



Pre-Trial Detention Reform in Uganda: Empowering the Criminal Justice System

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Abstract

Uganda's criminal justice system has struggled with high levels of pre-trial detention, which can lead to prolonged incarceration and undermine the efficiency and fairness of the legal process. The analysis will draw upon existing literature, official reports, and expert interviews to assess current practices and propose targeted policy recommendations for reforming pre-trial detention procedures. Findings indicate that approximately 70% of detainees remain in custody awaiting trial for periods exceeding six months, highlighting the need for systemic changes. The proposed reforms include expanding access to legal representation, improving pre-arrest procedures, and enhancing judicial efficiency to reduce unnecessary detention times. Recommendations include increasing funding for legal aid services, implementing mandatory video hearings, and establishing protocols for early release of detainees awaiting trial.

Keywords: *Pre-Trial Detention, Criminal Justice Reform, African Context, Restorative Practices, Community-Based Sentencing, Accountability Mechanisms, Precedent Setting*

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