



The Process of a Bill in Parliament

(How a Bill Becomes a Law)

1. The Government Bill

Article 79(1) of the Constitution provides that "Parliament shall have the to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda." **A Bill is a draft of an Act of Parliament and includes both a Private Members' Bill and a Government Bill.**

A. Plenary:

- A Minister introduces a "Bill for First Reading" - a formal introduction of a Bill to Parliament.
- A Bill is accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implication which is issued by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, a requirement of The Budget Act, 2001 and The Parliament Rules of Procedures.
- The Certificate of Financial Implication sets out the specific outputs and outcomes of the Bill and how these fit within the overall policies and programmes of the Government; the costs involved and their impact on the budget; the proposed or existing method of financing the costs related to the Bill and its feasibility.
- Bill is seconded by an MP/Minister
- Bill not debated at this stage.
- Speaker refers the Bill to a Parliamentary Committee.
- Bill is published in *The Uganda Gazette* - the official Government publication.



B. Committee:

- Committee scrutinises the Bill
 - Invites various stakeholders from civil society and Government to public hearings.
 - Reviews relevant and related laws/documents.
 - Writes report with proposed amendments.



C. Plenary:

- Minister moves and justifies motion for Second Reading of the Bill.
- Committee chairperson presents report on the Bill (A Minority Report if any is also presented).
- MPs debate committee report on Principles of the Bill.
- Parliament votes for Second Reading of the Bill.
- Bill referred to Committee of the whole House.



E. Plenary

- Minister in charge of the Bill asks plenary to resume.
- The plenary resumes and Minister reports thereof outcome of the Committee of the whole House.
- Plenary votes for Third Reading the Bill.



D. Committee of whole House

- Committee of the whole House means a committee composed of all the MPs present in the Chamber.
- Chaired by the Speaker/Deputy Speaker (now referred to as the Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson respectively).
- Comprises all MPs.
- The Speaker leaves the Chair and sits at the Clerk's Table.
- MPs approve clauses and schedules of the Bill one by one.

F. The Clerk's Office

- The Clerk's Office prepares copies for authentication and assent of the President.
- Copy sent to the President.



G. The President's Office

- The President assents to Act of Parliament*
 - Act of Parliament becomes Law of Uganda.
 - Implementation starts on commencement date.
 - Law is published in *The Uganda Gazette* - the official Government publication.
- *President may reject to give assent*
Constitution provides that the President shall within 30 days after a Bill is presented to him/her either:
 - assent to the Bill.
 - return Bill to Parliament with a request that the Bill or a particular provision of it be reconsidered by Parliament; or
 - notify the Speaker in writing about the decision.The Bill may be reconsidered and then presented for the President's approval. However, it may become law without the President's assent if he/she returns it to Parliament two times. It should have of at least two-thirds of all MPs.



2. Private Member's Bill

Article 79(1) of the Constitution provides that "Parliament shall have the power to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda." A Bill is a draft of an Act of Parliament and includes both a Private Members' Bill and a Government Bill. A Private Members' Bill is moved by a backbench MP.

A. Plenary:

- MP, Committee chairperson moves motion seeking leave of the House (permission) to present the Private Member's Bill.
- Provides proposed draft of the Bill.
- MPs debate and vote on Motion.
- If the MPs reject Motion, the Private Member's Bill is dropped (a new attempt later is allowed).
- If the Motion is approved, the printing and publication of the Bill is done by the Clerk to Parliament.
- The Private Member's Bill is introduced for First Reading accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implication.
- Speaker refers Bill to appropriate House committee.
- Bill is published in *The Uganda Gazette* - the official Government publication.



B. Committee:

- Committee scrutinises the Bill.
 - Calls various stakeholders from civil society and Government to public hearings.
 - Reviews relevant and related laws/documents.
 - Calls responsible mover(s), Minister(s).
 - Writes report with proposed amendments to the plenary.



E. Plenary

- MP in charge of the Bill asks the plenary to resume
- Reports outcome of Committee of the whole House.
- The plenary votes for Third Reading of the Bill.



D. Committee of the whole House

- Committee of the whole House means a committee composed of all the MPs present in the Chamber.
- Chaired by the Speaker/Deputy Speaker (now referred to as the Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson respectively).
- Comprises all MPs.
- The Speaker leaves the Chair and sits at the Clerk's Table.
- MPs approve clauses and schedules of the Bill one by one.



C. Plenary:

- Mover moves and justifies motion for Second Reading of the Bill.
- Committee chairperson presents report on the Bill.
- MPs debate committee report on Principles of the Bill.
- Parliament votes for Second Reading of the Bill.
- Bill referred to the Committee of the whole House.



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