities. Development projects and programmes planned and implemented at grassroots level must encourage the participation of members of the public or the communities that are the potential beneficiaries. There must be avenues for promotion of grassroots community participation in the planning and implementation of democratic and development interventions.

Without effective grassroots organization, many youth leagues are likely to continue having little impact in the decision making process. The leagues are supposed to play a key role in the policy process and decision making process with people's interests in mind. They must articulate and aggregate their members' interests and aspirations in particular, and the general citizenry's interests and aspirations in general in the decision making process. This could be possible if they are partners of grassroots democratic and development initiatives. This will be one of the important avenues of strengthening youth and youth leagues participation in politics, governance and development initiatives.

#### **5.2.4 Mechanisms for Leadership Grooming and Recruitment**

Although youth leagues may draw their leaders primarily from their own rank, for example on the basis of seniority, over reliance on this method of recruitment can result into patterns of recruitment that are rigid and resistant to change, production of photo-type leadership, and leadership that is unresponsive to the young generation of leadership. Youth leagues could also recruit some of their leaders from the external environment, for example recruitment of leaders from professional bodies such as universities that offer expert services or recruit other potentially well- to- do leaders from other youth leagues by co-opting them, etc.

The issue of leadership grooming and recruitment is hereby underlined because both attraction of members and retention of the same are fundamentally important. It, among other things, creates good environment for leadership succession. Lack of effective leadership succession plans is one of the serious challenges that afflict contemporary African leadership. To avoid being caught up into the same trap (if not yet) youth leagues must ensure that potential and reliable members be sought, groomed, recruited and socialized on organizational etiquette. Youth leagues as organizations require well articulated and legitimate techniques and strategies for leadership grooming and recruitment .In short once youth leagues members are recruited; they should be made to be what in organization theory is called 'organizational citizens'. It is from this pool of 'organizational citizens' one would expect to groom good, successful or ethical leaders not only of the youth leagues but also of our respective countries and region as a whole.

It is also critical and important that youth leagues have facilitative environment and procedures that encourage and promote women members to actively participate in political leadership (political leadership and gender).This is one of the big but noble challenges in the ongoing democratization process in East Africa

#### **5.2.5 Enhancing Research as an Avenue for Youth Leagues' Effective Participation in Political Leadership**

Modern organizations need to have strategic knowledge banks in order for them to perform well. Youth leagues can also not afford to shy away from this requirement. Rigorous research interventions on leadership issues in general and political leadership in particular need to be promoted. Enhancement of research increases skills, competence, and confidence especially in the contemporary competitive world (including competitive politics). Such research could, for example, focus on identifying success and sad stories of youth leagues in Africa and beyond in regard to effective political participation, establishing areas of strength and weakness. The findings of such research would then be synthesized, lessons drawn and emulation of areas of strength undertaken.

#### **5.2.6 Campaign for Effective and Responsive Electoral Performance**

Elections are avenues through which youth and youth leagues can exploit to promote effective participation in political leadership. Youth leagues are likely to make no

significant impact on the on-going democratization process and on people's lives if they can't be effective and represented in decision making bodies such as parliaments. In many countries (East African countries inclusive), representation into decision making bodies has largely through electoral performance. In Tanzania for example the largest number of MPs is constituency MPs who join the legislature on the basis of electoral performance. A few are nominated MPs. Youth of who have reached the electable age need to explain this opportunity. Youth leagues in parties must do strategic planning for elections. A number of critical areas that should be part and parcel of strategic planning for electoral performance should include, among others, the SWOT analysis.

Furthermore, strategic planning should be an ongoing process that determines what an organization is and will be in future. Thus, it involves developing a vision for the future; and identifying the activities, skills and resources necessary to achieve that vision. It should also involve overall development of the youth league; and how the league will contest an election. Strategic planning is important and critical because it:

- Clearly defines the purpose of the organization and to establish realistic goals and objectives consistent with that mission in a defined time frame within the organization's capacity for implementation.
- Communicates those goals and objectives to the organization's constituents.
- Ensures the most effective use is made of the organization's resources by focusing the resources on the key priorities.
- Provides a base from which progress can be measured and establish a mechanism for informed change when needed.
- Provides a clearer focus of organization, producing more efficiency and effectiveness.

### **5.2.7 Develop and Implement Effective Strategies for Resources Mobilization and Management**

As noted in section 3, youth leagues, just like any other organization, cannot afford to exist and realize its goals without requisite resources such as skills and competencies. In more specific terms resources would include financial, human, physical infrastructure, technology, etc. Having this in place entails effective resource mobilization. However, this may not be realised if no explicit strategies and mechanisms are in place to ensure that such resources are well utilized and democratically managed. The issue of democratic management of organizational resources stands as one of the critical challenges of many organizations in Africa. Here one could include state as an organization, political parties, NGOs. There are many conflicts going on in Africa related to either unprofessional or undemocratic management of organizational resources.

Youth leagues must therefore strive for effective and democratic strategies of resource mobilization and management. Even the electoral performance issue alluded to above cannot be well realized if youth leagues do not have explicit, effective and democratic strategies for resource mobilization and management. Specialized training interventions related to resource mobilization and management could be one of the steps in the right

direction. Such specialized training could for example involve such programmes as Training for Trainers (TOTs) who, upon returning to their respective work places, could impart such acquired knowledge, skills and experiences to their fellows and the general public.

### **5.2.8 Establish Effective External Relations Strategies for Youth Leagues**

Parties and youth leagues as organizations need to interact with the external environment. It is very difficult for any organization to live as a closed entity in the current era of information technology. Political parties and youth leagues also need to 'strategically' interact with the external world. We emphasize strategic interaction with the environment because interaction with the environment is not inherently positive for the thriving of organizations. This strategic interaction could be in such areas as:

- Inter-party/inter youth league networking
- Networking with other key stakeholders
- Networking with strategic constituency base
- Strategic collaboration with competitors (the inter-party 'marriages')

### **5.2.9 Champion Internal Democracy and Democratic Conflict Management Strategies**

Many organizations today (including political parties and youth leagues) are facing the problem of internal conflicts. This is partly because of lack of internal democracy and lack of strategic conflict management mechanisms. Youth leagues should enhance internal democracy and put in place strategic mechanisms for peaceful and democratic management of conflicts. This will contribute to their effective participation in political leadership and governance in general.

### **5.2.10 Develop and Implement Strategies and Programmes for Promotion of Formal and Civic/Voter Education**

The formal education system should be restructured to be able to equip the youth with technical skills rather than general knowledge. This would enhance the ability of the youth to tackle the problem of unemployment and poverty that make them vulnerable to manipulation. The system should also deliberately promote the virtues of integration and closer cooperation among the member states.

Civic education is strongly encouraged as it is potential in creation of an informed citizenry. It also enables youth leagues members, party members and the general public attain civic competence. This in turn would account and contribute toward realization of participant political culture in our countries. As noted earlier on, the essence of democratization should be to realize participant political culture.



### 5.3 Looking into the Future

From the foregoing, it is evident that participation in organizational life is very critical and important because it generally generates organizational citizenship. There is need for understanding the importance and potential advantages of participation in organizational life. This needs to be followed by genuine willingness to let it be realized. It has also been noted that East Africa and Africa needs good, successful and ethical leadership and not leadership for its own sake.

Furthermore, the youth and youth leagues have a potential in the democratization process as there are many avenues through which they can play their part. The publication asserts that the youth ought to take a claim to leadership now and not in the future. The youth can take active role in contemporary and future political leadership of East Africa. Likewise the publication points out that participation in general and political participation in particular is not given on a silver platter. It needs some ground work i.e. some preconditions must be in place. The publication has attempted to point out some of such preconditions. Last but not least, it suggests some specific interventions which might be employed by the youth/youth leagues for their enhanced participation in political leadership. It is hoped that such strategies and interventions, if employed, would contribute toward transforming the youth/youth leagues from the 'wings' to the 'mainstream' in as far as their role in the democratization process in East Africa is concerned.

The following would serve as strategies to guide future engagements and further push the regional youth agenda forward:

- There is need to establish and strengthen legal and policy frameworks so as to stabilize and regulate political parties, including internal democracy, respect for members' rights, coalition formulation and party funding. The establishment of a political parties funding Act in Kenya can be part of the solution if well managed, despite its short comings, which have to be reviewed.
- There is need to expand and scale up training programmes for the youth. There should be deliberate efforts to carry out talent scouting, mentorship and role modeling for young political leaders across the political parties in East Africa.
- The Youth Leagues across the political parties and geographical boundaries should establish strong partnerships, linkages and networks for lobbying and advocacy to enhance participation in multi-party politics and regional integration.
- Youth Leagues should strategize on the establishment of an institute to nurture and impart leadership skills among the youth from Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan and Ethiopia.
- The youth league should enhance solidarity and unity of purpose in diversity so as to bring pressure to bear on their parent political parties, executive and legislative arms of government in their respective countries and the entire East African Region.

- There should be information super high way for youth leagues to share information and exchange ideas as well as engage in policy dialogue and issue oriented political debates within their countries and across the East Africa Region.
- The youth leagues should be supported technically and financially to operate semi-autonomous offices and programmes from their parent political parties.
- The youth leagues should push for policy and legislative reforms that brings them to the main-stream of political parties, instead of remaining on the wings or periphery of multi-party politics within their respective countries and East African region. They should be empowered to conduct their own recruitment, political mobilization, socialization and political education. This should in the long run give them a significant share in the running of their respective political parties.
- There should be a move towards the formation of a vibrant youth leagues/young people's political federation for East Africa with a central secretariat and national chapters in all the seven (7) or so countries in the Eastern African region. The same young people's political federation should be given observer status or formal membership recognition in all the regional political and economic treaties and protocols within East Africa.

To achieve the above recommendations, the representatives of the East Africa regional youth league leadership meeting in Nakuru, Kenya in November, 2009 resolved to establish the inter parties youth league forum. The forum's main objective is to design and implement strategies that would enhance the participation and representation of young people of East Africa in the integration and democratization processes. The resolutions of the Nakuru Conference are contained in the communiqué hereto annexed for ease of reference.

## 6.1 Annex 1: The Nakuru Communiqué

### **Communiqué of the Regional Conference on Strengthening Youth Leagues and their Role in Democratization in East Africa**

**Held at Hotel Cathay, Nakuru from 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

We, representative of Youth League Leaders from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, meeting at a regional conference on strengthening youth leagues as effective vehicle for political participation and enhancing their role in democratization in East Africa between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in Nakuru, Kenya

Having realized the challenges facing millions of youth in East Africa including unemployment, poverty, inadequate representation, insecurity, inadequate educational systems and a governance crisis,

Concerned about the status of democratization and participation of young people participation in political processes in the Region,

Cognizant of the East African Community Treaty and the requirement for good governance and people-centered integration process,

Desirous of putting young people at the centre of democratization and regional integration in East Africa, now resolve as follows:

- To establish and put into effect an inter party youth league forum and hereby appoint a seven member interim coordinating committee to design and institutionalize the Forum.
- To enhance the influence of young people in the process of regional integration in East Africa.
- To engage political parties in the Region (our mother political parties) to have a shared agenda for the integration and democratization process based on social justice principles.
- To engage our national Governments to establish and/or strengthen the national youth councils/union and establish a regional youth council at the EAC level.
- To enhance democracy and good governance within our political parties, countries and the Region.
- To strengthen and improve internal democracy within youth leagues in the Region.
- To adopt and promote pan Africanism in our ideology, thoughts, outlook and actions.
- Advocate for sound environmental management and sustainable development in the Region and beyond through engagement with Government and communities,

and other actors in a bid to achieve a clean and safe environment.

- To work with our mother political parties and national Governments to improve young people's livelihood through adoption and implementation of appropriate policies & strategies on education, employment and information, communication technology (ICT).
- To demand representation of young people in all organs of the East African Regional integration process including the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the EAC Secretariat, task forces, and commissions. These resolutions will be presented to our respective mother parties for approval as may be necessary.

These resolutions will be presented to our respective mother parties for approval as may be necessary.

Adopted at Hotel Cathay, Nakuru on Saturday 14th November 2009

	<b>Party</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Signature of party representative</b>
1	Umoja wa Vijana Chama cha Mapinduzi, UVCCM	Tanzania	Signed
2	Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo, CHADEMA Youth League	Tanzania	Signed
3	National Resistance Movement, NRM Youth League	Uganda	Signed
4	Uganda People's Congress, UPC Youth League	Uganda	Signed
5	Rwanda Patriotic Front - Inkotanyi, RPF Youth League	Rwanda	Signed
6	Conseil National pour la Defence de la Democratie – Force de Defence de la Democratie, CNDD – FDD Youth League	Burundi	Signed
7	Sudan's Peoples Liberation Movement, SPLM	Sudan	Signed
8	UMMA Party	Sudan	Signed
9	Youth League of the National Congress Party, NCP	Sudan	Signed
10	Ethiopia Peoples Democratic Revolutionary Front, EPDRF Youth League	Ethiopia	Signed
11	Party of National Unity, PNU Youth League	Kenya	Signed
12	Orange Democratic Party, ODM	Kenya	Not signed*
13	Liberal Democratic Party, LDP Youth League	Kenya	Signed

*\*ODM did not approve or agree to be bound by the resolutions.*