



**STATEMENT OF THE HON. CHIEF JUSTICE
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE JUDICIARY
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR
THE F/Y 2021/2022**

HELD AT

JUDICIARY HEADQUARTERS,

HIGH COURT BUILDING, KAMPALA

ON 31st AUGUST. 2022

My Lord, Hon.

My Lord, the Deputy Chief Justice,

The distinguished Hon. Ministers present

The Hon. Attorney General of Uganda,

My Lord, Hon. Principal Judge,

My Lords, Hon. Justices and Judges of Courts of Judicature,

The Members of the Judiciary Council

The President Uganda Judicial Officers Association

The Head of the Industrial Court,

The Director of Public Prosecutions

Your Excellences, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners,

The Head of Public Service,

The Hon. Members of Parliament, present

Heads of Justice Law and Order Institutions,

Your Worship the Chief Registrar,

The Permanent Secretaries, present

The Clerk to Parliament,

The representatives of Development Partners,

The President Uganda Law Society and distinguished Members of the Bar,

Your Worships, The Registrars and Magistrates,

The Judiciary Administration and Support Staff,

Our esteemed Participants attending Online;

Members of the Fourth Estate,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. I have the honour to welcome you to this important activity when the Judiciary accounts to you and to the esteemed people of Uganda about the activities we have undertaken on our journey to deliver justice services during the Financial Year, 2021/2022.
2. As you all know the Judiciary derives its mandate from the people as articulated in Article 126 of the Constitution of Uganda, 1995 in the following authoritative terms:

Judicial power is derived from the people and shall be exercised by the courts established under this Constitution in the name of the people and in conformity with law and with the values, norms and aspirations of the people.

It is on this basis that we are duty-bound to account to the people of Uganda for the financial and other resources we receive; and for the actions we take; in accordance with section 39(1) of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020. This is the second Report we are issuing since the enactment of the Administration of the Act in 2020.

3. As you already know, our transformation agenda, which we believe will help us to curb **case backlog** and ensure meaningful access to Judiciary services is mainly hinged on the following pillars:
 - a. Lobbying for enhanced funding of the Judiciary;
 - b. Recruitment and deployment of more judicial and non-judicial Officers;
 - c. Establishment of more Courts at all levels/grades; and

- d. Strengthening the Inspectorate of Courts, to supervise court operations and curb corruption.
4. I can proudly report that the Judiciary has earned support from the Government which has seen our budget slightly enhanced, in spite of the challenges of Covid-19 on our Economy, from **UGX. 181Bn** in FY 2019/2020 to **UGX. 376Bn** in FY 2021/22 and subsequently to **UGX 381.88Bn** for FY 2022/23. This enhancement enabled us to commence the implementation of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020 as planned.
 5. We have already embarked on the realization of our transformation agenda and the public is already enjoying the fruit of timely receiving justice resulting from more recruitments. When we assembled here on 29th January 2021 at the opening of the new law year, we had only **42** Chief Magistrates in this Country. Of the 42, 27 were circuiting between 2 to 6 Magisterial areas. For instance, the Chief Magistrate of Fort Portal was caretaking Kamwenge, Bundibujjo, Kasese, Ntoroko and Kyenjojo. The one of Soroti was caretaking Kumi, Katakwi, Amuria and Kaberamaido. This critically fettered service delivery in those Courts. Today we have **77** Chief Magistrates, this is the highest number the Judiciary has had, in history. Consequently, we have operationalized **15** Magisterial areas of Dokolo, Mayuge, Sironko, Katakwi, Rakai, Kiryadongo, Kyenjojo, Bubulo, Isingiro, Kumi, Kamuli, Isingiro, Kotido, Kira and Lugazi. Karamoja sub-region now has 2 Chief Magistrates, Acholi Sub- region has 4 Chief Magistrates.
 6. Regarding the Magistrates Grade one, by February 2021, we had only **186**, today we have **301** Magistrates. As a result, we have operationalized Magistrate Grade One Courts of Kyotera, Kyanika, Kole, Lamwo, Kyazanga, Kalungu, Amuria, Atanga, Kalongo, Kangulumira, Namugaluwe, Kibito and Nyarushanje;

plus Municipal Courts of Mbarara, Masaka, Tororo and Arua. The improved coverage of the Judiciary at this rank has reduced case backlog to only 2,602 out of the total backlog of 50,908 cases in the Judiciary.

7. The appointment of 16 Judges who were deployed on 15th August 2022 brings the number of High Court Judges to **72** up from **56**. This is the first time the High Court attains this number. Following this recruitment, we immediately operationalized the High Court Circuits of Moroto, Tororo, Iganga, Luwero, Hoima and Rukungiri. This will significantly improve physical access to justice for our people. For example, Soroti High Court Circuit has been handling the entire Teso and Karamoja sub-regions whereby people had to travel hundreds of kilometres. This state of affairs will automatically improve with the operationalization of Moroto High Court Circuit.
8. This Financial Year we plan to recruit at least 10 High Court Judges. It is my desire to deploy these Judges in the Commercial Court and at the Land Division and to operationalise 08 more High Court Circuits at Nebbi, Bushenyi, Kasese, Kamuli, Kitgum, Lyantonde, and Apac. This will significantly reduce case backlog and enhance access to justice services. The release of money through the disposal of cases in these two critical Divisions of the High Court would have monumental impact in our economy.
9. Regarding the hardware of the Judiciary, we have equally registered laudable progress. The construction of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal is in sound progress at **85%** completion stage. By close of this year we shall be able to occupy the Supreme Court Block, and by February 2023, the Court of Appeal Block would equally be ready. We have also

accomplished the construction and renovation of a number of Courts and Justice Centers across the Country.

10. Last month, during my Country-wide field visits to the South Western Uganda, which is part of the strategy implementation plan, I was glad to note that even Buhweju Court is now constructed and would soon be removed from the list of hard-to-reach places once their road network is worked upon. This is just but one of the several milestones we are accomplishing.
11. As we work on the Judiciary hardware (the Physical Infrastructure) we are also putting effort on improving the software (human resource) as well. We have prioritized capacity building and induction of newly appointed officers. We have equally undertaken to mentor them and discipline those who fail to cope with the demands of the Judiciary Service. It is on this note that we shall seek for a review of the composition and membership of the Judicial Service Commission with a view to expand it and give it permanent members. We demand for expedition of disciplinary cases, which will increase with our expanded structure.
12. Let me now take the honour, on behalf of the Judiciary, to present to you the Judiciary Annual Performance Report for the year, 2021/2022. The report expounds the achievements of the Judiciary during the Financial Year, as well as the challenges and impediments encountered in realising those achievements. It also underscores the Judiciary's efforts towards strengthening the administration of justice in accordance with the Judiciary Strategic Plan V, for FY: 2020/2021 to 2024/2025.

A: Financial performance

13. The Judiciary was blessed with an enhancement in its budget allocation from GX 199,077,590,548 for the FY 2020/2021 to UGX 376,956,526,179 for the FY 2021/2022. During budget execution for the period under review, a supplementary budget of UGX 3,767,787,323 was received leading to a revised budget of UGX **380,724,313,502**. The supplementary budget was earmarked for retirement benefits of judicial officers of the lower bench given the adjustments that were necessitated by the newly approved salaries.
14. Out of the released budget of UGX 378,244,218,317, the Judiciary spent UGX 337,173,161,201 contributing to an absorption rate of 89.1%. The 10.9% that was not absorbed comprised the wage budget of UGX 40,632,824,169 which arose from a planned wage enhancement for non-judicial officers that was not approved, delayed recruitment of staff, retirement and late replacement of staff. It also included a non-wage budget of UGX 425,995,447 of mainly unpaid pension as well as a development budget of UGX 12,237,500 arising from delays in the procurement process.
15. The Judiciary also received a cumulative release of UGX 7,476,328,305 from JLOS (UGX 4,921,343,205) and Development Partners like UN Women (UGX 1,581,555,100) and UNFPA (UGX 973,430,000) of which UGX 7,427,677,544 had been spent by the close of the financial year.

Non-Tax Revenue (NTR)

16. In the reporting period, the Uganda Revenue Authority collected UGX 12,577,981,675 on behalf of the Judiciary, UGX 7,847,275,760 of which was Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) remitted to the Consolidated Fund. The balance of UGX 4,730,705,915 was bail deposits which are refundable to the litigants after the

disposal of cases. The NTR remitted to the Consolidated Fund increased by 37.75% from the previous year's collections.

B: Physical Court Performance

17. During the FY 2021/22, courts disposed of a total of **205,967 cases** out of a total caseload of **373,974**. This accounted for 55% of all cases in the system. Cases disposed of increased compared to FY 2020/21 where 156,875 cases out of the caseload of 317,929 were disposed of. The Magistrates Courts recorded the highest disposal rate of 71%.

The enhanced disposal of cases is, inter alia, attributed to the increased staffing levels, automation of court processes and increased use of ADR by the Courts.

Summary of court performance for FY 2021/22 by court level

| Court Level | Brought Forward | Registered | Caseload | Completed | Pending | Disposal Rate (%) | Clearance Rate (%) |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Supreme Court | 566 | 212 | 778 | 92 | 686 | 12 | 43.4 |
| Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court | 7,537 | 1,506 | 9,043 | 793 | 8,250 | 9 | 52.7 |
| High Courts | 59,947 | 41,010 | 100,957 | 36,766 | 64,191 | 36 | 89.7 |
| Chief Magistrates Courts | 58,683 | 124,964 | 183,647 | 112,488 | 71,159 | 61 | 90.0 |
| Magistrate Grade I Courts | 17,291 | 59,420 | 76,711 | 54,142 | 22,569 | 71 | 91.1 |
| Magistrate Grade II Courts | 575 | 2,263 | 2,838 | 1,686 | 1,152 | 59 | 74.5 |
| Grand Total | 144,599 | 229,375 | 373,974 | 205,967 | 168,007 | 55 | 90 |

Source: Court Case Performance Report for FY 2021/22

A trends analysis of court performance for FY 2020/21 and FY 2021/22

| Court Level | Registered | | Completed | | Pending | | Disposal Rate (%) | | Clearance Rate (%) | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
| Supreme Court | 209 | 212 | 102 | 92 | 614 | 686 | 14 | 12 | 49 | 43 |
| Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court | 1,853 | 1,506 | 1,504 | 793 | 7,591 | 8,250 | 17 | 9 | 81 | 53 |
| High Courts | 32,400 | 41,010 | 35,350 | 36,766 | 57,961 | 64,191 | 38 | 36 | 109 | 90 |
| Chief Magistrates Courts | 93,260 | 124,964 | 85,304 | 112,488 | 68,457 | 71,159 | 55 | 61 | 91 | 90 |
| Magistrate Grade I Courts | 35,651 | 59,420 | 32,574 | 54,142 | 25,846 | 22,569 | 56 | 71 | 91 | 91 |
| Magistrate Grade II Courts | 1,974 | 2,263 | 2,041 | 1,686 | 585 | 1,152 | 78 | 59 | 103 | 75 |
| Grand Total | 165,347 | 229,375 | 156,875 | 205,967 | 161,054 | 168,007 | 49 | 55 | 95 | 90 |

Disposal of election petitions

18. Following the general elections of 2021, the Judiciary registered a total of 160 petitions at the Parliamentary and Local Council Chairpersons level broken down as follows: 102 Parliamentary Petitions, 49 Local Council Chairpersons Petitions, 09 Miscellaneous Applications. In the Court of Appeal, a total of **162 Election Petition Appeals** were registered, 9 were withdrawn, while 151 were heard and completed. Among the appeals heard, 5 cases were sent for bye-elections while 8 cases were sent for retrial. We are happy that this time, all election matters were dealt with expeditiously.

Case management interventions

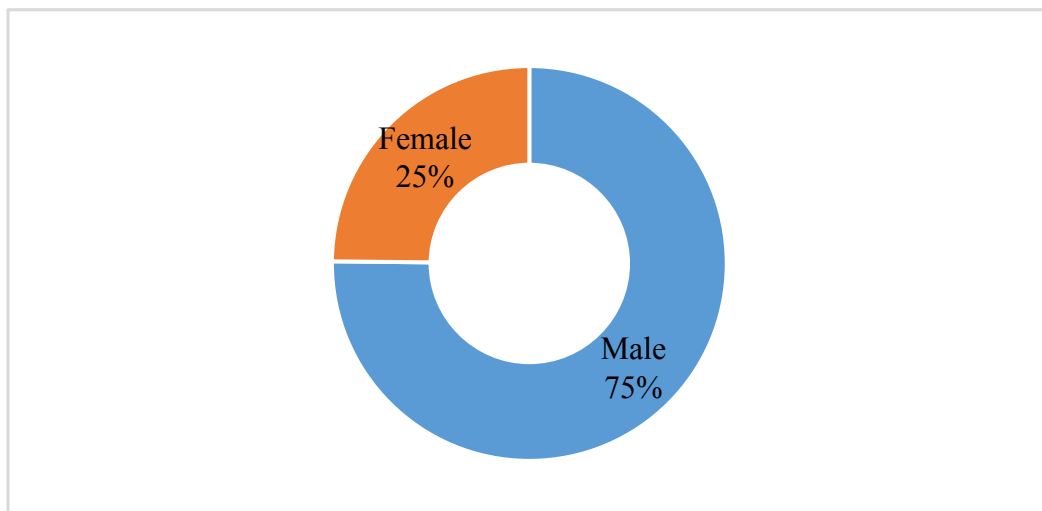
19. The Judiciary promoted Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and other case management interventions like plea bargain, mediation and small claims procedure. Plea-bargain

sessions The High Court conducted 15 plea-bargain sessions resulting in the disposal of 2,144 cases. Mediation A total of 3,617 cases for mediation were brought forward and 1,086 registered. Out of these, 1,851 cases were completed through mediation across court levels and 1051 were successful.

Small Claims Procedure

20. The roll-out of the Small Claims Procedure (SCP) was programmed on a country-wide basis and so far it's in 154 courts. During the FY 2021/22, SCP courts registered 14,648 cases and disposed of 11,675 at demand notice level. The 11,675 demand notices disposed of means that around 71.3% of the civil-commercial disputes resolved in the period were concluded at the pre-trial stage of issuing a demand notice. Overall, the SCP caused the recovery of UGX 14,361,149,224 (UGX 2,287,924,604 from demand notes and UGX 12,073,224,620 unlocked from the litigation process).

Gender distribution of claimants under Small claims Procedure



Cases handled under Mediation

21. In the FY 2021/22, a total of **3,617** cases for mediation were brought forward and **1,086** registered. Out of these, **1,851** cases were completed through mediation across court levels and 1052 were successful. Table 23 below shows the performance of courts in mediation.

Performance of the mediation programme for FY2021/22

| S/No | Court Level | Mediation Category | Brought Forward | Registered | Completed | Pending |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court | Civil | 11 | 83 | 53 | 41 |
| 2 | High Courts (Circuits and Division) | Commercial | 22 | 32 | 21 | 33 |
| | | Civil | 1,142 | 286 | 638 | 790 |
| | | Family | 1,342 | 87 | 242 | 1,187 |
| | | Land | 456 | 97 | 457 | 96 |
| 3 | Chief Magistrates Courts | Civil | 255 | 335 | 232 | 358 |
| | | Land | 203 | 43 | 32 | 214 |
| 4 | Magistrate Grade I Courts | Civil | 83 | 65 | 87 | 61 |
| | | Family | 27 | 10 | 8 | 29 |
| | | Land | 76 | 48 | 81 | 43 |
| Total | | | 3,617 | 1,086 | 1,851 | 2,852 |

Source: Court Case Performance Report for FY 2021/22

Plea-bargaining programme

During the FY 2021/22, the High Court conducted 15 plea-bargaining sessions resulting in the disposal of **2,144** cases under the scheme as shown in Table 15 and Figure 8 below. The High Court Circuits and Divisions that participated in these sessions were Mbarara, Mukono, Masindi, Mbale, Kabale (at Rukungiri), Jinja, Mubende, Mukono and the Criminal Division (at Entebbe and Kitalya Prison), Masaka High Court, Mukono High Court at Nakasongola Main prison, Soroti High Court and Mbarara Chief Magistrate court.

Performance on plea-bargaining for FY 2021/22

| S/N o. | Station | Number of cases cause listed | Number of completed cases |
|--------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Jinja High Court | 30 | 23 |
| 2 | Mubende High Court | 59 | 59 |
| 3 | Criminal Division at Kitalya Prison. | 72 | 49 |
| 4 | Kigo Prison | 22 | 11 |
| 5 | Mukono High Court | 110 | 89 |
| 6 | Masaka High Court | 43 | 43 |
| 7 | Criminal Division | 6 | 6 |
| 8 | Mukono High Court at Nakasongola Main prison | 46 | 29 |
| 9 | Masindi High Court at Main Prison | 158 | 118 |
| | | 158 | 116 |
| | | 95 | 99 |
| 10 | Soroti High Court | 63 | 63 |
| 11 | Mbarara High Court | 17 | 17 |
| | | 124 | 124 |
| | | 89 | 89 |
| 12 | Mbarara Chief Magistrate court | 271 | 271 |
| | | 70 | 70 |
| | | 34 | 34 |
| | | 80 | 80 |
| 13 | Mbarara and Bushenyi prisons | 652 | 652 |
| 14 | Nakasongola Prison | 75 | 75 |
| 15 | Criminal Division at Rukungiri & Kabale | 27 | 27 |

| S/N o. | Station | Number of cases cause listed | Number of completed cases |
|--------|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Total | 2,301 | 2,144 |

Source: Office of the Principal Judge, Office of the Registrar, High Court and Court Case Performance Report for FY 2021/22

Special sessions on sexual and gender based violence related cases

22. The Judiciary together with the Governance and Security Programme Secretariat (Formerly Justice Law and Order sector-JLOS) with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other development partners has over the last four years been implementing a project on disposal of Sexual and Gender Based violence (SGBV) related cases in a number of districts.

The Judiciary organized 14 criminal sessions in selected districts of Kampala (Criminal Division), and High Court circuits sitting at; **Tororo, Iganga, Mbarara, Gulu, Moroto, Kasese, Masaka, Otuke, Adjumani** while the four (4) sessions were conducted by Chief Magistrates at **Tororo, Apac, Busia and Nakapiripirit** disposing of a total of 682 cases.

C: Reform of the laws and court procedures

23. The following rules were formulated, approved, signed by the CJ and gazetted for use on 28th June 2022:
- a. The Judicature (Court Bailiffs) (Practice) Rules, SI No. 53/ 2022.
 - b. The Judicature (Amicus Curiae) Rules, SI No. 54/ 2022.
 - c. The Judicature (Legal Representation at the Expense of the State) Rules, SI No. 55/ 2022.
 - d. The Constitution (Bail Guidelines for Courts of Judicature) (Practice) Directions, L.N. No. 8/2022.

D: Construction of courts

24. The Judiciary, through its Infrastructure Committee, developed Guidelines for Architectural Designs (Standardisation of Courthouses) to provide minimum standards that should be considered while designing and constructing Courthouses across the country.
25. In the FY 2021/22 the Judiciary had 429 gazetted courts of which 300 were operational. Out of these, 150 courts were in self-owned premises, 74 in rented premises, while 76 were in district and sub- county buildings.
26. The Judiciary increased physical access to Judiciary services through construction of Courts notably, the GoU-funded construction project of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal buildings in Kampala which were at 70% completion. Other ongoing construction projects at various stages were Mukono High Court, Kole Justice Centre and Namayingo Justice Centre which were at completion stage. Mayuge Chief Magistrates Court, Buyende Magistrates Court, Sembabule Justice Centre, Butambala mini Justice Centre and Kamwenge mini Justice Centre were still under the defects liability period. Clearance was ongoing at the Magistrates Courts of Patongo, Alebtong and Karenga.

E: Automation of court processes

27. The Judiciary automated court processes in an effort to improve the administration of justice. The Electronic Court Case Management Information System (ECCMIS) Go-Live was launched on 1st March 2022 in the seven pilot courts namely:

Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Anti-Corruption Division, Commercial Division, Lands Division, Civil Division and Mengo Chief Magistrate Court. The roll-out to other courts was planned to be in a phased manner. The ECCMIS was expected to improve efficiency and record-keeping, allow inter-institutional data integration and also reduce chances of physical contact with court staff which in itself could reduce opportunities of corruption.

28. The registered benefits of ECCMIS so far include increased case registration with a total of 5,391 cases registered through ECCMIS; increased Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) collection and increased use of E-payment mode of paying court fees and fines.

The Table below summarises registered cases in the first four (4) months of its operation.

Cases registered under ECCMIS in the first four months

| S/No. | Court | Number of Cases Registered Manually in February, 2022 | Case Registered in ECCMIS | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | | March, 2022 | April, 2022 | May, 2022 | June, 2022 |
| | Court | Feb-22 | March, 2022 | April, 2022 | May, 2022 | June, 2022 |
| 1 | Supreme Court | 10 | 13 | 16 | 7 | 7 |
| 2 | Court of Appeal/Constitutional Court | 137 | 141 | 121 | 108 | 202 |
| 3 | Anti-Corruption Division | 21 | 32 | 19 | 23 | 25 |
| 4 | Civil Division | 251 | 170 | 123 | 154 | 177 |
| 5 | Commercial Division | 82 | 217 | 309 | 470 | 375 |
| 6 | Lands Division | 149 | 271 | 312 | 459 | 471 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 7 | Mengo Chief Magistrates Court | 247 | 355 | 239 | 293 | 282 |
| TOTAL | | 897 | 1,199 | 1,139 | 1,514 | 1,539 |
| Rate | | | 34 | 27 | 69 | 72 |

F: Recruitments and promotions

29. The Judiciary received 258 Judicial Officers, newly appointed in the Judiciary Service to bridge the staffing gaps and improve service delivery for the FY 2021/22. They included: Two Justices of the Court of Appeal, 21 Judges of the High Court, 3 Registrars, 11 Deputy Registrars, 6 Assistant Registrars, 47 Chief Magistrates, 10 Senior Principal Magistrates Grade One, 19 Principal Magistrates Grade One, 26 Senior Magistrates Grade One and 143 Magistrates Grade One. This recruitment increased the staffing levels of judicial officers from 37% in FY 2020/21 to 45% in FY 2021/22.

G: Challenges faced by the Judiciary

In spite of the notable achievements registered during the Financial Year, a sizeable number of challenges still stands in our way towards realising our set dreams.

(a) Case Backlog

At the close of the FY 2021/22, the case backlog stood at 50,592 cases (30.11%) against 168,007 pending cases. This was a 2.23% (1,156 cases) reduction from the FY 2020/21 status of 51,748 backlog cases

against 161,054 pending cases. The biggest backlog was at the High Court with a total of 31,657 backlog cases.

- i. In the Supreme Court, 335 (49.2%) cases of 686 pending are backlog cases.
- ii. In the Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court 4,887 (11.3%) of the 8,250 pending cases are backlog.
- iii. 11,650 (37.6%) cases of the 30,969 pending at High Court Divisions were backlog cases.
- iv. In the High Court Circuits 19,824 (59.6%) cases of the 33,222 pending were backlog cases.
- v. In the Chief Magistrates Courts 11,231 (15.7%) of the 71,159 pending cases were backlog cases.
- vi. 2,560 (11.3%) cases of the 22,569 pending cases at the Magistrate Grade 1 Courts were backlog cases.
- vii. In the Magistrate Grade II Courts, 79 (6.8) of the 1,152 pending cases were backlog cases.

(b) Weaknesses and inadequacies of the key sister agencies

The quality of police investigations remained wanting in many cases, leading to frustration of justice when many cases collapsed due to lack of persuasive evidence. There is lack of necessary equipment and resources to facilitate investigations.

The human resource deficiency in the Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions was grave with the office operating at 37% of its approved structure of prosecutors. As at the end of the year 2021, prosecutors were unavailable in 102 courts throughout the country where magistrates were ready to render justice.

(c) Inadequate capacity of the Judicial Service Commission

The JSC does not have full time membership and its sittings are ad hoc. This situation caused delays in the recruitment process and disposal of disciplinary matters involving judiciary staff.

(d) Man power gaps

The number of Judicial Officers was still low in comparison with the caseload they had to grapple with. In addition, the structure and establishment of non-judicial officers was still pending Cabinet approval. Judicial officers need the support of administrative staff including clerks, process servers, secretaries among others to meaningfully execute their duties.

(e) Low salaries for administrative and support staff

While the salaries of Judicial Officers were enhanced to reasonable levels, the administrative and support staff still grapple with very little pay. This affected their day-to-day livelihood and negatively impacted on their morale and output.

(f) Inadequate court infrastructure

Most of the court buildings were not only old but also small and inadequate to match the staff and court user space needs. Very crucial courts were operating from rented premises, while other gazetted Courts, including some High Court Circuits, could not start operations because of lack of premises.

(g) Shortage of transport

The Judiciary still faced a big challenge of inadequate vehicles to facilitate the work of judicial officers especially those at the lower bench and in hard-to-reach areas like the islands of Koome, Buvuma and Kalangala. A water vessel to traverse the islands was also urgently needed.

(h) Poor road infrastructure and insecurity in some parts of the country

The road network in some places such as Buhweju, Kanungu, Bulambuli, Kaabong, among others, remained very poor, hence making accessibility and performance of courts very difficult. Some places, especially in the Karamoja region still faced insecurity that has threatened life and property which affected delivery of justice services.

(i) Insecurity of Judicial Officers and the Courts

Judicial Officers and other justice service providers have continued to receive threats from known and unknown sources. The Judiciary condemns this vice and undertakes to support its officers to fight this indiscipline.

(j) Impudence and refusal to respect court orders.

During the enforcement of court orders, some bailiffs have refused to follow the legal steps resorting to enforcing the orders unlawfully, violently, destructively and sometimes at night. We also experienced disrespect of court orders and interference with the execution process by some members of the armed forces, some Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) and even some lawyers.

(k) Corruption

While incidents of corruption have reduced in the Judiciary, the vice still looms. We have received reports of litigants and lawyers who made attempts to solicit or offer bribes to the court staff. Some Court staff were accused of soliciting and or accepting bribes in order to cause undesired results such as hiding files, removing some key documents from files, granting or denying bail or even deciding cases in a certain way. The Judiciary will continue hunting down these errant persons and ensure that they are eliminated from the Courts.

(I) Indiscipline of litigants/Advocates

There is growing indiscipline among the litigants and advocates. Unfortunately, there are delays by the Law Council to dispose of these disciplinary cases involving advocates. Judiciary experienced a breed of litigants who were not advocates but were doing legal practice under guise.

H: Recommendations

A number of interventions have been adopted to ameliorate the challenges. We believe the following interventions will lead us to the promised land.

1. Enhance the Judiciary budget and explore other funding options.
2. Commitment to effective implementation of the Judiciary Strategic Plan V
3. Full implementation of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020
4. Fighting case backlog through improved staffing levels and case management innovations.
5. Establishing more courts and Justice Centers
6. Advancing the use of ICT and other technologies
7. Promoting ADR & Other Case Management Interventions, such as Plea-Bargaining, Small Claims Procedure; and Mediation.
8. Manpower Planning and Development
9. Enhancing Judiciary Physical Infrastructure

10. Continuous confronting of the vice of corruption
11. Reforming of laws and procedural rules
12. Improving stakeholder engagement and participation

I: Key priorities for the FY 2022/23

(a) Recruitment

The Judiciary plans to recruit 10 High Court Judges, 6 Registrars, 13 Deputy Registrars, 8 Assistant Registrars, 13 Chief Magistrates and 71 Magistrates Grade 1 in FY 2022/23 to address enormous the demand for Judiciary services.

(b) Operationalisation of new courts

The Judiciary will operationalise new High Court Circuits in Moroto, Tororo, Iganga, Luwero, Hoima, and Rukungiri. There are also plans to open up more High Court Circuits at Nebbi, Kitgum, Apac, Kumi, Kamuli, Lyantonde, Bushenyi and Kasese to alleviate the severe inhibitions to access to justice in these areas.

(c) Procurement of more transport equipment

The Judiciary will procure vehicles for the Justices, Judges, Registrars and Magistrates especially those in hard to reach areas to facilitate locus visits and other adjudication functions of courts. A total of 72 vehicles, a marine boat and 52 motorcycles will be procured.

(d) Provision of alternative sources of power

The Judiciary will continue to use technology in the administration of Justice. Effective application of the video conferencing system, court recording and transcription equipment and the ECCMIS requires uninterrupted power supply. The Judiciary intends to provide

generators to 12 courts and solar equipment to 12 others to forestall the challenges of the frequent unreliable power supply in most parts of the country, which hamper the ICT initiatives in courts.

(e) Automation of courts

The Judiciary will operationalise the 2nd Phase of the ECCMIS to bring the total number of court stations with the system to 11. These include: Three Divisions of the High Court, 1 High Court at the Circuit, five (5) Chief Magistrates Courts and 3 Magistrates Grade 1 Courts. The video conferencing systems will be rolled out to the Court of Appeal and High Court (Criminal Division) while the court recording and transcription systems will be introduced to 6 new High Courts Circuits of Tororo, Moroto, Luwero, Rukungiri, Hoima and Iganga. The Local/Wide Area Network (LAN/WAN) Infrastructure will be extended to and upgraded at ten (10) court stations respectively.

The Judiciary will also digitalise and upload current physical court files for the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court into the ECCMIS; procure 50 digital voice recording machines for chamber court hearings; and develop a judgment writing tool.

Furthermore, the biometric time attendance systems will be rolled out to 20 courts (High Court and Chief Magistrates Courts) at Arua, Fort Portal, Gulu, Jinja, Kabale, Lira, Masaka, Masindi, Mbarara, Mbale, Mpigi, Mubende, Mukono, Soroti, Tororo, Luwero, Moroto, Rukungiri, Iganga and Hoima. This is intended to monitor the attendance of court staff and ensure enhanced output.

(f) Strengthening the Inspectorate of Courts

The Judiciary will opening regional offices in Mbarara and Gulu. The number of inspector will be increased to match the work load.

(g) Capacity building

We undertake to strengthen the Judicial Training Institute and scale up inductions for all new judicial and non-judicial officers. In addition, more refresher trainings will be conducted for all staff.

H: Conclusion

The Judiciary is committed and ready to do whatever it takes to ensure that justice reaches every man and woman in this land. The Government has promised to continue supporting our cause for which we are much grateful. We promise our dear Ugandans that we shall continue to do our best to ensure that judiciary services are delivered timely.

I would like to thank the Hon. Deputy Chief Justice, the Principal Judge, the Justices and Judges of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court, the Chief Registrar, Secretary to the Judiciary, the Registrars and Magistrates; Heads of Departments and Units; and all the staff of the Judiciary for their efforts that account for this commendable performance.

I also extend our profound appreciation to the Executive and the Legislative Arms of Government; the Justice Law and Order Institutions, the Administration of Justice Programme institutions, the Development Partners (especially, the UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, World Bank, Pepperdine University, HiiL, and the Human Trafficking Institute, among others) for the financial and technical support; the Civil Society Organisations and the media fraternity; for your inalienable contribution and excellent partnership during the reporting period.

Last but not least, I commend the Chief Registrar and your team who developed this second Judiciary Annual Performance Report. I am grateful to all of you who have managed to personally attend this launch. Your presence cannot be taken for granted – it points to your commitment to the cause of Justice. May the Good Lord Bless you and keep you safe and sound.

For God and My Country.

Alfonse Chigamoy Owiny – Dollo
CHIEF JUSTICE