



MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL BUREAU FOR NGOS

NGO VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION EXERCISE



The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Act 2016 established the National Bureau for NGOs (NGO Bureau) as a semi-autonomous entity under the Ministry of Internal Affairs to replace the National NGO Board. The NGO Bureau is mandated to register, regulate, monitor, inspect, coordinate and oversee NGO operations in the country.

A National NGO Register was established in 1989 after establishment of the National NGO Board under the NGO Registration Act Cap 113 of 1989. Since 1989, there was no verification or validation of the register to establish the exact status of registered NGOs. In order to effectively implement the NGO regulatory framework, there was a need for a verification and validation of the information on NGOs. During Financial Year 2018/19, the NGO Bureau embarked on a verification and validation exercise which is still ongoing.

The purpose of the exercise was to build a reliable and credible data bank of information on all NGOs operating in Uganda for evidence-based decision making. The exercise will also help to determine any meaningful relationships, correlations and variations in the data with the NGO Bureau and the districts, to ascertain the status of NGOs operating in the Country. This exercise began on the 1st day of November 2018.

On the 8th day of April 2019, a communication was sent out to all districts requesting for a copy of the Community Based Organisations (CBO) register and NGO inventory. Out of 128 districts, 71 districts submitted their data and 57 districts did not comply. We are making a follow up on the non-compliant districts and also engaging the Ministry of Local Government. A database for CBOs was developed and the process of updating is on-going.

With effect from 31st July 2019, the National NGO register indicates that there were 14,207 registered NGOs, out of which 3,810 had valid permits, while 10,397 had expired permits. The method of establishing those figures involved physically going through every registered NGO file at the Bureau for verification.

THE REASONS FOR THE HIGH NUMBER OF EXPIRED NGO PERMITS INCLUDE: -

- This is the first time a verification exercise is being carried out on the NGO database since 1989 when the then NGO Board was established.
- NGOs ceasing operations without notifying the NGO Bureau and especially where:-
 - Some NGOs, mainly indigenous, who after registration and acquiring permits from the Bureau, voluntarily dissolve as a result of redundancy; lack of finances to carry out their operations; and sustainability challenges but quietly close.
 - Some NGOs were opened to respond to prevailing incidences in the country (situational trends at the time). When such incidences ceased to prevail, a number of them quietly closed down. A case in point are the NGOs that opened up in the early

1990s to respond to the AIDS epidemic, NGOs that opened up in Northern Uganda to respond to the post LRA war, influx of NGOs in Karamoja subregion and many other such cases.

- Some NGOs were founded by individuals targeting specific funding or projects. After those projects winding up or failure to access the funds, they disappeared and never renewed their permits.
- Some NGOs were opened to help address the unemployment challenges but due to the inadequate capacities of the founder members, they were abandoned.

c) Deliberately continuing to operate without valid permits and these include: -

- Some NGOs that are ignorant of the law. A number of NGOs think that possession of a certificate of registration allows them to operate freely without any requirement to renew.
- Some NGOs are confidently operating on forged documents. These forgeries were either committed intentionally by the NGOs, or by middle men hired by the NGOs to renew the permits and upon failure to meet the renewal requirements, resorted to forging.

OUT OF THE 3,810 NGOS OPERATING WITH VALID PERMITS, THEIR OPERATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS

a. Geographical area of operation		
No.	Region of Operation	Total
1.	All regions	1,660
2.	More than one region but not all	164
3.	Central	1,264
4.	Eastern	294
5.	Northern	216
6.	Western	212
	Total	3,810
b. Types of NGOs		
No.	Type of NGO	Total
1.	Indigenous	3,003
2.	Foreign	482
3.	International	235
4.	Regional	53
5.	Continental	37
	Total	3,810
c. Sector of Operation		
No.	Sector	Total
1.	Social Development	2,704
2.	Health	389
3.	Education	188
4.	Justice, Law and Order Sector	186
5.	Water and Environment	110
6.	Agriculture	79
7.	Public Administration	30
8.	Tourism	26
9.	Science, Technology and Innovation	25

10.	ICT	24
11.	Public Sector Management	20
12.	Trade, Industry and Cooperation	9
13.	Legislature	6
14.	Works and Transport	6
15.	Energy and Minerals	3
16.	Security and Defense	3
17.	Accountability	2
	Total	3,810

THIS IS TO INFORM THE NGO SECTOR AND ALL THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS THAT: -

- There will be a validation exercise for all NGOs with valid permits starting from the 8th day of August 2019 to the 7th day of September 2019. The validation forms will be accessed through the link www.validate.ngobureau.go.ug and the list of NGOs with valid and expired permits will be accessed on the Ministry of Internal Affairs website on www.mia.go.ug. The list can also be accessed at the districts with the CAOs, DCDOs and NGO Bureau offices. Upon completion of filling the form and submitting it, the NGO will be required to print a copy of the submitted form and deliver it to the NGO Bureau office before the close of the deadline.
- NGOs with expired permits and are still operating, should apply for renewal between the 8th day of August 2019 to the 7th day of September 2019. If an NGO fails to apply for renewal by the 7th day of September 2019, it will be presumed non-operational and will be deregistered. Upon application for renewal, an NGO will also undertake the validation exercise above.
- All NGOs with either expired permits or who have never registered with the NGO Bureau, in accordance to Section 31(1) of the NGO Act 2016, are not supposed to operate in any part of the Country. After expiry of the validation period, all relevant organs of Government should liaise with the NGO Bureau to ensure that unless an NGO has a valid permit or proof of application for renewal of a permit, they should not operate.

In conclusion, NGOs should take note of the ongoing exercise and the deadlines. Upon completion of the validation exercise, a report on the "State of NGOs in Uganda" will be published by October 2019 based on information at the NGO Bureau. This is to also call upon all the key stakeholders to ensure that they effectively implement the NGO Act 2016.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

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Minister of Internal Affairs