



THE JUDICIARY OF UGANDA

**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NRM MANIFESTO COMMITMENTS AND  
STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE PERIOD 2021 TO  
MARCH 2023**

*Presented to the Manifesto Implementation Unit*

*By*

***The Permanent Secretary/ Secretary To  
Judiciary***

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# OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines
3. Commitments made but not met
4. Challenges
5. Recommendations



# INTRODUCTION

The NRM Manifesto 2021-2026 highlights 5 commitments under Law and Order as ways of improving access to justice. The commitments include;

- i. Exploit processes for remote online adjudication of cases drawing from COVID-19 lessons,
- ii. Use ICT to minimize human-to-human contact in the delivery of services so as to reduce corruption,
- iii. Instill zero tolerance for corruption in the judicial system by introducing systems and periodic monitoring of Judicial Officers,
- iv. Recruit more judicial and other officers to fill the established positions in the Judiciary,
- v. Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters



## INTRODUCTION ...CONT'D.

The Judiciary also contributes to Directive 17 under Presidential Strategic Guideline and Directives issued by HE The President to Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016.

*“Investments cannot flow into a country that has got a weak or corrupt judiciary. Therefore, this government should work with the Chief Justice to gradually and affordably improve the working conditions of the Judiciary — salaries, institutional houses, offices and cars. Through inspection and intelligence, however, corruption must be eliminated from the Judiciary. It is shameful that the Judiciary contains corrupt elements that take bribes in order to distort the deciding of cases. It must be stopped.”*



# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>1) Exploit processes for remote online adjudication of cases drawing from COVID-19 lessons <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p><b>i. Video Conferencing System (VCS);</b> In a bid to embrace online hearing of cases and enhance capacity of Courts to reduce case backlog, the Judiciary installed Video Conferencing Systems in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supreme Court</li> <li>b) Court of Appeal</li> <li>c) High Court at Kampala</li> <li>d) Commercial Division</li> <li>e) 11 High Court Circuits (Mbarara, Arua, Masindi, Masaka, Jinja, Soroti, Lira, Fort Portal, Kabale, Mubende and Mbale);</li> <li>f) Buganda Road Chief Magistrates Court</li> </ul> <p>During this FY 2022/23, the Judiciary is installing two Video Conferencing Systems at Court of Appeal (COA) and High Court (Criminal Division).</p>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>1) Exploit processes for remote online adjudication of cases drawing from COVID-19 lessons (C'td) <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Court Recording and Transcription Systems (CR&amp;TS) have been rolled out (9 sets) to 4 High Court Divisions (Land, Civil, Criminal and Family), Rukungiri and Luwero High Courts.</li> <li>iii. Procured and installed 47 digital Voice Recorders for Chamber hearings in courts operating ECCMIS.</li> <li>iv. In this FY 2022/23, the Judiciary is installing additional 4 Court Recording and Transcription Systems for the 4 new High Court Circuits of Tororo, Moroto, Hoima and Iganga.</li> <li>v. The Judiciary procured computers and laptops for Judicial Officers as working tools hence increasing the proportion of computers to users from 52% to 67%.</li> <li>vi. Expanded internet infrastructure in Courts from 34% to 43% coverage across the Country;</li> <li>vii. Increased access to Online Digital Legal and Research databases for Judicial Officers such Lexis Nexus from 462 to 684 users</li> </ul>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>2) Use ICT to minimise human-to-human contact in the delivery of services so as to reduce corruption <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Electronic Court Case Management Information System (ECCMIS) Go-Live was launched on the 1st March, 2022 and is being implemented in 8 Court Stations at:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supreme Court;</li> <li>b) Court of Appeal;</li> <li>c) 3 High Court Divisions:- Land, Civil, Commercial and Anti-Corruption;</li> <li>d) Luwero High Court; and</li> <li>e) Mengo Chief Magistrates Court.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements of the ECCMIS Implementation since its launch:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The average case filing rate has increased at a rate of 2.8% in the courts operating ECCMIS.</li> <li>b) Non Tax Revenue (NTR) has increased from <b>UGX. 5 Bn to 7 Bn.</b></li> <li>c) Increased use of e-payment methods for Court fees from 4,421 transactions to 5,567 transactions (25%).</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. Development of a Judgement Writing Tool is underway to ease Judgment writing for Judicial Officers and improve on the lead times for disposal of cases.</li> </ul>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>3) Instill zero tolerance for corruption in the judicial system by introducing systems and periodic monitoring of Judicial Officers <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Strengthened the Judiciary Inspectorate of Courts to work closely with the Judicial Service Commission to ensure that errant Officers are held accountable. Over 102 cases have been handled by the disciplinary committee and appropriate actions have been taken.</li> <li>ii. The Judiciary developed the Judiciary Anti-Corruption Strategy 2023 – 2030 to strengthen capacity to combat corruption;</li> <li>iii. The implementation of ECCMIS in the 8 Courts has minimised human-to-human contact in the delivery of services and thus has reduced incidences of corruption;</li> <li>iv. The Judiciary has provided uniforms to staff specifically Clerks, Process servers, Office attendant and Drivers to ease identification and thus reduced incidences of people masquerading as Court Staff;</li> <li>v. The Judiciary has put up Toll free hotlines (0800 111 900/ 0800 225 587) for the public to report acts of corruption and unprofessional conduct of Staff;</li> <li>vi. The Judiciary installed CCTV cameras around Court premises (Commercial Division, Gulu, Mbarara, Mbale and Fort Potal High Court Circuits and Buganda Road CM) and Registries (Anti-Corruption, Land, Civil and Criminal Divisions, Entebbe and Mengo CM) to assist monitor the ongoing activities.</li> </ul>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>4) Recruit more judicial and other officers to fill the established positions in the Judiciary <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p>The Judiciary received a total of 380 new appointments and promotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Justices of Supreme Court (3);</li> <li>b) Justices of Court of Appeal (2);</li> <li>c) Judges of the High court (21);</li> <li>d) Registrars (3);</li> <li>e) Deputy Registrars (11);</li> <li>f) Assistant Registrars (6);</li> <li>g) Chief Magistrates (42);</li> <li>h) Magistrates Grade One (173)</li> <li>i) Administrative Staff (119).</li> </ul> <p>Currently, <b>46%</b> of the approved staff structure is filled. The resolution by Cabinet to expand the structure of Judicial Officers of the Upper Bench is pending the amendment of the Judicature Act by Parliament.</p>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>5) Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p>Improved physical access to Judiciary services and proximity to Courts through:</p> <p><b>a) Construction of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal Buildings.</b> The construction of Supreme Court building is at 92 percent of completion while Court of Appeal is at 85 percent completion.</p> <p><b>b) Completed the construction of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Mukono High Court,</li> <li>ii. 4 Justice Centres at Sembabule, Buhweju, Maracha &amp; Namayingo;</li> <li>iii. 3 Chief Magistrate Courts at Mayuge, Kamwenge and Butambala.</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Ongoing constructions of 12 Court buildings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 3 Justice Centres at Sheema, Kole &amp; Kibaale;</li> <li>ii. 3 High Court buildings at Tororo, Rukungiri &amp; Soroti;</li> <li>iii. 3 Chief Magistrates Court buildings at Albetong, Lyantonde, and Budaka;</li> <li>iv. 3 Magistrate Grade I Court buildings at Abim, Patongo and Karenga.</li> </ul>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>5) Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters (C'td) (<i>Page 83 of the abridged edition</i>)</p>	<p><b>d) Completed renovation of 11 Court buildings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 3 High Court buildings (Lira, Masaka &amp; Mbale High Court);</li> <li>ii. 8 Chief Magistrates Court buildings (Makindye, Hoima, Luwero, Ntungamo, Kisoro, Nebbi, Tororo and Masindi).</li> </ul> <p><b>e) Ongoing renovation of Court buildings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Gulu High Court;</li> <li>ii. 6 Chief Magistrate Court buildings at (Tororo, Pader, Moroto, Oyam, Katakwi and Mbale);</li> <li>iii. Nabilatuk Magistrate Grade I Court.</li> </ul>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>5) Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters (C'td) <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p>f) Operationalized 6 new High Court Circuits of Iganga, Tororo, Luwero, Hoima, Rukungiri and Moroto;</p> <p>g) Deployed resident Chief Magistrates in 11 Magisterial areas at Kaggansi, Amuru, Kiruhura, Katakwi, Buhweju, Rakai, Kisoro, Dokolo, Mayuge, Kiryandongo and Sironko. In addition, Court stations with heavy caseload at Chief Magistrates level like Nakawa, Buganda Road and Mengo now have two Chief Magistrates;</p> <p>h) Deployed Magistrates Grade Ones at Mukuuto and Namungalwe sub-counties in Iganga District and Buvuma Island;</p>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>5) Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p>i) Increased Case Disposal Courts disposed of 205,967 cases in the FY 2021/22 compared to 156,875 cases disposed of in the FY 2020/21 resulting in a 31 % increase in case disposal.</p> <p>As at end of March 2023, Courts disposed of 176,825 cases against the target of 172,564 cases performing at 102.5% against the planned target.</p> <p>As a result of the above performance, Courts recorded an overall decrease in case backlog from 32% to 26%.</p> <p>The good performance is attributed to the increased number of Judicial Officers, use of ICT in case handling, use of plea-bargaining, Small Claims Procedure and Mediation.</p>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

NRM Manifesto Commitment	Progress
<p>5) Uphold the Administration of Judiciary Act 2020 which serves to provide for the efficient and effective administration of the Judiciary; strengthen the independence of the Judiciary; and provide for retirement benefits of judicial officers and related matters (C'td) <i>(Page 83 of the abridged edition)</i></p>	<p>j) Acquired additional transport equipment to enhance capacity of Courts to timely adjudicate cases. A total of 138 vehicles and 102 motorcycles were acquired to facilitate adjudication of cases.</p> <p>k) Retirement benefits are being provided for 222 Judicial Officers in line with the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020.</p>

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

Implementation of Directive 17 issued by H.E The President to Cabinet on 23rd June 2016

Progress

Investments cannot flow into a country that has got a weak or corrupt judiciary. Therefore, this government should work with the Chief Justice to gradually and affordably improve the working conditions of the Judiciary — salaries, institutional houses, offices and cars. Through inspection and intelligence, however, corruption must be eliminated from the Judiciary. It is shameful that the Judiciary contains corrupt elements that take bribes in order to distort the deciding of cases. It must be stopped.

## 1) Salaries

The Government enhanced pay for Judicial officers. Justices and Judges have attained 100% of the approved pay target which translates into 56% salary increase.

However, Judicial officers of the lower bench have so far attained an average of 84% of the approved pay target as follows;

1. Chief Registrar – 100%
2. Registrars - 75%
3. Deputy Registrars - 72%
4. Assistant Registrars – 70%
5. Chief Magistrates - 70%
6. Magistrate Grade One - 92%

# Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines

## Implementation of Directive 17 issued by H.E The President to Cabinet on 23rd June 2016

## Progress

Investments cannot flow into a country that has got a weak or corrupt judiciary. Therefore, this government should work with the Chief Justice to gradually and affordably improve the working conditions of the Judiciary — salaries, institutional houses, offices and cars. Through inspection and intelligence, however, corruption must be eliminated from the Judiciary. It is shameful that the Judiciary contains corrupt elements that take bribes in order to distort the deciding of cases. It must be stopped. (C'td)

### 2) Institutional houses

No institutional houses have been constructed since 2016.

### 3) Construction of Courts

(a) Sixteen (16) Courts have been constructed since 2016:

- i. 3 High Court building of Masindi, Mukono & Kabale;
- ii. 10 Justice Centers at Rubirizi, Mitooma, Kiruhura, Nakaseke, Mityana, Wakiso, Buyende, Nwoya, Ssembabule, and Buhweju;
- iii. 3 Chief Magistrate Courts at Mayuge, Butambala, and Kamwenge;

(b) Ongoing constructions of 14 Court buildings:

- i. Supreme Court and Court of Appeal Buildings
- ii. 3 Justice Centres at Sheema, Kole & Kibaale;
- iii. 3 High Court buildings at Tororo, Rukungiri & Soroti;
- iv. 3 CM Court buildings at Albetong, Lyantonde, and Budaka;
- v. 3 GI Magistrate Court buildings at Abim, Patongo and Karenga.

# **Key achievements of the NRM Manifesto 2021-2023 implementation and Strategic Directives and Guidelines**

The status on implementation of Directive 17 under Strategic Directives and Guideline on provision cars (transport equipment) and elimination of corruption in the Judiciary have been addressed in the previous slides.

# Commitments made but not met

Commitments	Details
Improving the working conditions of the Judiciary	<p><b>a) Salaries</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Cabinet did not approve 100% pay target for Judicial Officers of the lower bench;</li><li>2) Cabinet did not approve the structure and salary enhancement for non-Judicial Officers.</li></ol> <p><b>b) Institutional houses</b></p> <p>No institutional houses have been constructed since 2016 to cater for accommodation in hard to reach/stay areas such as Kalangala, Buvuma Island, Bulisa, Buyende, Abim, Karenga, Napak, Bukwo, Nakapiripirit, Moyo &amp; Buhweju.</p>

# Challenges

## 1) Inadequate manpower

The numbers of Judicial Officers are still insufficient to match the justice demands. In addition, the number of administrative staff has not been increased to match the Judicial Officers, which has negatively affected justice delivery. Only **46%** of the approved staff structure is filled.

## 2) Limited Budgetary provision

Government made a commitment to progressively adjust the budget for the Judiciary upwards to **UGX 800 Billion** by FY 2023/24. The Judiciary's budget has been **UGX 199 Billion** in the FY 2020/2021, **UGX 376 Billion** in FY 2021/22 and **UGX 381 Billion** for the FY 2022/2023. The approved budget for FY 2023/24 is **UGX 392 Billion** which does not match the proposed increment to **UGX 800 Billion**. This has slowed down the scale up of judicial services across the Country.

## 3) Inadequacies amongst some of the key justice Agencies

The other justice service agencies such as the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Uganda Police Force, the Judicial Service Commission and the Office of the Attorney General, among others, have not taken sufficient steps in terms of stepping up their human resources, increasing their presence across the country, and providing sufficient tools for their workforce. This has inevitably frustrated justice service delivery and made it difficult to banish case backlog from our Courts.

# Recommendations

## 1) **Fast track approval of the structure for non-Judicial Officers**

This is intended to match the structure of the non judicial officers to that of judicial officers to improve service delivery.

## 2) **Improve the budgetary provision**

Government should fulfill its commitment by increasing the Judiciary budget from the current UGX 381 billion to UGX 800 billion by FY 2024/25.

## 3) **Strengthen the capacity of members of the Administration of Justice Programme.**

For the desired access to justice to be achieved in Uganda, it is imperative that other Justice, Law and Order institutions whose performances greatly impact on the performance of the Judiciary, are equally and robustly strengthened. Emphasis should be made on the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Uganda Police Force (CID), Uganda Prisons Service and Attorney General's Chambers.

***THANK YOU FOR  
LISTENING TO US***

