



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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16 February 2007

### UGA102198.E

Uganda: Identity documents carried by Ugandan citizens; whether or not birth certificates are routinely issued  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

During a 9 January 2007 telephone interview, an official at the Ugandan High Commission in Ottawa indicated that documents routinely carried and used for identification purposes by Ugandan citizens include an identity card from the person's place of work if he or she is working; a driving permit if the person is driving; and "graduated tax tickets." The Official noted that graduated tax tickets bear the name of the holder and the location in which he or she lives and pays the graduated tax (Uganda 9 Jan. 2007). A March 2006 report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Refugee Law Project (RLP), "an autonomous project within the Faculty of Law of Makerere University in Uganda, with the aim of protecting and promoting refugees' rights" (RLP n.d.), indicates that Uganda recently abolished the graduated tax (IDMC/RLP Mar. 2006, 19). According to the report, graduated tax, which was a major source of revenue for local governments in Uganda, was imposed on all men and employed women in the country (ibid.). No further information on graduated tax or graduated tax tickets could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

As for birth certificates, the Official at the Ugandan High Commission in Ottawa said they they are not routinely carried or used for identification purposes by Ugandan citizens (Uganda 9 Jan. 2007). Families generally keep birth certificates "for years" until the documents are requested by a university or school for enrolment purposes (ibid.). Birth certificates are routinely issued to children born in hospitals (ibid.). A person can replace a lost birth certificate by contacting the hospital at which he or she was born, which will provide the documentation required by the Registrar of Births and Deaths to issue a new birth certificate (ibid.). The Registrar of Births and Deaths does not issue birth certificates if there is no hospital record (ibid.). However, the United States (US) Department of State Reciprocity Schedule indicates that for births that are not registered, "Ugandan citizens can obtain certificates from sub-county chiefs by swearing an oath before these officials" (US 26 Mar. 2003).

Like birth certificates, passports are also not routinely carried by Ugandan citizens although they are used for travel (Uganda 9 Jan. 2007). Documents required to obtain a passport include a birth certificate; a letter from the local chief saying that the applicant has no criminal background and is a resident of a certain area; and a completed application form signed by the local chief and three administrative officers (ibid.). If a person does not have a birth certificate, the local chief can certify his or her identity (ibid.).

The Official at the Ugandan High Commission in Ottawa and 2006 news sources indicate that Uganda does not have a national identity card (ibid.; *The East African* 7 Nov. 2006; *The New Times* 22 Oct. 2006). One news source in 2006 reports that, although the government of Uganda had planned to develop national identity cards, it suspended the "multi-million dollar" project (*New Vision* 3 Feb. 2006; ibid. 6 Sept. 2006). Information on when or whether the project would proceed could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

*The East African* [Nairobi]. 7 November 2006. Joachim Buwembo. "AAGM: Support Danish Art, Sell Your Soul for a Piglet and a Sheep." (Factiva)

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<<http://travel.state.gov/visa/reciprocity/Country%20Folder/U/Uganda.htm>> [Accessed 9 Jan. 2007]

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** AllAfrica, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, Keesing Reference Systems, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), High Commission for the Republic of Uganda in Canada.

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