



# BEYOND JUST POLITICS; THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY IN UGANDA'S POLITICAL ECO-SYSTEM

## TOWN HALL AND VIRTUAL MEETING

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#### CONCEPT NOTE

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## 1. Introduction

The Public Policy institute (PPI) has teamed up with CivSource-Africa to convene a postelection reflection on the impact of the creative industry on the 2021 general elections. Like never before, artists have claimed a significant part of Uganda's political space. This postelection reflection will examine why and how this has come to pass. It will also examine the implications of having such many members from the creative industry in Uganda's political landscape and what this means for Uganda's democratic pursuits. The Town Hall and virtual meeting is scheduled to take place on **Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at Sheraton Hotel**. The townhall and virtual meeting will specifically focus on the following;

- a) The influence of the creative industry on Uganda's political eco-system and its implication for political participation and consensus building.
- b) The potency of artists-turned politicians as a social transformative force in Uganda's current political pursuits.
- c) Highlight the possible scenarios and approaches the new legislators and administrators from the creative industry will embrace to provide the change that the voters are seeking. And
- d) Generate the necessary policy shifts to strengthen the creative industry and its participation in and contribution to democratic participation and governance.

## 2. Context

Art and popular culture as an example of the creative industry is relevant in all sectors of life – private and public, since it entertains, clarifies, empowers, and reminds us of our civic duties and stake in national development <sup>1</sup>. The recently concluded 2021 Presidential, Parliamentary, and local government elections brought to the table many surprises. Contestants who were previously thought not to be material for high profile offices, have in the January 2021 elections emerged winners, defeating seasoned politicians, and in some cases those from the elite class. Traditionally, politicians have been drawn from disciplines considered to be academic and professional, at the bottom of which are the creative disciplines, such as visual art, music, drama, and dance. These occupy a bottom position because, either little is known about their potency as a social

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<sup>1</sup> Kyeyune G., 2018. The Role of Art and Popular Culture in Promoting Democratic Principles and Social Justice. Public Policy Institute, Kampala



transformative force or they are believed not to be intellectually engaging enough, or both. Artists have taken advantage of this ambivalence, taking a plunge into politics with dramatic results.

It is ironical however that, politicians have employed artists to enhance their campaigns. political aspirants believe that artists are simply gifted in producing captivating compositions but not smart enough to be in positions of political leadership, which was not the case according to the January 2021 elections. The last elections had a lot of things at stake such as the young voters being unhappy with the high level of unemployment, the citizenry disgruntled about tampering with the constitution, the pomp exhibited by the elite, etc...opened loopholes which artists took advantage of. When artists, moreover most of whom young and energetic, offered themselves to be elected, people at the grass roots and urban spaces listened and heeded. Many young voters identified with their mantra of *a new Uganda*. There is a difference however, between understanding the concerns of the ordinary Ugandan and having the capacity to tackle them. Many of the artists in any case, hire managers who co-ordinate their businesses. Without political or even administrative experience, it remains a concern on how the new legislators and administrators from the creative industry will provide the much-needed change that the voters are seeking.

## 2.1 Objectives

The specific objectives are;

- e) To analyse the influence of the creative industry on Uganda's political eco-system and its implication for political participation and consensus building.
- f) To assess the potency of artists-turned politicians as a social transformative force in Uganda's political eco-system
- g) To discuss possible scenarios and approaches the new legislators and administrators from the creative industry will embrace to provide the change that the voters are seeking.
- h) To generate the necessary policy shifts to strengthen the creative industry and its participation in and contribution to democratic participation and governance.

## 2.2 Methodology

To align with the Ministry of Health standard operating procedures to combat the spread of COVID-19, the scientific event will be conducted through a town hall and virtual meeting with an in-house audience of 40 participants and an online audience that will be connect via zoom, Facebook live and YouTube.

The discussions will be informed by a paper by the Public Policy Institute that examines why and how 'without political or even administrative experience, the new legislators and administrators from the creative industry will provide the much-needed change that the voters are seeking' and the implications of having such a large number of members from the creative industry in Uganda's political landscape in the years to come. The presentation of the paper will be followed by a representative panel discussion informed by the paper, objectives of the townhall and their individual experiences in the creative industry and politics.



## PROGRAMME

| <u>Time</u>  | <u>Activity</u>  | <u>Responsible Person</u>  |
|--|--|--|
| 08:30 – 09:00 am   | Arrivals and registration  |  |
| 09:00 – 09:15 am   | <i>Opening remarks</i>   | Ms. Asimwe Jacqueline<br><br>Chief Executive Officer,<br>CivSource Africa  |
| 09:15 – 9:45 am  | <b><i>Presentation</i></b><br><br>The Impact of the Creative Industry on the 2021 General elections and Uganda’s Political Outlook Ahead of the 2026               | Mr. Emmanuel Kitamirike<br><br>Associate Director, Public Policy Institute |
| 9:45 – 10:15 am  | <i>Tea Break</i>   |  |
| <i>Panel Discussion</i> – Moderated by Ms. Brendalyn Kirungi |  |  |
| 10:15 – 10:35 am   | The influence of the creative industry on Uganda’s political eco-system and its implication for political participation and consensus building.                    | Ms. Joyce Bagala,<br>Woman MP Elect, Kasanda District                      |
| 10:35 – 10:50 am   | The potency of artists-turned politicians as a social transformative force in Uganda’s current political pursuits.   | Owek. Wamala Nyanzi,<br>Wamala Nyanzi Art Studio<br>Kampala                |
| 10:50 – 11:10 am   | Possible scenarios and approaches the new legislators and administrators from the creative industry will embrace to provide the change that the voters are seeking | Hon. Rachael Magoola,<br>Woman MP Elect, Bugweri District                  |
| 11:10am – 12:10pm  | <i>Plenary Discussion</i>  |  |
| 12:10 – 12:25 pm   | <i>Final Remarks from the Panelists</i>  |  |
| 12:25 – 1:00pm   | <i>Lunch, Networking and Departure at Leisure</i>  |  |