

Friday, October 25, 2024



**AFFOSHED  
CO.  
LIMITED**

## **UNDERSTANDING THE USE OF NON-CERTIFIED WIREMEN IN UGANDA**



### **A Short Survey Report**

| Dan Marlone Nabutsabi; M.D., AFFOSHED CO. LIMITED



ENERGY | POWER | ELECTRICITY

**AFFOSHED CO. LIMITED**

# **Understanding the Use of Non-Certified Electricians in Uganda**

*A Short-Survey Report*

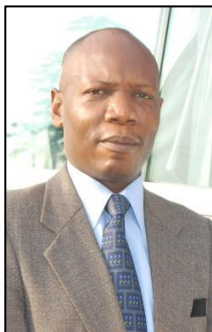
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## ***Foreword***

**T**he Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) of Uganda has emphasized the importance of employing Certified Wiremen for all electrical installation works, to ensure safety of persons and property and in compliance with national and global standards. Despite this, some companies and individuals still hire non-Certified Electricians. It was against this backdrop that our company, AFFOSHED, commissioned this short survey to help us understand the reasons behind this choice and promote the benefits of hiring Certified Wiremen, which would ultimately inform our advocacy efforts and pave a way for possible interventions.

## ***About the Author***

**D**an Marlone, the founder and Managing Director of [AFFOSHED](#), undertook his debut assignment in Uganda's Electricity Supply Industry in 2004, when he was tasked by the [Electricity Regulatory Authority](#) (ERA) to coordinate top leaders and key stakeholders of various regions in Uganda for sensitization and awareness in their rights and responsibilities as electricity consumers. He later went on to serve as a Consumer Advocacy Organisations representative on the ERA Installation Permits Committee (responsible for certifying electrical installation wiremen, technicians, engineers and contractors) for 12 years, after which he left to go and manage the EU funded [HYPOSO](#) (Hydro Power Solutions for Developing and Emerging Countries) Project as Uganda Country Lead.



Over the last two decades, he has engaged through public speaking opportunities with many actors in the energy, power and electricity industries, both in East Africa and abroad, including forums like the official launch of HYPOSO in Munich, Germany; the RENEXPO InterHydro, Salzburg, Austria; HYDRO 2022 at Strasbourg, France; HYPOSO Workshop for Framework Conditions, Yaounde, Cameroon; International Commission on Large Dams ([ICOLD](#)) Congress at Marseille, Africa 2023 at Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala; Arusha and Nairobi, among others.

He is a founder National Executive Member and current Chairman of the Hydro Power Association of Uganda ([HPAU](#)), Chairman Board of Directors for the Uganda National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Alliance ([UNREEEA](#)) and a member of the Uganda Committee on Large Dams (UCOLD). He was also the Alternate Chair for the Developers and Operators Chamber of the International Hydropower Association [Hydropower Sustainability Governing Council](#). Through the Uganda Consumer Action Network (U-CAN), Dan Marlone is a member of the ISO Mirror Consumer Policy Technical Committee (ISO-COPOLCO) of the Uganda National Bureau of Standards ([UNBS](#)).

## ***Disclaimer***

This survey was commissioned as a private initiative by AFFOSHED and does not necessarily represent the position of the Electricity Regulatory Authority or its management; or the opinions of our corporate partners, locally and globally.

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## *Acknowledgement*

**T**his is to express our sincere gratitude to all our friends and partners, who, at short notice, managed to create time to respond to this short survey! We are pretty sure that your valued contribution will help us influence the Electricity Supply Industry in Uganda.

Allow me also render our special recognition to the words of encouragement and support that we received from Eng. Richard Wabuna, Mr. Emmanuel Matsyetsye, Ms. Hellen Munyasa, Eng. James Ludigo, Mr. Alfred G. Musamali, Ms. Carolyn Aciro, Ms. Aisha Ntabadde, Mr. Tony Tongoi, Ms. Esther Nambuya, Dr. Stephen Watiti, Mr. Moses Nabutsabi, Ms. Agnes Nabukalu, Ms. Vivian Acito, Ms. Pamella Oyungrowth, Ms. Brenda Nabulo, Ms. Berna Namanya, Ms. Agatha Nalumansi, Ms. Diana Muttu, Mr. Ivan K. Walunyolo, Ms. Gloria Ashaba, Mr. Jacob Etunganan, Ms. Hope Akasiku, Ms. Ruth Kemirembe, Mr. Henry Kasozi, Ms. Phiona Nankya, Mr. Robert Nkambo, Ms. Teddy Nabakooza, Ms. Kirsten Gumisiriza, Ms. Immaculate Amany, Mr. Titus Masaba, Bishop Nathan Mutengu, Dr. Alice Arinaitwe, Ms. Serina Massa, Mr. Pius Ssuuna, Mr. Rogers Tsesili and Ms. Grace Bless Aleng; thank you so much!

To the mighty AFFOSHED Team – Ms. Christine Namuwenge, Mr. Prosper Wesonga, Ms. Maureen Asimwe, Ms. Daphine Samalie Keddi, Ms. Lucy Atyang, Ms. Joviah Namutebi, Mr. Fred Ssekirime, Mr. Timothy Nsubuga, Mr. Edgar Nuwagaba, Ms. Winnie Patricia Nantume, Mr. Eria Senabulya – you are such a blessing!

Special thanks also go to Eng. Victor Chris Watasa and Ms. Brenda Nagawa, who created time to shape the survey questionnaire to what it finally was.

We cannot forget to recognise, in an extraordinary way, all members of the various Wiremen Associations in Uganda with whom we have shared a lot on the subject matter of this survey; especially UPCEA, APEC, EWAU and NECA, that *aluta continua!* And to the members of the various sector associations that I lead – Hydro Power Association of Uganda (HPAU) and the Uganda National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Alliance (UNREEEA), I say, we are in this together!

Finally, sincere appreciation to our global partners – Aqua Media International, HYPOSO, DOLSAR Engineering, MUHR and GUGLER Water Turbines – for allowing me to painfully opt out of my scheduled international speaker slot at the HYDRO 2024, Graz, Austria, to concentrate on the cause of AFFOSHED; I'm deeply indebted to you!

Thank you all once again and May God Abundantly Bless and Richly Reward You All!

**Dan Marlone Nabutsabi**

Managing Director

AFFOSHED CO. LIMITED

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

### **1.1 Background**

During the launch of the Electricity Consumer Protection & Installation Permits Committee (IPC) Centre in Kampala in October 2022, the Minister of Energy and Minerals Development, Hon. Dr. Ruth Nankabirwa Ssentamu Nnalongo, pointed out the three main tasks that lay ahead as Uganda celebrated its 60+ years of independence. These were: accelerated electricity access rate, affordability of electricity services and taming power supply irregularities. She, thus, urged electricians to be certified by the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA), as one of the solutions towards these tasks.

### **1.2 Ongoing Government Electrification Programs**

The Government of Uganda has initiated various programs geared towards increasing access to clean energy and electricity, to at least 60% by 2030. These include the Electricity Connections Policy, Hybrid Electricity Customer Connection Credit Framework and Get Access Project, among others. With the current 2047 MW of installed generation capacity, up from 180 MW in 1996, coupled with the various projects expected to be added to the grid soon, there is a deliberate effort by the country to grow demand for electricity. This will in turn call for an increased number of certified electricians, who will provide the necessary manpower to connect consumers.

### **1.3 The Mandate of ERA to Certify Wiremen**

The Electricity Act 1999, now the Electricity (Amendment) Act 2022, mandates the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) to certify qualified electricians to conduct electrical installations; making them an important factor of the electricity access agenda. The Electricity (Installation Permits) Regulations, 2018, further stipulates that it is an offence for the owner of a building to engage an uncertified wireman to carry out any electrical installation works (including repairs and alterations); which, if convicted, both the premise owner and the uncertified wireman shall pay a penalty, or be imprisoned, or both. To date, ERA has certified over 4,000 Wiremen and contractors, as competent to carry out electrical installation works in the country.

However, in spite of these provisions, there are some organisations and individuals that still hire non-Certified Electricians (interchangeably known as Wiremen).

It was against this backdrop that our company, AFFOSHED CO. LIMITED, commissioned this short survey to help us understand the reasons behind this choice and promote the benefits of hiring Certified Wiremen, which would ultimately inform our advocacy efforts, ultimately towards increased access to clean, safe, reliable and affordable electricity in Uganda.

## 2.0 A Brief about Our Company

### 2.1 Legal Status

AFFOSHED is a private Ugandan consultancy company in the field of Energy, Power and Electricity, duly registered by the Uganda Registration Services Bureau.

### 2.2 Core Business

Our core business rotates around six main tenets, namely –

**2.2.1. Consumer Protection:** – Working in tandem with various stakeholders to ensure that consumers of our services and products are safe and aware of their rights and responsibilities.

**2.2.2. Electrical Installation by Certified Wiremen:** – Promoting the use of Wiremen that are certified by the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) for all electrical installation works, particularly in the Distribution Segment of the Electricity Supply Industry (domestic, commercial and industrial premises).

**2.2.3. Quality Electro-Mechanical Equipment:** – Dealing in importation, supply, sale and distribution of all types of quality standardized electro-mechanical equipment from reputable sources; both locally and globally.

**2.2.4. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Technologies:** – Engaging in opportunities to develop all forms of renewable energy technologies (hydro power, solar energy, biogas, biomass, geothermal, clean cooking, energy efficiency and e-mobility) among others.

**2.2.5. Climate Change and Environment Protection:** – Working with like-minded partners to ensure the sustainable development of our resources; with our future generations and the planet earth in mind.

**2.2.6. Strategic Partnerships and Linkages:** – AFFOSHED, through its Founder and Managing Director, has worked on several projects under the Government of Uganda ministries, departments and agencies, together with other key private sector (developers, consultants) and electrical engineering and construction companies; often offering expert advice, business linkages and administrative backup support at different phases of project development.



## **3.0 The Use of Non-Certified Wiremen Survey**

### **3.1 Approach**

This survey was administered virtually, mainly through WhatsApp groups and contacts, from October 2nd, 2024, using a pre-designed Google Form. Being a short survey, we targeted at least 100 respondents for over one week. We were glad to have received feedback from a total of 118 respondents; more than 75% of who responded during the first half of the week. All responses were voluntary.

### **3.2 Key Findings**

#### **3.2.1 Electricians among key respondents**

Much as respondents were sampled from a fairly wide spectrum of professions and backgrounds, the majority of the respondents seemed to have been electricians, wiremen and technicians (over 70%). This could be attributed to two factors, namely –

- The way the questionnaire was administered, mainly through social media forums; especially those of the electricians;
- The subject matter seemed to have been quite pertinent to the issues that electricians experience, where one respondent actually exclaimed that this kind of feedback enabled them to air out their views and that it had been long overdue.

#### **3.2.2 Large companies and organisations represented**

Companies and organisations with over 200 employees were among the respondents, which indicated a clear sense of interest in the subject.

#### **3.2.3 Willingly hiring non-certified wiremen to cut costs**

Close to half of the respondents (48.2%) indicated that they had hired non-certified wiremen; much as 84.7% of these believed that in the importance of certification. Out of these, 42% confessed that they chose to hire non-certified wiremen simply because they thought that non-certified wiremen were cheaper to hire; which may probably sound to be true in the short run, until there is a fire accident and loss of a life or property.

### **3.3 Demographic Analysis**

The survey considered two categories of entities, namely, individuals and organisations.

### 3.3.1 What type of entity are you?

We received a total of 118 responses. Out of these, 97 (82.2%) were individuals, while 21 (17.8%) represented companies or organisations, as per the chart below.

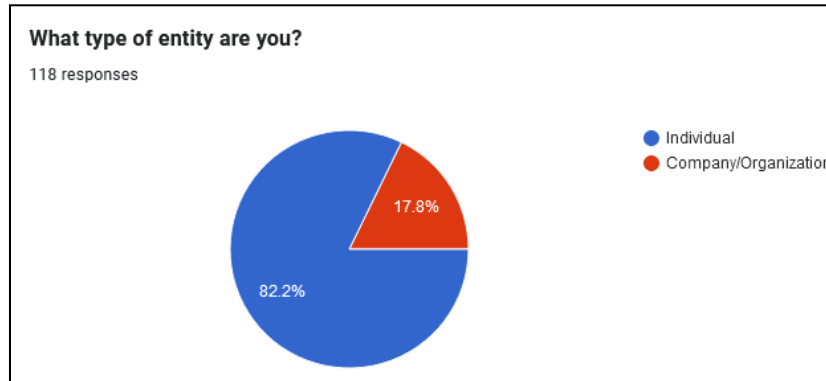


Figure 1: Type of Entity

### 3.3.2 Occupations of Individual Respondents

We received 92 responses to the question of occupation for individuals. One unique respondent wrote thus; verbatim: “AM a Field\_Electrical\_Technician, a diploma holding, aged 25, skilled in house wiring, network assessment, solar technician, an EPC Technician and a certified permit holder Class D.

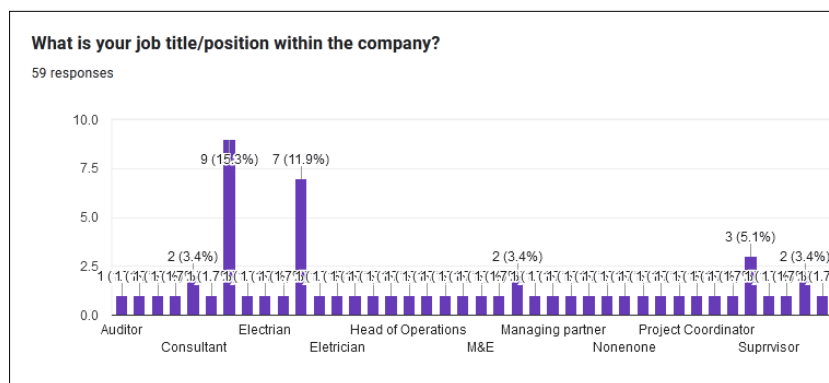


Figure 2: Job title / position of respondent

Otherwise, the rest fell in the following 45 categories; as listed in the **Appendix 4.1**.

### 3.3.3 Location of Respondents

Out of 117 respondents, 88 (75.2%) are located in the Central Region of Uganda, followed by 19 (16.2%) from Western Uganda. This could be attributed to the high concentration of certified wiremen, together with the stability of internet network in the Central Region, compared to other regions of the country.

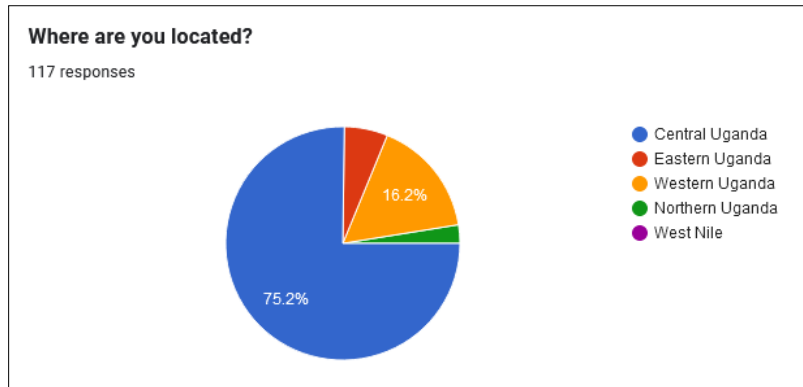


Figure 3: Location of respondent

### 3.3.4 What is the size of your company?

Out of the 61 respondents who said they had or belonged to companies, 42 (68.9%) belonged to small companies of between 1 and 50 employees, followed by large size companies having above 200 employees (14 respondents, representing 23%).

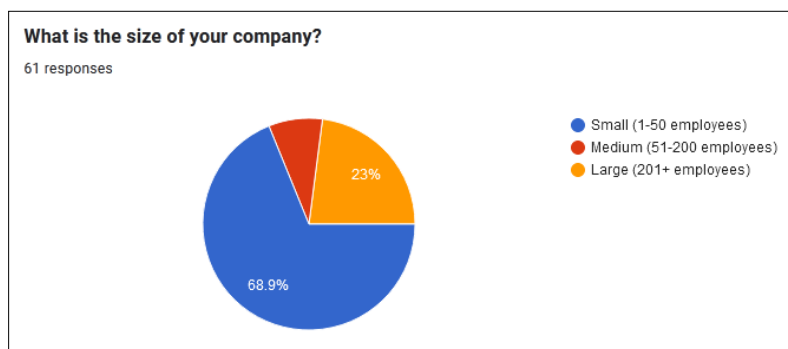


Figure 4: Size of company / organisation

### 3.3.5 Area of Operation for Companies and Organisations

Out of 70 respondents, 34 (48.6%) operate in services, followed by 12 (17.1%) in the construction business. Retailers were 5 (7.1%). Two (2.9%) are in manufacturing.

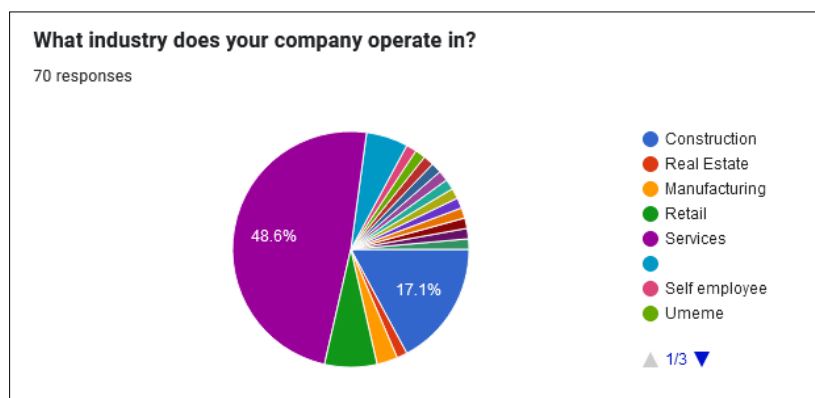


Figure 5: Type of specific industry of operation

## 3.4 Respondent Feedback

### 3.4.1 Some have ever Hired a Non-Certified Electrician

Almost half of the 110 respondents, 53 (48.2%), have ever hired non-certified wiremen.

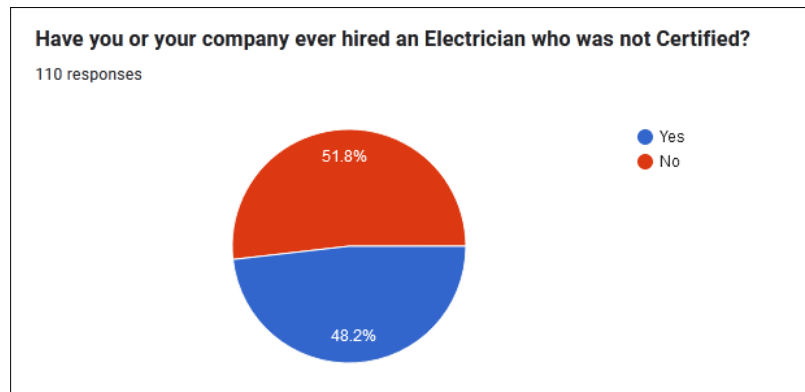


Figure 6: Respondents that have ever hired non-certified wiremen

### 3.4.2 Factors that Influenced Hiring a Non-Certified Wireman

The main factor that influenced the decision of the wiremen was the trust and skills of the wireman, 32 (46.4%) of the respondents.

This was followed by the need to save cost of wiring, 29 (42%). But still, 18 (26.1%) respondents were not aware of the existence of certified wiremen.

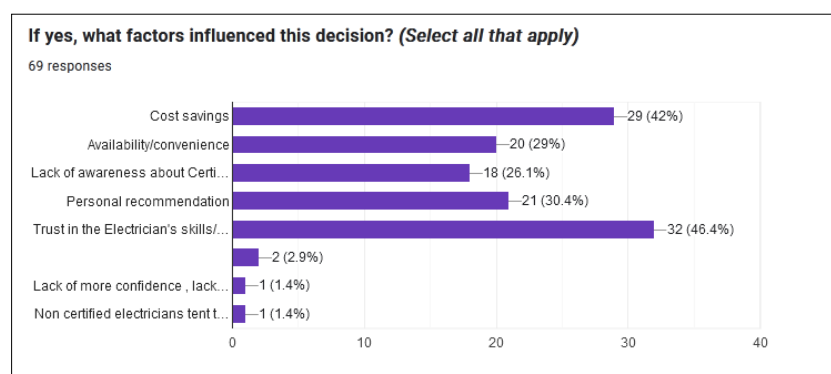


Figure 7: Factors that influenced hiring non-certified wiremen

Luckily, an overwhelming majority, 94 out of 111 respondents (84.7%) believe that the issue of certification is 'very important' when it comes to hiring an electrician. But it would be interesting to know why the 5 (4.5%) respondents said certification was not an important issue.

### 3.4.3 Importance of Certification when hiring Electricians

The majority of the respondents (84.7%) believed in certification as an important factor to consider when hiring an electrician.

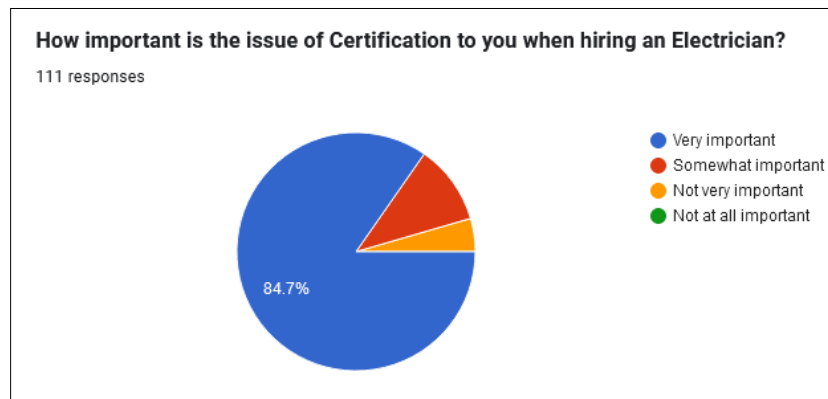


Figure 8: Considering 'certification' when hiring wiremen

### 3.4.4 Challenges Ever Faced when Working with Non-Certified Wiremen

Out of 104 respondents, 62 (59.6%) admit to have ever experienced challenges during their work with non-certified electricians.

But it also indicates that the 40.4% that have not had challenges with non-certified are likely to recruit non-certified wiremen again.

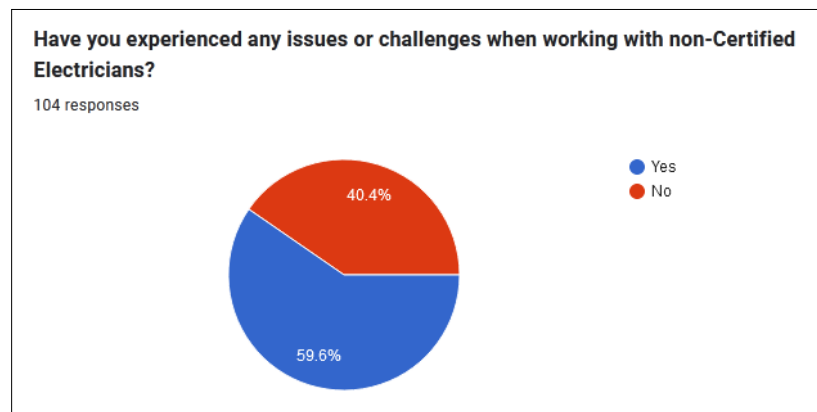


Figure 9: Challenges while working with non-certified wiremen

#### 3.4.4.1 Specific Challenges Faced while Working with Non-Certified Wiremen

There were several challenges experienced by 55 respondents. These included using substandard materials, substandard workmanship, lack of technical knowledge and skills, and little or no attention paid to safety issues. Details are in **Appendix 4.2**.

### 3.4.5 Perceived Benefits while Hiring Certified Electricians

Out of 113 respondents, 80 (70.8%) have the perception that certified electricians do high quality work, with an equally high level of safety assurance. Another 62 (54.9%) believe that certified wiremen comply with regulations, while 42 (37.2%) believe that engaging certified wiremen guarantees peace of mind.

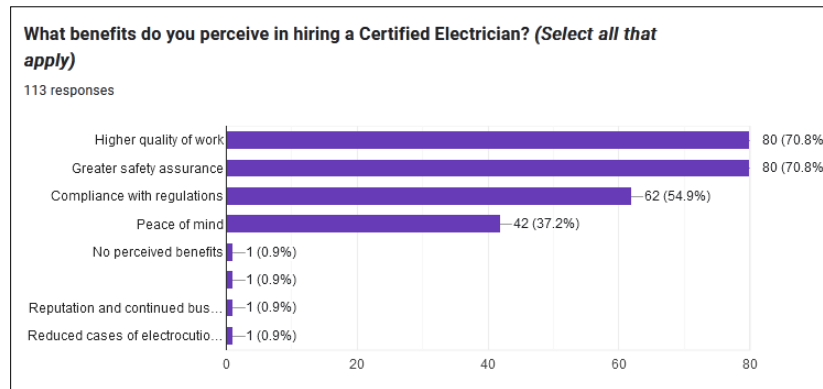


Figure 10: Perceived benefits of hiring certified electricians

### 3.4.6 Awareness about ERA's Certification Requirement

A total of 20 (18%) of the 111 respondents were not aware of ERA's certified requirements and importance of hiring certified wiremen.

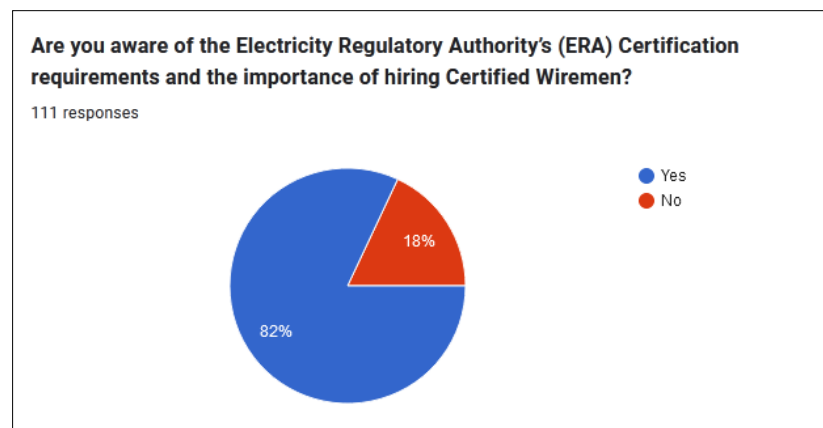
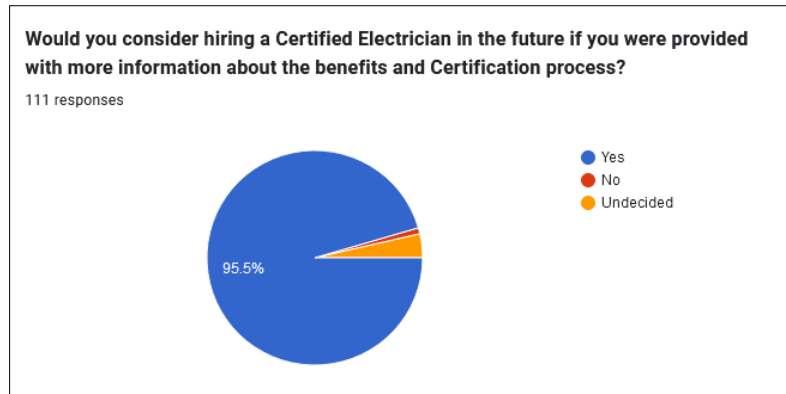


Figure 11: Awareness about ERA's Certification

### 3.4.7 Readiness to Hire Certified Electricians

The good news is that an overwhelming majority, 106 out of 111 respondents (95.5%) expressed readiness to hire a certified electrician in future, if they were provided with information about the benefits and the certification process. Of course some 4 (3.5%) were undecided.



**Figure 12: Readiness to hire Certified Wiremen**

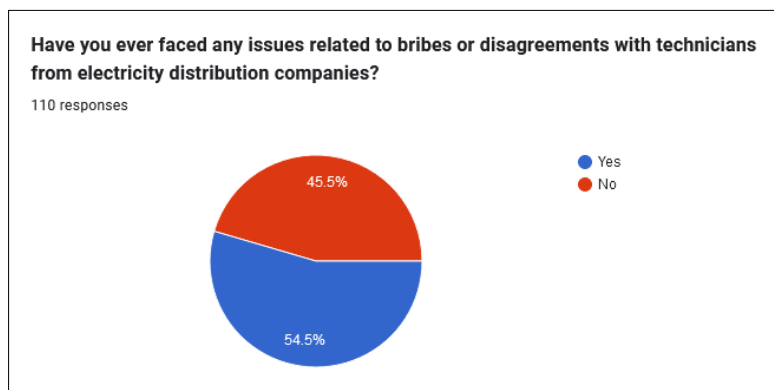
### 3.4.8 Factors to Encourage Hiring of Certified Wiremen

There were 94 responses to this question. Key words in the responses were five, as below:

- ‘Safety’ – 28 occurrences
- ‘Quality’ – 25 times
- ‘Compliance’ – 9 occurrences
- ‘Profession/alism’ – 8 occurrences
- ‘Standards’ – 6 times

### 3.4.9 Experiences of Bribes and Disagreements with Technicians

A total of 60 (54.5%) out of the 110 respondents confessed to have experienced the issue of bribes and other disagreements with technicians from the electricity distribution companies.



**Figure 13: Experiences of bribes and disagreements with technicians**

## 3.5 Limitations

According to us, this short survey was very successful. We, however, believe it would have scored much more highly, using different parameters, if the following limitations could be taken into consideration.

- **Not Academic** – We may not necessarily have conducted it along the methodology of a full-fledged academic exercise; but a mini-exercise, to inform our next course of advocacy action. There is room for a more detailed academic survey on this subject.
- **Single Communication Channel** – In this age and time, there are numerous communication channels that can yield comprehensive feedback. We chose the least cost one, being WhatsApp.
- **Language** – One of the respondents expressed a wish for this survey to be translated and administered in our local languages, other than English.
- **Sample Space** – If we had increased our sample population, probably to 1,000 or even to 10,000, probably the results could be different.
- **Duration** – One or a couple of weeks may not necessarily be sufficient to get adequate response from our target audience.
- **Partnerships** - As already mentioned, this was a private initiative of AFFOSHED. If we got any other independent partner to fund the survey, probably through a consultant, it is possible that the survey design could have been different, and most likely that the result would be even more comprehensive.

### 3.6 Conclusion

These short survey results provide valuable insights into the issue of Understanding the Reason Influencing Decisions of Organisations and Individuals in Uganda to Hire Non-Certified Wiremen.

The overwhelming feedback we received from our respondents over less than a week, albeit through one communication channel, indicates the high interest in the subject of certification of wiremen, vis a vis their quality of work and affordability.

It is our desire that different key stakeholders pick interest in findings and recommendations on this subject; first the Electricity Regulatory Authority, but also the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, distribution licensees like Umeme Limited and Uganda Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd., plus other development partners interested in the subject of increasing access to clean energy in Uganda, to address the challenges and gaps hinted on by the respondents of this survey, as detailed in the Appendix, and to inform decision making and design appropriate interventions for improved service delivery in our Electricity Supply Industry (ESI).

As AFFOSHED, we shall always be ready and available to render all the administrative support required, to ensure that all efforts towards a better ESI, and thus a journey towards achieving Uganda's middle income status, is realised.



## 4.0 Appendix

### 4.1 Job Titles of the Respondents

1. Accountant
2. Administrator
3. Administrator ... Director
4. All domestic work
5. Businessman
6. Business woman
7. Certified Electrician
8. Certified domestic electrician
9. Certified wireman
10. Civil Engineer
11. Consultant
12. Data analyst
13. Data Engineer
14. Doctor
15. Domestic installation
16. Domestic/Industrial installation
17. Consultant
18. Educationist
19. Electrician
20. Electrician certified by ERA
21. Electrician (domestic installations)
22. Electrical Engineer
23. Electrical installation in domestic
24. Electrical technician
25. Engineer
26. Environmental scientist
27. Event Manager
28. Financial advisor
29. Hotelier
30. Installation repairs and maintenance
31. Journalist
32. Life insurance agent
33. Linesman
34. Marketer/marketeer
35. Managing Director
36. Medical doctor
37. Professor
38. Receptionist
39. Sales and Marketing Executive
40. Social worker
41. Stay home mom
42. Teacher
43. Technician
44. Unemployed
45. Wireman

### 4.2 Challenges Experienced when using Non-Certified Wiremen

The 55 responses were listed as follows:

- They don't follow ERA regulations in doing their work;
- Substandard work;
- When he or she fails to do the work properly no other plan to solve the problem; the work is try and test; he or she doesn't follow the standards; the poor quality of work; no safety;
- Have limited skills;
- Quack works ... and they involve in substandard work;
- Using low quality wiring equipment and tools;
- You have to be near him or her to avoid mistakes which can lead faults;
- They are not reliable and lack work ethics;
- Doing shabby works;
- Poor workmanship;
- They don't mind about standards;
- Non certified don't mind about the quality of materials, don't know even that electricity can kill; wastage of materials; preference of using poor quality materials; short circuits every time; even some are expensive;
- The quality of material they use is very poor;
- Safety is in adequate on;
- Lack of British standard while working i.e. cable sizing, phase balance, mention the few plus carelessness at work;
- They may not have the technical knowledge about some things;
- Not understanding the lay out and designs of electrical requirements;

- Full time supervision is required;
- Has little knowledge and narrow thinking;
- Shoddy work and they are money minded; they use substandard materials;
- They prefer short cuts to standards;
- An professional decisions on duty;
- Safety issues;
- Need to start work before any toolbox talk;
- Shoddy work;
- They are not reliable, especially when there is an agent problem to solve;
- Time wastage due to collections, a lot of damages, no technical advice from them;
- They don't know electrical installation regulations at all hence end up having; misunderstanding;
- Unprofessional work;
- They are so independent that they do work as they please. They report to work at their own convince. If they are absent and not available on their phone contacts, it is difficult to trace them;
- You can never have peace of mind since they don't adhere to code of work ethics; You must supervise them 24/7;
- They need supervision of a certified or qualified Electrician because non certified electrician do loose connections that result into damage of property. They are not dependable;
- Some of them don't know the standards to followed and this makes their work to be of poor quality and safety assurance is guaranteed;
- Lack of skills;
- Substandard service delivery in most cases;
- Lack of trust;
- Non certified electricians lack that detailed principles of operations of an electric current;
- He or she doesn't fear for negative outcomes from bad installations because will not be answerable;
- Dishonesty, shoddy work and unreliability;
- One of the electricians I engage on behalf of the company didn't have experience with industrial wiring. Had little evidence of exposure to industrial electrical systems and standards;
- Use of fake materials;
- Difficult for the client to trust your skill;
- Lot of faults;
- Doing sub-standard work;
- Substandard material's on market;
- He does all things with assumptions "so as long as it works" attitude, installation fails in a shortest time possible;
- Providing small size of cable to sockets leading to short circuit;
- Poor work, wasted material on the side;
- Poor workmanship;
- They are always not following standard regulations, hence poor workmanship;
- Some of uncertified electrician don't mind when doing work since they are not regulated.

### 4.3 Factors that Would Encourage One to Hire a Certified Wireman

**What would encourage you to hire a Certified Electrician over a non-Certified one?**

The detailed responses are listed here below.

- Compliance with regulations;
- Compliance;

- Safety, safety;
- Certified Electricians are compliant with the regulations and safety;
- Quality work, Quality assurance, Good quality of the work, High quality work;
- Is better to work with certified electrician 1 is work und the law 2 work with confidence 3 work with follow the standard instructions;
- In case things go wrong, nowhere to tress him or her;
- Quality works Safely of personal and equipment;
- Their availability and cost;
- Safety wise is good to use certified electrician;
- Certified electricians work professionally and you can make follow-up just in case of poor workmanship;
- Certified electricity carry out works to the highest quality;
- To do quality work;
- Standards;
- Guaranteed safety;
- Hiring a certified electrician is safer, ensures better quality work, comes with a warranty, and follows all the latest regulations. We need to be educated more about the certified electricians please;
- Quality of workmanship by certified electrician is better safety there is guaranteed;
- Quality of work;
- Regulatory compliance, professionalism;
- They are permitted to work by ERA;
- They know what to do then non certified one;
- Because of competence and the technical knowledge they possess;
- High quality work;
- As described along with the benefits are fore said above;
- Safety n compliance;
- Assurance of safety during and after work;
- Assured of quality and professional services;
- For great safety assurance;
- Less supervision, higher quality of work, rules and regulations;
- Knowing more details;
- Trusted assurance of the works done;
- Quality and professional works;
- Safety and quality work;
- Competence , safety and quality assurance;
- Because they guarantee you safety assurance after completing their job;
- Quality work;
- To have a quality work;
- Certified;
- They are easily traceable and reliable in offering a service. They can be dependable;
- Peace of mind and high quality work that complies with the regulations and acceptable standards;
- Because of their adherence to the acceptable International and National regulations and standards. Even they give me a peaceful mind when dealing with them;
- Safety assurance and quality work;
- Safety assurance and great work outcome;
- If costs are not high;
- Safety assurance;
- Certified electricians are compliant;
- Professionalism;
- Lowered costs;
- Safety, quality of work, less supervision/competence and overall compliance;
- Price;
- The kind of work done by a certified electrician is far good/better than that done by no certified ones;
- Safety and reliability;
- Certified one will value my licence and avoids poor work;
- Hiring a certified electrician hives me a greater safety assurance;
- Expected work quality and reliability;
- Safety of the work done. Assurance that he is certified individual;
- Shared believe that we both understand the practice codes and conform to it;

- For greater safety assurance;
- Professional works;
- Peace of mind;
- Compliance with regulations;
- Because it's can me to identify myself to client;
- For quality work and adherence to regulations;
- Safety assurance;
- For professional work;
- Standard work ensured;
- Good;
- Safety of my property and value for money;
- Safety and compliance;
- To ensure safety and compliance with regulations;
- The certified electrician is proven by regulatory body and he/she is briefed about the laws governing the electrical industry;
- Skills;
- Because they understand their profession;
- Availability of knowledge on where to find them and how they operate;
- Compliance and safety;
- Safety assurance of people using electricity;
- Certified electrician high quality work;
- Safety guarantee;
- Safety concerns;
- Quality assurance;
- Safety of people, places and entire community;
- Since they are regulated they normally work according to standards.

#### 4.4 Bribes and other issues of technicians and distribution companies

If you answered yes to the previous question, please describe the issues faced.

55 Responses

1. E.g. Umeme technicians (1) they don't care, (2) are very corrupt;
2. Asking for a bribe instead of undertaking a disconnection;
3. Connection of new meter, they ask for 'ka tea';
4. Only old individuals/companies known to Umeme officials get projects from Umeme. Like 2 years back even a new licensed company by ERA wouldn't be allowed by Umeme to construct lines, be it on private [basis]. To put your company on the pre qualified list by Umeme you had to pay much of the bribe;
5. Asking extra charges from official charges;
6. Bad installation can lead a person to bribe surveys, which is not good;
7. They ask for bribes to pass your work or they delay approving your work;
8. Surveyors delaying to do inspection because they have not received money;
9. Mainly on new connections, after doing an installation, these so called inspectors who can't even wire a two way switch but is given powers to inspect someone with a class C or B and on reaching the site before any test he declares the installation has failed because he has not got the bribe. On certain issues those so called inspectors don't even go to sites but you just hear the instructions failed that's when you haven't given out the bribe. To my surprise after he had failed the inspection and you find him at his office you give out something then that something changes the installation from 'failed' to 'passed' without any further works. After the client has done all the process to get connected he or she must give out money to get connected whether it was Government funded or private. If you want to prove this go and make samples in different distribution offices, you will find a client applied in let's say March or May [this being October] but has never been considered and you will find many of them (clients) who applied like in June being fully connected;

10. Need for transportation [by field staff];
11. Non compliance to safety requirements;
12. They can't progress applications once not bribed;
13. Being asked to pay a non documented fee for a service meant to be offered by the company;
14. High charges for services;
15. Some Umeme contractors and surveyors ask for money to work for clients;
16. [Lack of ] integrity, i.e. poor communication skills to 'green' customers;
17. An informed payments and cuts connections across the country;
18. Declaring that the earthing is not okay without any measurements taken;
19. Price hikes;
20. They demanded me to pay them some money before they climbed the electricity pole to connect me back, yet the problem was caused by the wind, which came in with heavy rain. And needed the power, when I tried to complain to one of the officer from Umeme, he advised me to 'understand the African language' and I ended up calling back the person I had refused to bribe and begun begging him to connect me and we settled at 50,000 UGX. I had no any other option because even the big person was in the know of that bribe;
21. Like Umeme they can't make for you work request before you pay;
22. Employing non certified electricians;
23. Sometimes, they can promise that they are coming and they don't come on time;
24. They cannot be reliable. They never keep their promises;
25. They can take the money and never do the work or if they do, it they delay and do it after a long period of time when we have already lost the appetite for the services;
26. Mostly it is always about surveying my new sites when we apply for new connection. Surveyors always ask for bribes;
27. With money they serve you with one heart and customer care;
28. Customers go media and spoil the work you do;
29. Bribe to pass survey [inspection];
30. For instance the surveyors tend to give manipulated results in order to extort money from the client for them to pass the test. Additionally the technicians who come for connection of power do ask for extra money on top of the one client has already paid to the distribution company;
31. Taking a bribe and return to switch off using a colleague;
32. Asking for money for reconnection;
33. Demand of bribes by Umeme Staff;
34. Umeme boys had came to connect our site to the grid but they said we have to pay them yet we had all cleared receipts;
35. My meter was no working during the upgrade, so when they connected me to the direct pole power, when they finally worked on me they asked for money I can't even use in one year and were pestering me to pay or they'll cut me off. I hated Umeme but didn't know where to complain;
36. Surveyors even if u have provided good work , they still need money to pass your customers inspection;
37. Asking for bribes before issuance of wiring certificate. While Processing of power connection to new house;
38. Utility technician wanting bribes for them to fix tripped Circuit breakers, or replace fuse on distribution line;
39. Pretence and impersonation;
40. Paying extra money to have them do the work;
41. Some companies reject our document;
42. Services are not provided due to lack [non-payment] of bribe;
43. Power connection, pay me *kitu kidogo* & I will connect you swiftly in a weeks' time;

44. Even when everything is in order, they will delay the process of approving your application request just because they have not received any bribe from you;
45. Limited time of attendance [attending to clients];
46. Bribery;
47. Technicians always ask for bribes to pass inspection of installations, even though works are properly done;
48. Installation using stolen poles, and no registration with the distribution company;
49. In 2021, I had a need to wire my house but UMEME procedures challenged me. The electrician in charge asked for one million and in a week, I had power. But I feel pain over such;
50. My power went off and I reported , those guys who were sent to elect my issue asked for money before they attend to me;
51. Poor wiring work;

## 4.5 Additional comments on this topic

**Additional Comments – Please share any additional thoughts or feedback on this topic.**

70 responses

1. I therefore call upon the ERA to empower the wiremen and organise them so that they can work under the real leadership;
2. I would like to know more about the certification;
3. Create awareness;
4. Certifying is good and is the way to go but you need to change in the criteria used to certify these PAWA Kapo DIT students, etc.;
5. At least projects like those of one pole service by Government be distributed to certified wiremen or companies basing on where it is located;
6. My company wishes to do electrical construction work but it is hampered;
7. I request that ERA engages the network operators to stop bribery and delay in providing services to certified wiremen yet we provide all documents to them on time. This especially applies to Umeme and UEDCL;
8. ERA should help sensitize the community about hiring certified electricians and leave *kamyufus*;
9. This survey is informative, please make this very public, people need this information, safety, quality is key to all Ugandans;
10. People doing inspection in distribution companies should at least be a class ahead of what he is going to supervise and also he or she should be Certified by ERA for that purpose not depending on whom do you know at office;
11. All electricity operators must be certified;
12. Need to visit the ground;
13. I am requesting ERA when they issuing permit to consider experience – here what I am meaning i.e. if I have class D for some years at least I qualify to get class C if I can pass the interviews – that's are my request;
14. A lot has to be done;
15. There should be a list of recommended service providers for this cause this should go along with strict supervision of the works;
16. I would prefer the ERA to start following us in the field like the NDA [National Drug Authority] does;
17. The biggest challenge in this field is, most of the clients look for cheap labor and they never care whether the contractor is a certified one or not;

18. We need more sensitisation on surveying a site for power connection;
19. More awareness about certified electricians through media and mass communications;
20. To prioritise certified wiremen for any available opportunities;
21. Thanks for such informed descriptions and kindly share such to Government;
22. We look forward to being awarded opportunity to serve people safely;
23. All companies need to hire and follow their performance with certified wiremen;
24. I wish this survey was also conducted in Luganda [vernacular];
25. There should be a stop bribe or corruption mechanism put in place straight away from office [staff] to field officer. In most cases the field officers shares the proceeds with the officers who stay behind in the office. The whole process is normally done in a syndicate. The proper system should be put in place to deny such act;
26. They can't install a meter before some money;
27. Non certified electricians should not work at all;
28. It is better for the ERA to emphasize that any non certified Electrician to offer any service in Electricity, there must be a certified Electrician to supervise such works;
29. Is there are any available Certified Electricians, they need to be given all the necessary support and recognition to offer a professional service/s to their Country;
30. Please let the Country recognize and support the importance of certified Electricians;
31. My thought about this topic is that at least certified wireman would do the surveying part and the technicians from the distribution company just come only to supervise what was surveyed especially at the time of applying for new connection and this is because they take long to do the surveying for example [in] this gov't project a customer may even [take] a month without being surveyed;
32. Kindly put this survey after every month to share our ideas with you admin;
33. All electrical works should be done by certified wiremen than using non certified wiremen;
34. ERA needs to sensitize the citizens on the danger of electricity and why it's important to use certified electricians over non certified electricians. Additionally ERA should try possible way of protecting clients from the extortion of money by distribution company workers majorly field workers;
35. Great but many need to be educated on its total awareness;
36. Some people take chances and use good electricians that have not gone through the certification process. Let ERA ease the process of getting electricians certified;
37. I would like to know how the government subsidy on connections works;
38. Enforcement of this regulation is lacking and also there is enormous practiced of permit holders to issue permits without supervision. In other words they just sale the permit. ERA should appoint companies to implement the requirement of periodical re-inspection of electrical installation. This is still lacking. Ours is currently offering these services to the multinational companies basing on 'BS 7671' and national laws;
39. Very good survey for a consumer;
40. Thank you for thinking about this survey;
41. I think this is an important platform for encouraging the entire world to use only certified electricians for our power safety;
42. There is no immediate availability of such skill people or technicians;
43. There's need for more people to understand usefulness of using certified people;
44. I think pushing electricians for certification by ERA is very important to aid enforcement of industry standards. They need to understand that it goes beyond just loading equipments, but doing safely;
45. Ensure safety;
46. Clients should try to employ certified wiremen;
47. How can uncertified wiremen become certified? Because they have done good work for quite a period of time and still doing it, though not certified;

48. I am interested with this topic;
49. Let systems be freely handled so that issues of bribe are minimized, also employing the right people in right offices/desks;
50. And we [need] more free awareness;
51. Let's be under one [organization] for better identification;
52. The government should sensitize the citizen about certified Electricians, & dangers of not hiring the latter, most important setting minimum wage for Electricians and all other Engineering fields as this may reduce on the issues of bribes in the sector;
53. More information about the required qualifications for certified wiremen;
54. Cheap access;
55. Electricity is a dangerous service if not handled properly. For proper use one needs a qualified electrician;
56. Make awareness to all communities to the importance of certified Electricians, how to find them and benefits attached;
57. 'Re hiring' of more supervisors to inspect the done work by certified personals. Thus saves the issue of one being certified but by work zero result;
58. ERA should sensitise the public more about certified wiremen and also find a way of making the public identify them as well i.e. customized dressing, etc;
59. Help considering safety of installation using China vs England materials;
60. The distribution companies' processes are challenging. Currently I have a neighbour capable of paying but he has spent close to 4 months without power;
61. Use of non certified personnel should be phased out. They can't be regulated.

## 4.6 The Survey Questionnaire

### AFFOSHED CO. LIMITED

#### Understanding the Use of Non-Certified Electricians Survey

##### Introduction:

Thank you for participating in this short survey.

The Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) has emphasized the importance of employing Certified Wiremen for all electrical installation works, to ensure safety of persons and property and in compliance with national and global standards. Despite this, some companies and individuals still hire non-Certified Electricians. Your responses will help us understand the reasons behind this choice and promote the benefits of hiring Certified Wiremen. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

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##### 1. What type of entity are you?

- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Company/Organization

##### 2. If you are an individual, please specify your occupation: .....



**3. If you are representing a company/organization, please provide the following details:**

**a. What is the size of your company?**

- ☐ Small (1-50 employees)
- ☐ Medium (51-200 employees)
- ☐ Large (201+ employees)

**b. What industry does your company operate in?**

- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Real Estate
- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Services
- ☐ Other (*please specify*) .....

**c. (For both individuals and companies) - Where are you located?**

- ☐ Central Uganda
- ☐ Eastern Uganda
- ☐ Western Uganda
- ☐ Northern Uganda
- ☐ West Nile

**d. What is your job title/position within the company?**

.....

**4. Have you or your company ever hired an Electrician who was not Certified?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**5. If yes, what factors influenced this decision? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Cost savings
- ☐ Availability/convenience
- ☐ Lack of awareness about Certification
- ☐ Personal recommendation
- ☐ Trust in the Electrician's skills/experience
- ☐ Other (please specify) .....

**6. How important is the issue of Certification to you when hiring an Electrician?**

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not at all important

**7. Have you experienced any issues or challenges when working with non-Certified Electricians?**

- ☐ Yes (please describe) .....
- ☐ No

**8. What benefits do you perceive in hiring a Certified Electrician? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Higher quality of work
- ☐ Greater safety assurance
- ☐ Compliance with regulations
- ☐ Peace of mind
- ☐ No perceived benefits
- ☐ Other (please specify) .....

**10. Are you aware of the Electricity Regulatory Authority's (ERA) Certification requirements and the importance of hiring Certified Wiremen?**

- ☐ Yes

☐ No

**11. Would you consider hiring a Certified Electrician in the future if you were provided with more information about the benefits and Certification process?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Undecided

**12. What would encourage you to hire a Certified Electrician over a non-Certified one?**

.....

**13. Have you ever faced any issues related to bribes or disagreements with technicians from electricity distribution companies?**

☐ Yes (*please describe*) .....

.....

☐ No

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**Additional Comments:**

**14. Please share any additional thoughts or feedback on this topic.**

.....

**15. Optional: If you would like to receive a summary of the survey results, please provide your email address below.** .....

*Thank you for your time!*

For any additional comments, please contact us on:



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