

Talking notes

1. The 2004 Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development issued a National Youth Policy in which it identified major problems, issues and interest of the youth
2. Underemployment, unemployment, a poor education system, inadequate health facilities and deal with needs of the youth limited participation of youth in leadership, lack of leisure communities and juvenile delinquency
3. Those are problems which these seeking office in elections and those in governance are expected to address. The expectation therefore is that youths would be at the heart of elections and governance to push for their interests.
4. The youths of the 60's were in a much better position because politics then was mainly ideological. It was based on the concepts of Marxism, Communism, Capitalism, Social democracy etc. There was a platform upon which debate was conducted as the best alternative for youth problems.
5. Today's politics is substantially different as there is decreased emphasis on ideology. Elections are most commonly made on the basis of individual leader's characteristics, ethnicity, patronage and other effective indentities. Leaders avoid controversial topics for and gravitate towards populism. Ideology is less relevant to the electoral process. As a result youth's role and impact will too be guided by these factors
6. The major reasons for political indifference protests instead of participation, revolt instead of representation acting instead of complaining and violence are
 - (a) Lack of political will on the part of government. The 1994 National Youth Council Act creates a powerful youth movement thru which youths would effectively engage in politics, elections and governance. All youths in a village belong to the village council. There are executive committees at village, parish sub county and district levels. There are 58,000 villages, 7600 parishes 1390 sub counties and 112 districts. Each

of these units has an executive of 9 members. These are 67,102 executive committees. This translates into 603,918 leaders.

Under Section 18 of the National Youth Council Act, parliament and Local Government Councils are supposed to appropriate money for functions of these councils. Because the money appropriated since 1994 does not include the function of these councils, the youth act why?

(b) A clogged system

President Museveni, Amama Mbabazi and Kizza Besigye the leading candidates in the presidential elections were powerful figures in government in 1986. They called the shots, they still call the shots. They have therefore set the youth political agenda since then. How do you originate your own ideas when you are an appendage. Your views are subject to the same people for 31 years. Compare with China

(c) Manipulation

Because they are manipulated during elections, despresidency set in after elections and they disengage and start complaining. See the recruitment of crime preventers in the run up to 2011 elections when 30 youths were recruited as crime preventers per village with the promise that they would be absorbed in police after elections. There were a political ploy then, they are a political ploy today. Kizza Besigye is telling P10 to keep the cards. The shuttle message is: if I make it you will be rewarded. Suppose he does, will he keep the promise?

(d) Patronage

Uganda has adopted a patronage system which undermines genuine political debate among the youth. These reduces on impact of the youth in elections and governess. It leads to youths jumping from one political party to another. Omodo Omodo and Luzindana , sacks of money carried on someone head to give to the youth. This commercialization of politics has reduced youth political leaders to "eating "and greatly affected genuine involvement in politics

- (e) The 1995 Constitution and youth representation in parliament was a stop gap measure. Not a permanent solution. Now youths take it that their MPS are the ones to sort out their problems. No
- (f) Lack of a reading culture

For the youth to be effective on elections and governance they have to develop a reading culture. Only then can you interrogate the manifestos and promises made, make an analysis and come up with a decision. Museveni, Rugunda, Olala Otunnu the late Omwony Ojok while at University read challenged the leaders. And then leaders had to listen. You can ignore facts.

7. Institutional building

Strong institutions ensure accountability and transparency. The executive, legislature and judiciary have a role to play in building a justice society in which the role and impact of youth in politics can be realized. Unfortunately our institutions are still weak and this has a bearing on the topic we are discussing

8. Wrong messages by political leaders impact youth thinking. I will only leave power if East Africa is united; If elections are rigged there will be a coup; I will go to the bush. What do we expect the youth to think? That the elections are a means to change am I? ~~What~~ Why should youths then do as jai as elections are carried?