

THE IMPACT OF AFRICA-FOCUSED EXCHANGE PROGRAMS IN RESHAPING U.S.- AFRICA RELATIONS

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF GOVERNANCE
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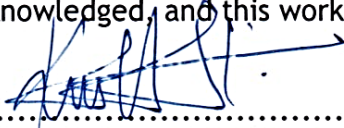


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DECLARATION

I, KYEYI ANWARL MUKASA, do hereby declare that this research report has not been submitted for any academic award to any institution. All sources consulted have been duly acknowledged, and this work is not plagiarised.

Signed 

Date 01/06/26

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report was done under my supervision as an academic supervisor, and is ready for submission for examination.

Signed 

Date 06/06/2026

Mr. Tabalanga Jonathan

Academic Supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family: my mother, Ms. Nakafeero Harriet & my brother, Mr. Allan M. Nsubuga for their unwavering support through this process. I also dedicate it to African scholars everywhere who, like me, believe this continent's future depends on honest, persistent, and brave intellectual work.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AHA	Anti-Homosexuality Act (Uganda, 2023)
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
EAC	East African Community
GLI	Global Livingston Institute
IIE	Institute of International Education
IR	International Relations
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Foundation)
MWF	Mandela Washington Fellowship
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
UCU	Uganda Christian University
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative

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Table 4.1: General Information of Key Informants

ABSTRACT

The paper talks about the impact the Africa-centered exchange programs have on U.S-Africa developmental relations and government outcomes in the continent with special emphasis on Uganda. The research was guided by four objectives:

- (1) To document governance influence of intensive exchange programmes, such as the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Fulbright, and the Africa Presidential Scholars Program;
- (2) to determine the success of the Global Livingston Institute in its in-country, reciprocal model compared to the traditional unidirectional designs;
- (3) to comprehend how digital platforms contributed to the dynamics of alumni networks and what new risks have appeared; and
- (4) to identify the conditions that make exchange programs more likely to lead to equitable, long-term partnerships.

The interpretivist approach, involving the documentary analysis of the program materials and the evaluation reports and correspondence with three main informants, who were selected on a case-by-case basis (Mr. Ryan Grundy and Ms. Lia Russell of the Global Livingston Institute and Mr. Edgar Mwine of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Uganda), was adopted as the qualitative approach. The thematic content analysis was used to interpret data.

The results show that exchange programs are invariably connected to individual level governance effects - attitudinal change, professional network and normative reorientation but seldom result in institutional or policy-level change unless by coincidence, deliberate re-integration support, curricula which focus on African traditions of governance and program designs which reflect prevailing power asymmetries. The research suggests that greater investments in post-exchange support should be allocated, the two-way exchange models should be expanded and the risk of digital governance of alumni in politically restricted settings should be given more attention.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The United States has been cooperating on the premise that long-term diplomatic gain can be accrued over almost 80 years strategically as a result of sustained human interaction across and within the national and cultural boundaries. The reasoning is as follows: African and American professionals in the same institutional arenas, addressing the same issues, and when having long-term personal relations, the relationships formed by them will provide a platform that the alliances formed by it will be harder to break than those formed by the formal contractual relationships alone. On this premise, one of the largest endeavors in the history of foreign policy in the United States, the Fulbright Act of 1946 was grounded.

That project is not exaggerable in size. The initial decade of operation in the United States alone saw the nation bring over 4,000 fellows to the nation through its structured experiences of leadership, via its Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and its Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) under it in 2014 (USAID, 2023). The Fulbright Program, the African Presidential Scholars Program and a thick web of university based and non-governmental organization programmes can be added to these flagship programs, which have introduced tens of thousands of African professionals to a systematized program of exposure to the American system, research facilities, and civil society. All this in retrospect causes the investment to be colossal- and the hope that has accompanied it, that the involvement in the exchange would result in better governance and more development partnerships have never been held to the test squarely and emerging against what actually happens when the participants get back home.

The issue that will be covered in the research is the disparity between investment and the outcome gauged. Measurement of such programs will be more satisfaction and self-reported attitudinal change - a valuable bit of information, but not a governance change (Goldstein & Tevita, 2018). Institutional conditions, where the altered view of the individual has always a manifestation in the creation of a new order in the institutions or in the creation of alliances are seldom considered. And those asymmetries of power encoded into the relationship between African partners and the United States are rarely addressed as a dilemma to the issue of whether exchange does actually lead to change or is merely an illusion of it.

Global Livingston Institute (GLI) occupies an interesting niche within this landscape. Founded in Denver, Colorado in 2009, GLI deliberately reverses the conventional direction of exchange by bringing American students and practitioners to Uganda and Rwanda rather than transporting African participants to the United States. This reversal is not a mere coincidence but a principle of protest against the supposition that the exposure of American institutions is necessarily pedagogical and that knowledge worthy of transmission is north-south (Global Livingston

Institute, 2024a). Uganda also has the best empirical test case. Uganda, in the sense of excessive reliance on U.S. aid and in a very real sense of strategic advantage versus disadvantage, and with a key diplomatic bargaining chip gone with the enactment of the Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA) of 2023 (Human Rights Watch, 2023), is a country where the exchange diplomacy might or might not succeed due to political calculations.

The study is informed by two theoretical traditions, and the approach to its analysis. Constructivist theory of IR, which links identities and interests that constitute the behaviour of states and non-states are generated in the process of interaction, and are not given, and which has been advocated by Wendt (1992) and Katzenstein (1996) - a perspective which makes exchange programmes analytically interesting, as they are precisely mechanisms of interaction. The cure of the structural form that the framework of asymmetric interdependence by Keohane and Nye (1977) must provide is that in a relationship where one side is more dependent than the other, the less-dependent side has what they termed “disproportionate leverage”, and adherence to its rules cannot easily be construed as a norm adoption. Such imbalance is the birthplace of the so-called compliance corridor in this paper - the space in which African exchange actors might seem to be satisfied with what is dictated by the Americans on how they should be run, but in fact, they are in the institutional processes that leave them with limited options.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The most challenging aspect of the current literature on the U.S.-Africa exchange program is not that they have been avoided by the scholars but rather the evaluation schemes that have been put in place are not suitable to provide the answers to the questions that are of most concern. A sense of change on the part of the participants is measured by means of self-report surveys; a sense of change on the part of governance institutions is not measured by means of self-report surveys. Longitudinal designs follow the attitudes of the alumni over a period of time; they seldom enquire whether or not institutional settings the alumni go back to permit exchange-based norms to be expressed. What is produced is a literature that is thorough in its affirmative results, and that is limited in its explanatory ability (Goldstein & Tevita, 2018).

Such complacency has been challenged by postcolonial theorists who have argued that the exchange programs which are founded on the basis of an African participant being exposed to an American model of institutions can actually generate the same hierarchies that they are coercing (Escobar, 1995; Said, 1978). The difference between the program that presents African members with the American-developed program and the one that replicates its full epistemological assumptions is not merely philosophical in essence - it defines what type of partnership is going to be established in response to the encounter and how sustainable the partnership will be to the pressure. Arndt (2005), Goldstein and Tevita (2018), and the IIE (2020) are not the only scholars, who concentrated on certain sides of this problem without unifying IR theory, governance analysis and postcolonial criticism and research on digital diplomacy around one

question: how does the exchange programs impact on U.S. African partnership formation? This paper makes the integrative leap.

This required a systematic inquiry as such that could ask what the governance consequences of large U.S.Africa exchange programs are in reality, evaluate the alternative architecturing of GLI on its own merit, explore the ways in which the opportunities and the threats of maintaining an alumni network have changed, and what are the enabling conditions of creating results worth the investment it entails.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This paper discusses how the relations between the U.S. and Africa have been transformed by the help of the Africa-based exchange programs, how the outcome of governance will be, how the creation of partnerships and exchange investment under what conditions will yield any outcomes.

1.4 Specific Objectives

Attempting to analyze the impacts of governance of the big U.S.Africa exchange programs such as the Mandela Washington Fellowship, the Fulbright and the African Presidential Scholars Program on the attitudinal change, network building and development partnership outcomes.

To experiment with the Global Livingston Institute reciprocal, in-country exchange design as an alternative to the conventional unidirectional exchange design.

To explore the role of digital platforms in transforming reach, resilience, and control risks of exchange alumni networks.

To establish whether the exchange programs that are Africa-centric might cut across the structural disequilibrium to more balanced and sustainable development partnerships.

1.5 Research Questions

What are the implications of big scale U.S.Africa exchange programs in terms of governance and how predictable are implications to become institutionalized and become alliances?

What is the difference between the reciprocal, in-country exchange model of GLI and the traditional unidirectional designs and how can the differences in governance be explained?

How has the digital platforms transformed the way the exchange alumni networks operate and what are the risks to the functioning of governance posed by the transformation?

What can the institutions do to realign exchange programs with an Africa focus to stop reproducing power asymmetries into more really equitable development relationships?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Geographical Scope

U.S.-Africa exchange relations have been examined, with Uganda as the leading empirical case. The main institutional aspect of the case study analysis was Entusi Campus on Lake Bunyonyi in Southwest Uganda under the management of GLI.

1.6.2 Content Scope

The research entailed the governance impacts of five programs, such as Fulbright African Research Program, MWF and YALI, African Presidential Scholars Program, USAID Development Leadership Program and GLI, in three domains of analysis of individual-level impacts, i.e. institutional design characteristics and development partnership impacts. The prime case of the empirical example was Uganda-U.S. bilateral relationship (a bilateral relationship) and AHA conditionality episode in 2023.

1.6.3 Time Scope

This is within the time frame of 2009 when GLI was founded and 2025. The most important sources are the establishment of the YALI (2010), the institutionalization of the MWF (2014), the development of online alumni groups of the 2010s, and the AHA crisis of 2023 and diplomatic implications.

1.7 Justification of the Study

This kind of exchange programs as addressed here require the governments on both sides of the Atlantic to spend a lot of money but the analysis of the payoffs in governance independent of research is less common and the structural analysis required to explain when and why such payoffs will occur are more scarce in the literature. The evaluation reports commissioned by sponsors (where most of the field resides) are described as having a known positive reporting effect resulting in ineffective sources of information on program redesign (Goldstein & Tevita, 2018). Uganda is a long-term recipient of MWF, one of the largest strategic U.S. partners, and the location of the most dramatic recent conditionality failure in the sub-Saharan African environment, so Uganda is a very fruitful study in answering these questions within an empirical context.

1.8 Significance

Policy makers and program designers: The evidence-based narrative of design aspects of the program that resulted in extended governing successes as indicated in the study can give concrete material to be utilized by the USAID, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the State Department and GLI in rebranding its programs. Chapter five has seven recommendations that are made to this audience.

Academic community It is a theoretically synthesized treatise, based upon constructivism, soft power theory, asymmetric interdependence, liberal institutionalism and the postcolonial development critique, which is more comprehensive to the complexity of the U.S.-Africa exchange dynamics than has been to date provided by any one single-disciplinary approach.

Civil society and exchange alumni: Learning structural circumstances that do not involve exchange experience to produce institutional advocacy - re-integration failures, digital governance risks, compliance corridors is a pre-condition to learning structural circumstances. This work provides a more correct view to the alumni and organisations that assist the alumni to know their enemy.

Regional integration: It is possible to consider how alumni can be mobilized to achieve the goals of the continental governance instead of alumni being the main instrument of the U.S. foreign policy.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

This analytical approach is followed in the study in three interlocking theoretical traditions. Wendt (1992, 1999) and Katzenstein (1996) succeeded the most in constructivist IR theory development since they believed that actors' identities and interests are constituted through social interaction rather than given in advance. It implies that exchange programs cannot be informational, but are normative events that re-formulate what is seen as a legitimate manner of governing, working together and proper professional behavior by the participants involved. The governance effects of the literature on evaluation are real in this sense; the question remains whether they are sound and well-founded to result in behavioural and institutional change.

The soft power model introduced by Nye (1990, 2004) discusses how the influence can be implemented by the exchange programs: by making the American institutional arrangements desirable but not by ordering them to adhere to such arrangements. The argument that such a framework has itself been subject to - that it underestimates the possibility of soft power becoming coercion when institutionalized within a dependency relationship predicated on aid (Mattern, 2005; Hayden, 2012) - can be traced to the notion of asymmetric interdependence that is embodied in Keohane and Nye (1977) that is then applied to the present study

The theory of postcolonial development provides the critical prism through which the epistemological presuppositions of exchange program design - what is relevant knowledge, which frame of analysis is considered generative, and who is the learner - can be seen (Escobar, 1995; Said, 1978; Mamdani, 1996). Governance-the rules, norms and institutional forms by which societies structure collective action-gives the concept of bridge with which the theoretical traditions are brought together with the empirical analysis. The study hypotheses are that the tools of governance with the ability to either challenge or reproduce asymmetries and hierarchies pre-determining the U.S.- Africa relationship are exchange programs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The interest of this study was the governance implications of Africa-oriented exchange programs, which prompted the use of literature on four topics: cultural diplomacy and assessment of exchange programs; the theory of governance in relation to international development; the theory of development partnership and its postcolonial critics; and the new literature on the concept of digital diplomacy and network dynamics. It was not a thorough examination since it was selective since it was aimed at determining the resources that were available to the study and the gaps that required to be filled by the study. Peer-reviewed journals, academic monographs, grey literature and organisational reports were used as sources and located using Google Scholar, JSTOR, EBSCOhost and the African Journals Online.

2.2 Exchange Programs and Cultural Diplomacy

Arndt (2005) and Cummings (2003) set the intellectual background of the exchange program scholarship by developing a difference in the history of American cultural diplomacy that, however still useful as an analytical tool in the present day, creates a gap - between the exchange process and the exchange as an instrument of projecting national values with no real dialogue - between the two. The empirical literature has since gone through the decades and one resultant finding is that involvement in an exchange program is associated with positive attitudinal change towards the host country by the individuals involved. The most common ones to make such a statement are the longitudinal studies by the IIE (2010, 2020) and the effects analysis conducted by the Fulbright Association itself (2015).

The biggest problem with this body of evidence is the methodological criticism that was raised by Goldstein and Tevita (2018). They do not say that there are no attitudinal effects, only that the evidence of attitudinal effects is based on self report data which is systematically biased by the social desirability effects, that it is impossible to control the contribution of program participation to confounding variables and that there is little analysis of the disparity between what participants say they believe is the case and how they actually behave in their professional and civic life. An assessment of the MWF by the USAID (87 per cent of alumni said they had a better understanding of U.S. institutions, USAID, 2019) in 2019 and a follow-up three years later by IREX (2021) indicated positive orientations but these values are perceived attitudes, not reported behaviour. The most theoretically substantiated explanation of the phenomenon of attitude change under the impact of exchange encounters is given in the meta-analysis of the intergroup contact theory by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) but also define the conditions, including “equal status, cooperation goals, institutional support” that is barely possible in development-oriented exchange programs of participants of unequal status.

Concisely, the assessment of literature is positive that the exchange programs do have actual impacts at the individual level but little is known on whether and how the impacts could be extended to institutional or policy reform. They need more theoretically based explanatory story telling (IIE, 2010, 2020; Fulbright Association, 2015).

2.3 Governance Theory and International Development

The most relevant governance scholarship in this research starts with the milestones of reconceptualisation of governance by Rosenau and Czempiel (1992) that explored the possibility of creating “governance without government” (or in addition to government). That framing that opens space in the normative and institutional terrain of international development can be conceptualised in terms of the role of exchange program organisations that exist outside the state structures. The very idea of governance reform as a precondition to sustainable development proposed by the World Bank (1994) made governance reform central to development programming in the 1990s and later, although the particular conception of governance in that model that of “liberal democratic institutions, the rule of law and market mechanisms” was subject to widespread criticism as an imposition of historically specific western regimes as a universal medicine.

This criticism has direct implications as far as the designing of exchange programs goes. Exporting the World Bank model of governance that is criticized and presenting it as the ideal that the professionals of Africa should be oriented with, is programmes such as YALI that socialise their members into normative activities of democratic governance and market economics. Empirical investigation by Asongu and Nwachukwu (2018) has recently confirmed that the governance-development hypotheses in Africa exist but are highly heterogeneous - institutional arrangements on diverse templates are effective in different settings - and has pointed out that programs transferring one governance template will be of limited use in a setting where it does not assume.

The larger context here is that, the consequences of governance can not be evaluated a priori to the institutional forms, which the alumni revert to. What may be a norm of administration in Denver or Washington is not likely to establish in Kampala or Nairobi. The enabling conditions, institutional receptivity, political will, rather than the exchange programs, create allied reform constituencies and can be the difference between actual transformation and acting on changed attitudes to generate positive evaluation scores without generating institutional change (Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2018).

2.4 Development Partnership Theory and Postcolonial Critique

Development cooperation principles as laid down by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD, 2005) are the partnership, ownership and alignment, and since then, the principles have been the normative discourse of the field. The difference between genuine partnership like is

typified by “shared responsibility, accountability, and equal sharing of resources” and “pseudo-partnership” where the discourse of partnership is used to symbolize further subjugation of donors by the receiver that Fowler (1998) attracts is the most practically useful instrument of analysis to evaluate what occurs in exchange schemes in the real world. In addition, Brinkerhoff (2002) and Lister (2000) introduce granularity to this typology that illustrates the point that the accountability arrangements inherent to the partnership arrangements are as important as their formal architecture.

The post colonial scholars have been more violent. Drawing on the analysis of “development discourse” and its objects that Escobar (1995) developed, Ngugi wa Thiong’o applies his argument in *Decolonising the Mind*, that the relegation of African languages and knowledge systems is itself a form of “colonial governance,” and Said (1978) on *Orientalism* as an epistemological project and Mohanty (1988) on how Western scholarship homogenises non-Western experience all converge on the same point. It is analytically relevant that GLI has chosen to directly respond to this criticism, and is doing so in the analysis chapters.

The other point that Moyo (2009) and Ndikumana and Pickbourn (2017) make is that, after the exchange programs have been institutionalized into the context of larger aid relations, they can also be utilized to continue the process of the financial ownership of the African governments by the outside forces, annihilating the inner relations of accountability upon which the process of improvement of the governance is built over time.

2.5 Digital Diplomacy and Network Theory

Distance and time dimension affecting facilitation of professional relationship has affected the capability of digital platforms to facilitate exchange programs, whereby exchange programs can do more than what they would have done following the face-to-face interaction. Manor (2019) and Sevin and Ingenhoff (2018) have reported that social media platforms have enabled alumni communities to sustain network relationships and engage in information exchange in a manner that could not be done through the letter-writing period of exchange diplomacy. The most evident aspect of the change is the specific online platform, which 4,000 alumni worldwide in 49 countries are continuously connected professionally (YALI, 2023). Strictest reviews of the impact of these changes on the architecture of the very diplomacy are found in Hocking and Melissen (2015) where individual actors acquire a network-building power that previously had been concentrated on the state institutions.

The online communication that occurred during the pandemic signaled the utility of these platforms and their restrictions. Programs guaranteed continuity and in other participants of the physical exchange that were not admitted to the exchange by visa requirement or cost (IREX, 2021). But the kind of learning that could not have been realized in the absence of a physical presence, the confusion of being a student in a new country that was being lost in the heart of the relationship that is gained by weeks not hours at the computer was difficult to accomplish online.

The GLI experience, particularly, can be a pedagogical one: the exposure to its in-country paradigm is what leads to the attitudinal change that is least vulnerable to the derision of the exchange effects being superficial.

Less attention has been given to the risks of governance brought about by digital platforms. The political weakness of the alumni to its online presence could be because of political competitiveness. The reality that the state security organs are entitled to monitor online networks and that it is simple to disseminate information to the effect that an individual is a member of an internationally-funded organisation and weaponise such information are actual costs to alumni attempting to put into practice the exchange-based promises of governance in the home country. This was a threat that was polar to what was happening in Uganda after the adoption of the AHA in 2023, Chapter Four documents.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodological backgrounds of the research, including the research design, field of research, population and sampling methods, variables and indicators, data collection methods and data collection tools, quality control of data, data processing and analysis plan, ethical considerations, and methodological limitations that the study encountered have been outlined in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

This research was founded on the interpretive design; a qualitative design. This decision falls in line with nature of the research questions, as they seek to understand how the effects of governance are generated because of encounters of exchange, why the effects of some program designs are more enduring than the others partnerships and how alumni bargain the political spaces in which they will begin operating when the exchange can no longer be transformed into numerical data that can only be captured in a survey. Social phenomena, in its argument by Creswell (2014) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011) can only get its meaning through relation to contexts in which it was created and the meaning that actors give to it -and being abstract of the social phenomena is not the way to create knowledge about the social phenomena. It was structured like an amalgamation of a systematic documentary review, which has been rendered by Bowen (2009) and semi-structured correspondence to the key informants.

3.3 Area of Study

The analysis was through the U.S Africa exchange relations and primarily Uganda. The country of Uganda was not selected by chance: the dependence on the structural aid, the strategic security position (and, first of all, by the AMISOM), and decades of the engagement in the U.S. exchange programmes, along with the analytically informative failure of the conditionality in 2023, have made Uganda the wealthiest available case in the study of the relation between exchange diplomacy and domestic political calculation. GLI on the Lake Bunyonyi in Southwest Uganda, GLI became the institutional reference point of the analysis of GLI and the point of study on an organisation that had been operating in Uganda since 2009.

3.4 Population and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1 Study Population

The population of study was the organisations and individuals who had direct professional experience of designing, implementing and outcomes of exchange programs between the U.S and Africa. These referenced program officers in exchange organisations; the civil society

practitioners in Uganda in nexus of governance and international partnership; and those who had a personal experience of the Uganda-U.S. bilateral relationship. The potential key informant engagement correspondents were five.

3.4.2 Sample Size

The selection was made on three informants who were selected as key informants and they include: Mr. Ryan Grundy, the Programme Officer of Global Livingston Institute (ryan@globallivingston.org); Ms. Lia Russell, the Director of Academic Partnerships of Global Livingston Institute (lia@globallivingston.org); and Mr. Edgar Mwine, the Programme Officer of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Uganda. It was not a chance but rather a deliberate choice because the qualitative design is targeted at the level of understanding but without statistical representativeness (Creswell, 2014). The synthesis of all these three informants included the exchange sector that is the domain of NGOs and the civil society governance sector- the two institutional angles that are most relevant to the research questions.

3.4.3 Sampling Technique

The proper approach to this case was the purposive sampling; it was intended to be directed to people in an occupational position providing them with direct operationally based knowledge about the phenomena under investigation, not to reflect a population distribution. This is a rather typical approach in qualitative research, which presupposes the presence of practitioner knowledge (Creswell, 2014).

3.5 Variables and Indicators

The exchange programs study design was an independent variable that was conceptualized in four scales; the directional flow of the exchange (the participants travel to or out of the United States); level and quality of re-integration support that it provides at the end of an exchange; the epistemological assumptions that it is founded on at the curriculum design; and the digital alumni infrastructure architecture. The dependent variable was the governance transformation and development of partnership that was measured by: nature and sustainability of individual attitudinal change; establishment and maintenance of professional networks; existence of institutional or policy change that could be attributed to the action of the alumni; and nature of development partnership (authentic versus pseudo-partnership based on the typology of Fowler (1998)) developed. Structural asymmetry (measured in compliance corridor) and domestic political mediation and risks of digital governance were the intervening variables.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

The establishment of the evidentiary base on the basis of which one can place the correspondence of informants into perspective was the first step of the documentary analysis which had been introduced under the permission of the Uganda Christian University. Ryan

Grundy and Lia Russell of GLI were approached via mail at ryan@globallivingston.org and lia@globallivingston.org respectively and advised in writing of the aim of the study, extent and purpose of their respective contributions. Edgar Mwine was sent a letter in Kampala via Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The difference in time zone (eight hours) between Uganda and Denver meant that communication with the informants of the GLI would have to be asynchronous, via email, and that the time limits of the response would have to be mutually agreed to be within the schedule of the other. This limitation is expounded upon, to a greater extent, in the methodological limitations.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

The documentary was analyzed in accordance with Bowen (2009), and a pre-determined protocol was used to generate focus to the disconnect between the program intentions and what the evaluation evidence suggests the programs are actually doing to achieve - which is the centre of the analytical problems of the study. The signed email correspondence guide was semi-structured and contained four sections that were signed with key informants. General professional context was provided in section A, perceived impacts of governance in section B, re-integration support gaps and measures of unidirectional exchange. Part C addressed the program design of GLI and operationalisation of the Listen. Think. Act. framework. D covered digital alumni engagement risks and governance risks of digital platforms use in politically constraining environments.

3.8 Quality Control

3.8.1 Validity

The results triangulation (i.e. documentary analysis, peer reviewed scholarship, grey literature and correspondence between practitioners, referring to the same questions of analysis) facilitated confirming the assertions and, therefore, contributed to the demonstration of the discrepancies. Member-checking was used where possible: briefings were made to key informants regarding the use of their input and they were encouraged to assist in finding factual errors.

3.8.2 Reliability

It also presented the reliability as the protocol that was applied to execute the analysis was coded in an understandable way, therefore, it can be followed the way the analysis was done. To unearth the potential interpretive bias of the research, a reflexivity audit was conducted because the researcher is a Western scholar who studies programs on the implementation of programs as well as to a large extent on behalf of the western institution and the prospects of over reading the postcolonial critique with the aim of discovering some positive signal of program influence.

The researcher also brings to the interpretative approach the perspective of a student at the Uganda Christian University in Africa, who is aware of the influence of programs financed by the West and tailored to their needs. The analytical privilege of experience of the political, institutional situation in Uganda was particularly useful in sense-making of the post-AHA processes in Chapter Four, but might have been tilted against the postcolonial way of understanding program design. The researcher has not participated in any of the mentioned exchange programs and, therefore, deemphasized the experiential knowledge but reduced the bias of the participants. All the coding/interpretation steps re-examined these factors to ensure that the results were not pre conceived but data driven.

3.9 Strategy for Data Processing and Analysis

All the sources were processed using thematical content analysis and it follows the frame analysis approach as developed by Ritchie and Spencer (1994). Both inductive (resting on the data) and deductive (resting on the theoretical framework) codes were built and formulated a structure that would be structured around the four goals of the research. The coded document sources were based on claims related to governance, and discrepancy between the claimed and the achieved outcomes. Correspondence analysis of practitioners took into account theory-of-change assumptions and evidence of compliance corridor dynamics and re-integration dynamics. Findings were tabulated as narratives of analysis.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was achieved at the Uganda Christian University through the traditional proposal and defence methods. The purpose of the study and purpose of what they would do with their contributions and informed consent were fully disclosed and all the key informants were privy to the purpose of the study prior to any correspondence being analysed. Involuntary participation was free and the informants were free to drop out at any time. This information can only be found in this report, where in such instances, informants were particularly asked to be named. The sources utilized in the text have been used properly and cited in the reference list.

3.11 Methodological Constraints

It is possible to attribute several major limitations. The former is a lack of the physical field work. The fact that documentary sources and written correspondence would be used as the foundations of the research implies that the study would not feel the atmosphere of the encounter of the exchange or the informality of the alumni re-integration that would have only been captured with the help of the long-term fieldwork. The time gap between Denver and Uganda posed a limitation to the extent of follow-up and clarification that could be achieved with the informants of GLI: the asynchronous email can be conveniently treated but not the follow-up probing and clarification that would be possible using a face-to-face or even a synchronous interview.

Second, the evidence on the evaluation is very biased in favor of studies prepared by sponsors; only few independent evaluations with rigorous comparative design are available, which constrains the evidence concerning the causal assertions about the effectiveness of programs.

Third, the scope of the exchange programs between the U.S and Africa restricts the study to a volume of cross-cultural exchange programs that precludes it to deal with the comparative perspectives of the European, Chinese or intra-African exchange program, something that the future comparative research should take into account.

A fourth limitation is associated with the sample of informants. Two of the three informants of importance are Grundy and Russell, who happen to be in the same organisation (the Global Livingston Institute). Although their roles (Program Officer and Director of Academic Partnerships) enabled them to look at the workings of GLI in a new perspective, the fact that the sources of information lies within one institution increases the probability of the results of the study on the reciprocal exchange models being perceived as a reflection of self-presentation of the institution and not objective evaluation. This is especially so since the most desirable result of the work is connected with the model of GLI. Neither does it include the voices of YALI, Fulbright or the MWF alumni, this is why the experience of the participants of these programs is not considered in primary data, but in print assessment and grey literature. Further enhancement of future research would include a more institutionally diverse base of informants such as exchange alumni themselves.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results presentation, analysis and interpretation.

4.1 Introduction

The chapter outlines, describes and reports the findings of the research in an objective by objective manner. The assessment is based on documentary sources, the published program reviews, and the interview with the three most important informants. The profile in general of these informants has been given in Table 4.1 and the substantive findings have been given in narrative form with an amalgamated reference to the sources and to the opinions of the informants in the succeeding passages.

Informant	Name	Organisation	Role	Method
1	Ryan Grundy	Global Livingston Institute	Executive Chief Officer	Email correspondence
2	Lia Russell	Global Livingston Institute	Director of Student Engagement and Partnerships	Email correspondence
3	Edgar Mwine	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Uganda	Project Manager	Written correspondence

4.2 General Information of Key Informants

Table 4.1: General Information of Key Informants

All the three informants as observed in Table 4.1 were practitioners and therefore in direct working relationship with the phenomena that this study explores. Grundy and Russell are the opinions of a person who takes part in an exchange program organisation, and Mwine the opinions of the civil society in the country where the majority of the research is conducted, Uganda. At the time of the research, GLI was in Denver and the researcher in Kampala which meant that they would not conduct face-to-face communication, therefore, the latter was to be conducted over email instead because there was a time difference between GLI and the researcher (approximately eight hours). It is an asynchronous method which could be controlled but limited the scope of follow up enquiry. Mwine being a local was contacted by way of a written communication and there were no problems of time scheduling as in GLI exchanges.

4.3 Governance Effects of Major Exchange Programs

The initial research question of the article was to study the governance impact of the large U.S.-Africa exchange programs i.e. the Fulbright African Research Program, the Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF), the YALI network and the African Presidential Scholars Program. This is examined using documentary analysis of program evaluation reports and published documents and correspondence with three key informants of the study to give the contextual analysis.

Lia Russell raised an issue in a letter to this researcher which would become the shaping factor of how the evidence in all four programs would be read;- programs on the assumption that U.S. institutional exposure is developmental in the sense that they produce what she termed “compliance-corridor graduates” – alumni who have learnt how to exercise governance norms which are valued by American funders but may not necessarily internalise or institutionally reinforce them upon returning home.

The same issue was held in another dimension of the same context by Edgar Mwine of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Having collaborated with civil society organisations in Uganda, Mwine discovered that when moving back to the institutional space, alumni may not be able to use principles of governance learned in the exchange not because of anything wrong in the programmes, but rather due to the domestic institutional fact of what could and could not be done.

The informant observations resembled the results on program evaluation reports which were examined in a documentary approach. The Fulbright Association published a self-evaluation of its African Research Program in 2015 which boasted of actual scholarly effects, in the form of publications, research opportunities and career advancement, however, it did not provide much evidence of a dependable bridge between individual educational attainment and institutional management change. The very structure of the evaluation was biased towards deliverable products of publications and degree completions of the program and not of governance outcomes and it is a design limitation that leads to it being hard to identify what the program is actually accomplishing other than a personal career advancement.

The best documented evidence base is the one of MWF and broader YALI network. A 2019 USAID measure and a three-year longitudinal follow-up by IREX also reported higher percentages of self-reported attitudinal change by the programs in 2019 and 2021 respectively: the programs reported the percentages of those who were more committed to democratic governance, more confident in their leadership and more willing to engage in civic activity after the fellowship. The statistics of the Institute of International Education showed that the alumni continued the professional networks that they had acquired in the fellowship at considerably greater rates than the respective non-exchange professionals.

But what the experience of Russell and Mwine may help us to observe is that there is no consistency between such individual effects that are observed and any institutional change that can be measured. The biggest methodological limitation of this body of evidence was found by Goldstein and Tevita in the 2018 article: they do not state that the attitudinal effects are not established, but the current designs of evaluation - based on self-reported data of program alumni, without control groups with which to compare them - cannot possibly determine whether the effects would have occurred, or extrapolate them to governance behaviour.

The pattern that is readily discernible in all four programmes is that individual level influences of governance are factual and are fairly well-researched, whereas structural factors that define the existence or non-existence of institutional change such as re-integration support, domestic political space, availability of resources, and structure of assessment itself are not well understood by program designers and are insufficiently researched by the evaluation literature (Goldstein & Tevita, 2018; USAID, 2019; IREX, 2021).

Among the factors that the literature on evaluation and the primary data of this research have not taken care of is gender. The above effects of governance (attitudinal change, network formation, normative reorientation) are not disaggregated by gender in the available analyses and there is no information whether exchange programs would impact both genders (male and female) equally or whether barriers between genders would not impact re-integration differently. The 2020 UN Women Africa barometer on women political participation reveals that there are still existing disparities in women's access to institutions of governance on the continent - disparities that can be narrowed or even strengthened, depending on the nature of their systems to select participants, their curriculum, and post-exchange support services. None of the program reviews examined in the study and the three informants interviewed in the study had gender-disaggregated data on the outcome of governance and none of them cited gender as a factor in their account of the effectiveness of the program. This absence as well is a finding: that gender is peripheral, nevertheless, to the conceptualisation, measurement and discourse of the impacts of the governance of exchange programmes by practitioners. The gap of Chapter Five on the recommendation of gender equity targets in exchange nominations is based on this gap but in future research would require a much more systematic approach to the gap than this study has been able to do.

The African Presidential Scholars Program whose government officials already have a position of institutional influence may be expected to have a greater institutional effect on their profile of participants. According to an overview of the program published by the Association of American Universities in 2019, exposure is indicated to the U.S. policy settings and research institutions, but evidence of the evaluation is limited, and the satisfaction of participants and self-reported professional development. Herein it consists that the side which Mwine introduces on the filtering of domestic institutions is particularly pertinent: once the authorities have gone back to ministries where the principles of political obedience are egregious than the principles of technocratic government, structural constraint that cannot be eliminated with the assistance of any exchange curriculum, etc.

4.4 GLI's Reciprocal Exchange Model

The second one was to regard Global Livingston Institute, in-country exchange model as a reciprocal exchange which is an alternative to a conventional unidirectional exchange design. This section is the most reliant on primary data (correspondence with Ryan Grundy and Lia Russell, both of GLI, and analysis of published program materials of the latter based on the

documentary approach) but it is essential to mention that the information base of the section is institution-internal and the findings are to be considered in this context.

Grundy described the design reasoning behind GLI, reiterating: GLI was created under the premise that direction of travel is important. Whereas there are YALI and Fulbright programs where African students and young professionals are sent to the United States, there are GLI programs where American students and community practitioners are sent to Uganda and Rwanda. Grundy contended that this reversal is not cosmetic, but that it alters who is the expert, and who is the learner, as well as what type of knowledge the program is rewarding.

Russell continued to further this by outlining how GLI's Listens. Think. Act. framework realizes that promise. The Listen phase, she said, starts even before the participants enter East Africa: upon formal preparation, the American participants will investigate their assumptions of development, poverty, and agency of Africans. Phase of Think has to deal with empowered communication with Ugandan and Rwandese community members as knowledge bearers and not recipients. The Act stage helps in directing what is being learnt by the participants on community based projects which are not development agendas that are forced by some outer sources but on what the community priorities are.

Another element of the model that Russell pointed out to render it unlike what she terms "listening tourism" is that the community partner agreements of GLI that give the Ugandan and Rwandan partners real power over the content and presentation of the programmes. These agreements are not symbolically narrated, but they are contractual agreements that make the relationship a mutual determination.

Published materials of GLI justify these informant testimonies. A paradigm of the institute institutional profile tells us how it has the possibility of turning "the traditional flow of knowledge" in its approach to knowledge transfer in international development, and the Global Classroom curriculum is anchored in community-based inquiry, instead of externally-created learning outcomes. A separate GLI research paper of cultural exchange effect records attitudinal changes in American subjects - heightened sensibilities to make assumptions of development and heightened scepticism of discourses of deficit about African societies.

There are however two qualifications that are required. This evaluation is initially based on the description of GLI and the testifying of two informants to the association with GLI. It is not analyzed through independent checks, but rather viewed through the lens of the institute because the study neither interviewed the Ugandan or Rwandan community partners nor exchanged alumni, nor independent evaluators of GLI work. Second, there are at least ten times fewer applicants to the GLI model as there are to YALI or Fulbright, and it is not evident how the principles of its design can withstand the laws of scale, including bureaucratic standardisation and funding pressures which scale tends to exert. This may be the type of tension that Grundy

observes in correspondence when he observed that the effectiveness of GLI is partly determined by the depth of relationship to which a smaller cohort size can attain.

These results can be optimally described through the lens of Alan Fowler whose typology of authentic and pseudo-partnership in international development in 1998 has become a powerful one. Fowler believed that genuine partnerships must have the capability to shape the formulation of the agenda, mutual risk and willingness of the partner that is more dominant to have its presumptions questioned. By those standards, the community partner agreements and the strategic placement of African communities as knowledge experts put the model of GLI above the line to be a sincere partnership far better than any of the traditional programs taken into account in Section 4.3. The more thorough discussion of the rhetoric of development partnerships by Brinkerhoff (published four years ago) supports this argument: that the majority of programs have purported to operationalize the language of partnership as governance arrangements, and that GLI seems to have operationalized the reciprocity into its institutional form, and not merely superimpose it as a programmatic supplement.

4.5 Digital Diplomacy and Alumni Network Dynamics

The third aim was to scrutinize the digital platform influence on the scope and danger of exchange alumni networks in governance. The letter between Edgar Mwine as a practitioner who in his turn provided an idea of how the notion of digital visibility may serve the actors of civil society in the political life of Uganda and was backed by the documentary work on the documentation of the programs and literature on digital diplomacy is the first source to inform this segment.

Mwine also came up with a ground reality that is yet to be perhaps filled in by published literature on digital diplomacy. The visible digital networks of American partner organisations (reflected by LinkedIn profiles, WhatsApp groups, or social networks with program resources) of U.S.-financed exchange program alumni are a soft target of undesirable political attention in a place where affiliation with foreigners is seen with some level of distrust. He observed that during the years after the enactment of the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2023, organisations, which apparently had networks throughout the world, were more likely to be scrutinised by the authorities and that some alumni even went to the extent of limiting their presence in the Internet so that they would not be traced as the agents of foreign influence.

In her collaboration with GLI, Russell provided a second meaning of the possibility to have a positive governance of the digital platforms. She observed that the Mental Health Summit between Ugandan and American mental health professionals online via GLI cases an example of alumni interaction when organized as a professional interaction between peers other than a knowledge transfer. The platform works in her favor since it does not make Ugandans in it recipients of American knowledge.

These informant observations are placed in a larger evidence base. On the affirmative side, the digital platforms allowed the analysis in the documentary to show that what the past generations of the exchange programs could not accomplish was to establish communities of professionals that are long lasting and not diminishing as soon as the fellowship is complete. The YALI committed alumni network and the LinkedIn groups of the MWF have presented opportunities whereby the professionals that are involved in the governance can share opportunities and stay in touch across the borders. Statistics provided by Institute of International Education confirm this with regard to persistence of alumni network.

It is this synthesis of the primary and secondary data that leads to a two-sided picture that existing scholarship has not yet reconciled. This has been achievable and permanent through the alumni networks and this is a concrete benefit in the governance due to digital platforms. However, this visibility is at a price to the alumni, who are now in such a setup as post-AHA Uganda and the costs of such visibility have not been properly considered by program designers, nor by the literature on digital diplomacy.

The transition to virtual exchange under the effect of the pandemic gave the natural experiment some degree of reflection, which manifested itself in various reports on the program. The programs were also lenient to continuity and in certain instances found their way into the life of people who could not initially travel but there were also indications that virtual exchange was more of a difficult nut to crack compared to face-to-face exchange. This is in defense of Mwine who tends to assert that digital platforms have a good role in sustaining relationships but they do nothing much to promote the type of trust that the art of governance usually invokes.

This explanation of these developments is given the theoretical background of two schools of thought. The fact that the digital tools have facilitated the sustenance of diplomatic relations by making it larger and cheaper are documented both by Ilan Manor in his work regarding the process of digitalisation of public diplomacy and by a 2018 study by Sevin and Ingenhoff on the issue of public diplomacy in social media. However, neither of these studies addresses the issue of governance risks that digital visibility presents to alumni operating in politically constrained environments.

4.6 Conditionality, Asymmetric Power, and the Uganda Case

4.6.1 Uganda's Strategic Position and the Compliance Corridor

The fourth aim was to experiment on which conditions the exchange programs may give up reproduction of structural imbalances. The compliance corridor is where the first concept of the study, i.e. the compliance corridor, is conducted to the utmost level of the analytic activity and the bilateral relationship of Uganda and the United States was the empirical basis of the given analysis. The initial data in this section is based on the correspondence and documentary study of the policy and media sources regarding the relationship between the U.S and Uganda by Mwine.

The explanation that Mwine gave when he was questioned on the way the civil society organisations play chess the Uganda way of doing business with Washington was straightforward. In his account, he mentions the Ugandan organisations that are dependent on U.S financing or have are seen to be involved in blatant liaisons with American institutions, which is regulated by a regime of unwritten rules - not by the conditionality of the contract in the ordinary sense of the term but by a normative repertoire of expectations which determines what can be marketed and how. He referred to this as the room in which organisations learn to package their work in a manner that will not incur political outcry on the part of the locals as far as the local people are concerned but will satisfy American funders this state of being which this study conceptualises as the compliance corridor.

Mwine was proven and even extended with the help of document analysis. This strategic position of Uganda to the United States due to Kampala being a member of the AMISOM mission in Somalia where the largest population of refugees in Africa is, and a recipient of PEPFAR has historically given the Ugandan government an area of leverage against American pressure on governance issues which it perceives as issues of sovereignty. This has been captured by Aali Mari Tripp in her 2010 analysis of the hybrid regime in Museveni where Uganda has been in a position to access the American development resources, but has chosen to disregard the terms that accompany such resources to governance. The compliance corridor extends the argument of Tripp, but introduces the shift to at least the individual level: the exchange alumni, having served in the Ugandan government ministries, had been the subject of the same strategic logic, where they had applied the governance norms they had learned in the process of their American exchange experience to the demands of an institutional environment that rewarded selective adaptation.

4.6.2 The Anti-Homosexuality Act: When Conditionality Fails

These structural dynamics were brought into the spotlight by the Anti-Homosexuality Act of May 2023 in Uganda. The most empirically based account of the aftermath provided by Mwine was the main data that the study generated in the context of this question. He explained how the civil society organisations that were externally connected to the country were the target of suspicion and in certain instances, surveillance. Alumni whose professional identities had been based on their experience of exchange in America were also found to have those credentials on which they had formerly been property to be a liability in a world of politics where active weaponisation of foreign connection was progressing.

The larger lines of the story as told by Mwine were confirmed by the documentary record. According to Human Rights Watch, the American reaction to the AHA was tangible; Uganda was deprived of AGOA eligibility, part of the aid was redirected, the State Department released official press statements of alarm. But the backlash also demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the conditionality as a ruling instrument as well. The strategic intent of Uganda, especially its security services in the Horn of Africa, which Paul Williams wrote about in his 2018 article

about AMISOM ensured that the relationship was not going to be torn further. The compliance corridor was not destroyed but was reduced in size. The fact of exchange alumni was that it works in a more limited context, yet the basic game of doing just enough to be integrated into the norms of American governance without losing access to resources and networks and yet be able to act within a domestic political context that was hostile to said norms were still present.

The explanation can be achieved by referring to the model of asymmetric interdependence that was developed by Keohane and Nye in the late 1970s. The U.S.-Uganda relationship is not two sided, but one sided. The United States relies on American development funding and security alliance and Uganda relies on the power of the U.S. within the region as well as its readiness to embrace development programming. This non-equality of interdependence is what provides Kampala with the room to withstand the pressure of governance - and it implies that exchange programs, despite their well-designedness, are not functioning in a structural space which they can recreate in their own way. Here, one can also apply the further contribution of Keohane to the cooperation under the circumstances of the erosion of the structural benefits of the hegemon: it means that even under the circumstances that the structural benefit of the leading partner is destroyed, the asymmetric relations can still be maintained, and, that is why, the compliance corridor in Uganda has managed to withstand the changes in the U.S. strategic priorities.

4.6.3 China and the Continental Governance Architecture

The other structural variable is the enhanced contribution made by China towards global development finance and exchange of education. Mwine has cited in a letter that the Chinese development finance is available with less governance conditions than that of their American counterparts, and that African governments have an opportunity to weaken the bargaining power of U.S. funds programs. The failure of political conditionality in Chinese aid to make the activities of Western development actors in Africa to utilize funding as a method of rule more demanding has been reported in a detailed account of Chinese involvement in African development by Deborah Brautigam in 2009, and has only been strengthened since, according to Mwine.

It is against the backdrop of the African Union, and the Agenda 2063 and the African Peer Review Mechanism in particular that such hostile forces will eventually be brought into perspective. It is possible that the alumni of the exchange who undertake their own advocacy not only to the governance structures of the university but only to the institutional norms of the US have a more solid footing on the basis of which they can practice their governance not as susceptible to the compliance corridor dynamics that this paper has described. This can be supported by the analysis that was conducted by Asongu and Nwachukwu on relationship between governance and economic development in Africa indicating that the governance interventions that are based on regional arrangements have a high probability of having a long lasting impact as opposed to those based on bilateral conditionality.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, discussions, conclusion and recommendation.

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter Four, the results on which the discussions, conclusions, and recommendations of this chapter have been based are presented, unlike the reviews of the literature of Chapter Two. The objective discussions are objective and then argue about the research to arrive at the key conclusions and thereafter give the policy recommendations based on the same.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

5.2.1 U.S.Africa Exchange Programs: Governance Implication of Major Exchange Programs.

The findings of the governance effects of the large-scale exchange programs are corroborated by the findings of the other more planned studies that have been carried out in the literature: that the attitudinal change, expansion of professional networks and the establishment of a form of normative reorientation that is likely to be long-lived following the program ending are highly predictable outcomes of exchange participation. This finding that 87 percent of MWF fellows (USAID, 2019) said that they had a more favorable perception of U.S. institutions was corroborated by three years later IREX (2021) and is consistent with the overall evidence base compiled by IIE (2010, 2020) and the Fulbright Association (2015) and is consistent with the constructivist account of how exchange encounters

These results, however, do not lend credence to the stronger claim that individual-level effects can be consistently replicated into institutional reforms within the governance sector. This is none other than the difference between what people think they feel and what institutions do in fact that Goldstein and Tevita (2018) identified as the main evidentiary gap of the discipline, and that what the present research offers as a theoretic response to the gap: the compliance corridor as the outcome of the structural asymmetry of U.S.-Africa relations.

5.2.2 GLI Model and Governance Implications.

The research is most positively identified as in the model of GLI. The facts - program documentation, published research, correspondence of informants testify to the existence of GLI. Think. Act. framework has operationalised governance relevant learning in a more structurally mindful, and more consistent way than any of the government-funded programs under consideration. GLI is a challenge to the epistemic subordination as the strongest structural aspect of the development enterprise that Escobar (1995) suggests where the American actors are the learners and the African systems of knowledge are the learning centre. The model is a huge leap

in the right direction towards the very real partnership standard suggested by Fowler (1998) with the community partner arrangements that will give the Ugandan and Rwandan communities the real power to shape the program design and implementation.

The design principle that most distinctly differentiates GLI among the programs reviewed that was funded by government is the comment by Russell that GLI considers American participants as people who have assumptions about development that need to be refuted, not reinforced. It does not mean that every exchange program should be structured based on the given pattern of GLI, but rather that it is to suggest that the epistemological assumptions on the structure of the specified programs, i.e. what the learner is, what knowledge predominates are also the variables of governance, i.e. what kind of partnerships it will form. The experiments of training American actors as government students, not as government teachers, will produce different results, and the experience of the greater lastingness of the results of cooperation is registered.

5.2.3 Digital Diplomacy, Alumni Networks and Governance Risks.

The results support the discriminatory evaluation of the digital platforms as the means of engagement with the alumni of the exchange programs. When it comes to sustainability, the statistics are not misleading: the specialized network of the platforms such as YALI was able to handle an issue that was an order of magnitude too complex to sustain with letters and sporadic face-to-face meetings to sustain, at least in a long-term perspective (USAID, 2023). The virtual interaction of alumni provided by GLI such as the Mental Health Summit and continued functioning of the Global Classroom indicate that digital means can widen the reciprocal partnership model of the in-country experience instead of turning alumni into recipients of program messages.

The Uganda example in governance risks is educational in domains that are still to be exhaustively integrated in literature. The fact that Mwine in the practice of explaining the civil society space in the months following the adoption of the AHA, where internationally linked organisations have become the objects of political suspicion, instead of an instrument of governance reform, gives the general argument that Hocking and Melissen (2015) and Manor (2019) give on the fragility that digital visibility brings. The YALI and the Fulbright as well as the Presidential Scholars Program have not yet devised any specific guidelines regarding how they would deal with the alumni who have proven to be an international professional liability in the home nation. It is not an issue that individual alumni should address on a case by case basis but a design of governance loophole that has to be resolved.

5.2.4 Conditions for Moving Beyond Structural Asymmetry

Five conditions will facilitate exchange programs to yield really transformative governance outcomes as opposed to the normative performance of the exchange programs which will be established in the paper. The least demanding, transforming individual-level change into

institutional-level advocacy, which transforms governance, is deliberate re-integration investment, in the form of mentorship networks, seed funding of projects initiated by alumni, and long-term digital interaction. Following the GLI model, decolonisation of the curriculum is to eliminate the epistemological hierarchy in the restrictions of the conventional exchange design. The digital security investment will be done to ensure that the alumni networks are not pegged on tools that would equally expose them to political risks that they are not equipped to deal with. Enabling ecosystem is achieved through multi-stakeholder coordination between the administrators of the exchange program and the field offices of the development agencies leading to failure in re-integration. Lastly, the plan of alumni, fair nomination, meaningful APRM utilization by the African government agencies is an irreducible state, impossible to employ external program redesign to replace the decisions made by African governments regarding whether to utilize exchange investment.

5.3 Conclusion

The current research found out that:

Africa-oriented exchange programs provide real and enduring individual level governance impacts of altered attitudes, professional contacts and normative reorientation, which are systematically under-evaluated by existing systems of evaluation since they cannot distinguish between genuine change and conformity-corridors compliance. These are real, non-necessarily governance-transformative, effects.

The effects on the individual level will be transformed into institutional change, on structural conditions, of re-integration environment, resource disjunctures, political mediation, and institutional receptivity of domestic institutions, which can never be controlled by the exchange programs, but can be improved by program designers through conscious investment and promotion.

GLI two way exchange model, rooted in Listening. Think. Act. framework and the deliberate reversal of the traditional directional flow of exchange, presents the most viable, epistemically valid and practically feasible alternative to the traditional unidirectional design to date. It has implications on governance that its policy makers and program administrators ought to take seriously.

The sustainability of alumni networks online has taken a new form in the fact that it will give real governance dividends and in addition offer contemporary program structures governance risk to alumni in the politically controlled environment that has not been tackled ample enough. An institutional investment is needed in the two dimensions.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study and understanding the shortcomings of three-informant qualitative design, the program designers, policy-makers and future researchers can suggest the following areas of concern:

Increased investment in post-exchange re-integration support: program designers will be interested in encouraging alumni to participate in partnerships and give donations to governance, and using the proportion of alumni joining partnerships and making donations to governance as an indicator of their own program success as opposed to the levels of satisfaction among the participants at the end of the exchange.

The independent evaluations should be commissioned by all major exchange programs by matched comparison groups and longitudinal tracking of behavioural and not attitudinal outcomes. The evaluations funded by the sponsor should be peer reviewed by the researchers, who should be independent of the program.

An example is to transform exchange curriculum to make African systems of governance and patterns of analytical traditions and American institutions models. One real-life application of curriculum is the Global Classroom curriculum developed by GLI where the participants are based on postcolonial theory, structural inequality and African agency.

Even the programs can make investments in digital literacy and network security provisions to alumni, and may explore more transparent processes to support alumni whose professional networks in the U.S. work against them in their home settings, such as legal assistance systems and other sources of funds that will not make them reliant on bilateral U.S. resources when diplomatic networks fail.

By increasing the institutional ecosystem to which alumni would be recruited back and increasing the payoffs of exchange investment and enhancing coordination between the exchange program administrators and the USAID field offices through the sharing of the alumni data, planning the exchange programs, and placing alumni strategically in the development programming would strengthen the institutional ecosystem.

What the government funds of the United States may be concerned more with funding the programs that bring American learners to Africa instead of merely bringing African learners to the United States is that GLI in-country model would allow one to establish a form of governance learning and forms of partnership that would not have been otherwise achieved by the conventional unidirectional exchange.

The African governments can also consider forming national exchange alumni deployment policies, joining the gender equity goal of exchange nominations, rendering the alumni pertinent proxies of the APRM processes, and rating the overall engagement in exchange to Agenda 2063

priorities- acknowledging that the governance dividend of the exchange investment will be infeasible without African institutional agency.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

Dear respondent,

My name is Kyeyi Anwarl Mukasa, a student of the Uganda Christian University.

This paper I'm engaging you on is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of a Bachelor Degree of Governance and International Relations of Uganda Christian University. This study is of interest to your professional experience and the knowledge you have gained in the institution. It is all voluntary and you can pull out at any time with no repercussions. The information you submit will not be used beyond academia and will only be identified by you in terms of name and institutional position should you have given express consent to this. Through this, you contribute to the improvement in the scholarly knowledge of exchange diplomacy, governance and development partnership within the U.S.-Africa setting.

Respondent's Signature:

Researcher: Kyeyi Anwarl Mukasa

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

A1. Please indicate your name and current institutional role.

A2. How long have you worked in your current organisation?

A3. Please describe your direct involvement with exchange programs or governance partnerships in the U.S.-Africa context.

SECTION B: EXCHANGE PROGRAM GOVERNANCE EFFECTS

B1. In your professional experience, what types of governance effects — attitudinal, behavioural, institutional — do you observe in exchange program alumni?

B2. What conditions, in your observation, enable individual-level effects to translate into institutional or policy-level change?

B3. How would you characterise the re-integration support currently available to alumni returning to their home institutional contexts? Where are the most significant gaps?

B4. To what extent do you think conventional unidirectional exchange programs generate genuine governance transformation, as distinct from what this study terms compliance-corridor conformity?

SECTION C: GLI'S RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE MODEL

- C1. How would you describe the core design principles that set GLI's model apart from conventional exchange programs?
- C2. How is the Listen. Think. Act. framework operationalised in practice — through curriculum, facilitator training, community partner agreements, or other mechanisms?
- C3. What are the most significant governance implications of GLI's approach for the American participants in programs, and for Ugandan and Rwandan community partners?
- C4. What limitations or challenges does GLI's model face, and how does the organisation seek to address them?

SECTION D: DIGITAL DIPLOMACY and GOVERNance risks.

- D1. What has your organisation done through digital platforms to maintain the alumni networks and program impact beyond the physical exchange timeframe?
- D2. What are the risks of governance that you have witnessed among exchange alumni in politically limited settings - the post-AHA political environment at Uganda?
- D3. What do you consider are the most important institutional support mechanisms to protect alumni who experience governance risks due to their international professional networks?
- D4. Do you think the exchange diplomacy, governance, or U.S.Africa development partnerships have any perspectives that this study should take into account and that have not been addressed yet?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONTRIBUTION