

### Citizens Pathway Group paper on Leadership & Integrity

#### For a better life, focus on the integrity of leaders!

Our future as Kenyans depends directly on the extent to which we implement the new Constitution as well as Vision 2030. The Constitution states that the people of Kenya – you and I together – are **sovereign**. In other words, we are the ones who decide what this country will be; we are the ultimate authority. However, since we cannot involve every single person in all decisions and execution, we **delegate** (hand down) this authority to leaders through a democratic political process. These leaders are then supposed to make sure that they move this nation forward, making our all our lives better, no matter who we are or where we live around the country.

In the past, we Kenyans must admit that we've been rather poor at electing good leaders. We vote in people who end up as lazy, corrupt, greedy "leaders" who are also good at dividing us along ethnic lines, even to the point of fighting each other. Strangely, we don't seem to learn from experience: it is estimated that, at each general election, we throw out two-thirds of MPs in disgust at their performance. But then we replace them with people who behave exactly the same and often worse. Kenyans: there is something very wrong with the way we choose our leaders.

#### Make better decisions

So this time around, before we put anybody in a position of leadership, we must subject them to higher standards based on **personal integrity, competence** and **suitability**. Only if they pass this test should we entrust them with our future. If you as Aisha, Atieno, Boru, Kyallo, Dominic, Eshikule, Kamau etc want to remain jobless, if you want to remain poor, if you want to continue to struggle to access public services in schools or in hospitals, if you want your business to suffer, then go ahead and ignore the integrity of the leaders you are going to elect. In effect, you will be saying: "I would rather have so and so as my leader even though I know he/she will not improve my life"! If you make that choice, then you should not blame anybody else if you continue to have a miserable life. You choose the leaders and you suffer the consequences!

Under the Constitution (section 24), anyone who says that he/she wants to lead you must accept closer, deeper scrutiny than the way we assess ordinary citizens. If you want to run your fleet of matatus, or chain of hotels or manufacturing companies, and as long as you comply with the law, we might not look too closely. However, if you present yourself for leadership, you are automatically accepting all the sacrifices and limitations that come with voluntary public leadership.

#### What do we need to pay attention to in our decision?

There are three critical qualities that we need to look out for if we are to make the right decisions and avoid the consequences of a leadership that lacks integrity.

**Not corrupt:** We Kenyans continually complain about corruption. A couple of years ago, the Treasury Permanent Secretary said that each year the Government loses about one third of the budget to corruption. Our leaders are often involved and they usually use this money to give handouts to us, the voters. But this is already our money – taxes that we pay!

Moreover, whenever a politician dishes out money, he/she expects to recover it by being corrupt once in power. This means that you

## CITIZENS PATHWAY GROUP

lose the benefits you're entitled to when leaders doing their work as they are supposed to. It is like putting a hungry leopard in charge of looking after your goats!

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**Not accused in a court case:** Laws are supposed to encourage us all to behave in ways that keep good **order** in the country. Do not underestimate the value of order to your life. If you want matatus to behave properly so that we don't keep killing people on our roads, or if you want people not to grab your land so that you can use it freely without headaches, then you should care about the rule of law. **Certainly your leaders must have a high standard of keeping the law.**

Common practice for good governance is that, once a public leader is charged in a court of law, he/she immediately steps down until that case is determined. Electing someone who is facing a court case means we are disregarding the rule of law. The consequences can range from promoting disorder (hence "leaders" who throw stones) to outright impunity. If the level of the offence is high enough, impunity could lead to international sanctions against travel for the individual, freeze of personal assets, or against trade for the country as a whole. The repercussions of such sanctions on the economy, the prospects of businesses in Kenya, and the lives of Kenyans could be far-reaching.

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**Not involved in illicit businesses:** Some of our leaders suspected to be involved in these activities – such as drugs or illegal arms trafficking – are already facing sanctions from some foreign governments, including travel bans and freezing of private assets. We have also heard of government officials who are suspected of supporting or condoning these activities also facing similar consequences.

Illicit businesses result in terrible cancers afflicting the society. In order to thrive, criminal business develops its own systems to reach "customers" and to avoid the law. So, for instance, they employ young people to sell drugs to children and young adults. Because drugs are addictive and destructive, when you elect a politician involved in these businesses, you are selling your children's lives. Furthermore, once in power, the politician corrupts the justice and security systems to keep his/her illegal business going. Also understand that people who engage in illicit business are ruthless. The result is terrible and we can see this in countries like Mexico where drug criminals hold the country to ransom, including the police. They control certain parts of the country creating an atmosphere of fear and oppression. Is that where you want to live? You are not helpless – with your vote, you can avoid such cancerous leadership.

### Signs and symptoms to watch out for:

- Politicians with a lot of cash to hand out to voters, but its source is unclear and they cannot credibly tell you where their income comes from;
- Politicians who promise lots of jobs in government for people in their community, whether skilled or not;

## CITIZENS PATHWAY GROUP

- Politicians who either hide their court cases, or try to convince you to ignore their court cases, or even use their court cases to paint themselves as martyrs for your sake;
- Politicians with small armies of henchmen (usually unemployed youth) who are prepared to harm anyone and anything in order to get the politician elected;
- Politicians who can't convince you that they can improve your lives because they have no credentials in leadership or management.

Kenyans, please let us understand that **politicians who lack integrity do not care about you**. Moreover, you cannot outwit them by electing them and hoping to keep them accountable once they are in office – they are more powerful than you. And do not think that, just because they are in touch with your issues, they will care more about you than they care about themselves. Even where they seem to care, their underhand activities will prevent them from doing good for you. These are just facts of life.

### Citizens Pathway's leadership template

If you have followed our arguments to this point, you realise that the politicians who care about you and have the qualities we need are usually not the prominent ones. What we must do is make it easier to identify these better leaders and vote them in. For example, we propose the following template to assess candidates:

To convince me that you should be my President, Governor, MP, Senator, Women's Rep, etc you must present the following five things when you declare your candidacy:

1. **Personal integrity:** demonstrate to us your personal values and character and how these align to the Constitution. Clearly demonstrate that you have NEVER been involved in corruption or other illegal activities. We can assess your cleanliness by seeing whether you have been associated with corruption in any public or private institution e.g. misuse of CDF money.
2. **Wealth declaration:** demonstrate how you built your wealth. Tell us which businesses you own, where you have worked and the assets you own.
3. **Leadership competence:** Your leadership track record: qualifications and experience as a leader. We need to see whether you understand our problems, whether you have a strong vision of a better future for us and a plan of how to get there. If you have all these, we also need to know whether you have ever led people out of problems into a better situation – that shows competence.
4. **Your engagement with this particular constituency** (whether ward, constituency, county or nation): exactly what have you been doing here that points to your leadership capabilities? Please include anything you have been doing to unite us as ethnic communities so that we live peacefully.
5. **The change you are going to deliver, with specifics:** By now you know that it's very easy for a politician to promise water, electricity, roads, hospitals, schools, etc for you. However, you can tell how serious a leader he/she is by asking for specifics: exactly how do they plan to improve your lives? Do they even understand how Government works? Do their plans make sense to you?

You are in charge of your life. Don't let others decide for you – go and vote in the honest, competent, visionary leaders you deserve. And thereafter, enjoy a better life!