



UNITED
NATIONS
UGANDA



COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS

UGANDA

FIRST CONDUCTED IN JUNE 2020
(Updated December 2021)



Cover Image:
© Pixabay

United Nations Uganda © 2021

UNITED NATIONS IN UGANDA



UNITED NATIONS MISSIONS AND REGIONAL ENTITIES BASED IN UGANDA



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 6 |
| CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION | 8 |
| CHAPTER 2: UGANDA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA | 11 |
| 2.1 Uganda Vision 2040 for sustainable development | 12 |
| 2.2 NDP III: A platform for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals | 13 |
| 2.3 Summary of progress on the SDGs | 15 |
| 2.4 Status of progress on the SDGs | 16 |
| 2.5 Socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Uganda | 43 |
| CHAPTER 3: FACTORS SUPPORTING PROGRESS TOWARD SDGs IN UGANDA | 44 |
| 3.1 Causes of economic slowdown | 45 |
| 3.2 Causes of increased poverty and inequalities | 45 |
| 3.3 Ecological and climate-related factors | 46 |
| 3.4 Governance, peace and security factors | 47 |
| 3.5 Factors hindering human well-being in Uganda | 50 |
| 3.6 Social and gender inequality | 52 |
| CHAPTER 4: GROUPS LEFT BEHIND OR LIKELY TO BE LEFT BEHIND | 54 |
| CHAPTER 5: UGANDA'S FINANCING LANDSCAPE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | 62 |
| CHAPTER 6: COMMITMENTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS | 67 |
| CHAPTER 7: CROSS-BOUNDARY, REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES | 70 |
| CHAPTER 8: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES | 75 |
| 8.1 Sustaining good governance and strengthening capacity for effective service delivery | 76 |
| 8.2 Promoting and sustaining poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth | 76 |
| 8.3 Addressing human rights, gender equality and SGBV | 77 |
| 8.4 Harnessing the transformative potential of digitalization | 78 |
| 8.5 Partnerships, coordination and collaboration | 78 |
| CHAPTER 9: RISKS TO PROGRESS ON SDGs | 79 |
| 10. CONCLUSION | 81 |
| 10. ANNEXES | 82 |
| Annex I: Abbreviation and Acronyms | 82 |

FOREWORD

Uganda's impetus for sustainable development is enshrined in the 1995 Constitution and the Uganda Vision 2040. Having coincided with the post-2015 consultations and launched in 2013, the Vision 2040 aims at a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years.

The country implements this vision through the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework (CNDPF) delivered by three ten-year National Development Plans and six five-year National Development Plans (NDPs). The overarching goal of the third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21-2024/25 is to increase household incomes and improve the quality of life of Ugandans through resource-led sustainable industrialization, focusing on key growth opportunities of agriculture, tourism, oil and gas, and minerals.

Government's pledge to implement the 2030 Agenda has been evidenced by its active participation and reporting in the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) discussions, first in 2016 and later in 2020. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been integrated into Uganda's national development policy and planning frameworks and NDPIII is the vehicle towards accelerating the 2030 Agenda. The integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) simulation model identified Governance, Environment and Industry as key SDG accelerators for Uganda.

In order to fully realise this potential, the model found that investments in health, education and infrastructure would be necessary in addition to the SDG accelerators.



Besides the Global Goals, the country is fully committed to regional frameworks such as the African Union Agenda 2063, East African Community (EAC) Vision 2050, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Despite the commitment, there are major challenges and risks to Uganda's development trajectory, many of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive economic growth rates have been registered over the years, but there has been lack of shared progress as many groups of people are either left behind or likely to be left behind. The rate of economic growth has also not kept pace with the population growth rates. While poverty reduction trends had stagnated since 2012/13, the pandemic-induced measures led to loss of jobs especially for youth and women involved in informal micro and small enterprises which pushed many more people into poverty. The crisis has also greatly impacted on the human capital development sectors of health and education that were already facing significant inadequacies.

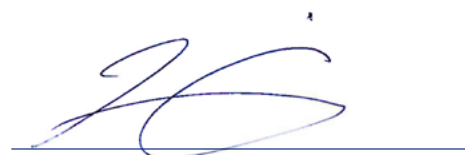
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been integrated into Uganda's national development policy and planning frameworks and NDPIII is the vehicle towards accelerating the 2030 Agenda. The integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) simulation model identified Governance, Environment and Industry as key SDG accelerators for Uganda.

The prolonged closure of schools, which were only reopened in January 2022, had severe implications as majority of the children were unable to engage in learning activities out of the school environment. As a result, cases of teenage pregnancy increased exponentially which has consequences for current and future human development and poverty reduction efforts. The limited investments in proper risk management measures in the various sectors of the economy increases vulnerabilities among the population. These development challenges have been compounded by weakening governance systems which impede the implementation of national laws and policies that are critical for sustainable development.

Amidst these challenges, Uganda is endowed with vast natural resources such as mineral deposits, tourist attractions, fertile soils and a largely warm tropical climate with two rainy seasons per year. Although the large and growing young population poses risks to sustainable peace and development, it also creates potential for sustainable economic growth if fully harnessed through better service delivery, effective skills development and digital transformation.

The United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA), which underlines the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) priorities, is our independent, impartial and collective assessment of Uganda's situation to inform the UNSDCF. It examines the progress, gaps, bottlenecks and opportunities against the country's commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda, UN norms and standards, and the principles of the UN Charter.

First prepared in June 2020, the CCA is a continuous core analytical function of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Uganda. The analysis has been updated in 2021 to reflect the changes in Uganda's development context and ensure its usefulness throughout the UNSDCF five-year (2021-2025) programming cycle, including the annual review of the Joint Work Plans. It is based on a systematic review of the latest evidence available from a wide range of stakeholders, including, government, UN, the Development Partner community, civil society, academia and private sector.



Susan Ngongi Namondo
UN Resident Coordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The initial United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) report was first prepared in 2020, based on an extensive desk review and analysis of relevant documents and data from various national and international sources. The purpose of the analysis was to inform the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the process of preparation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025.

The initial United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) report was prepared in 2020 based on an extensive desk review and analysis of relevant documents and data from various national and international sources. The purpose of the analysis was to inform the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) on the preparation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025. Since 2020, when the CCA was first drafted, several changes have occurred that impact the development landscape in Uganda and UNCT programming. Thus, the analysis must be updated to reflect changes in the development context and data. This updated report analyses Uganda's progress towards and challenges to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also identifies opportunities that could accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Uganda.

The Uganda Vision 2040, launched in 2013, aims to transform Uganda from a peasant society to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. This is to be implemented through the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework (CNDPF) articulated by three 10-year development plans and six five-year National Development Plans (NDPs).

The country is implementing its Third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21-2024/25,¹ whose overarching goal is to increase Ugandans' household incomes and improve their quality of life. This is expected to be achieved through resource-led sustainable industrialization, with a focus on key growth opportunities in agriculture, tourism, oil and gas, and minerals.

Uganda has embedded the SDGs in its national development planning frameworks and identifies NDPIII as the vehicle that can help accelerate achievement of the global Goals. It also addresses regional aspirations and commitments such as the African Union Agenda 2063, East African Community (EAC) Vision 2050, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The government rolled out the Integrated Sustainable Development Goals simulation model (iSDG) to analyse and identify SDG accelerators that should guide prioritization of the Goals in national development planning frameworks. The analysis identified governance, environment and industry as key SDG accelerators for Uganda.

¹ Uganda, National Planning Authority (NPA) (2020). Third National Development Plan (NDP III), 2020/21 – 2024/25, available at http://www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NDPIII-Finale_Compressed.pdf

According to the Sustainable Development Report 2021,² Uganda ranks 140 out of 165 countries, with a global index score of 53.5, having improved from 52.6 percent in 2019. The country is on track to achieve Goal 13 on climate action and making moderate improvements on Goals 2, 3, 7 and 8, but is stagnating on Goals 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 16 and 17. Progress is slowing on Goal 15 and no information is available on Goals 4, 10, 12 and 14. Currently, the country can report on 117 out of 201 SDG indicators that are applicable to Uganda's context but most of the available data is not appropriately disaggregated by gender, age, disability, income and other required characteristics.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, a series of economic and social developments have affected the SDGs in Uganda. Findings of the first joint UN socio-economic impact report of COVID-19 prepared in June 2020³ revealed that the pandemic had multiple short, medium, and long-term impacts on the economy, poverty reduction efforts, employment, livelihoods, and the sustainable use of natural resources.⁴ It has also worsened social and economic vulnerabilities, including an increased incidence of domestic violence, surging crime rates, and reduced access to emergency sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. The preventive health measures that the government has taken since 2020, including lockdowns and the closure of educational institutions and business units, have slowed progress towards achieving national, regional and global sustainable development targets.

For the short and medium term, attention will have to focus on ensuring access to vaccines for eligible population groups; investing in building a stronger public health and health administration system that can withstand current and future risks; investing in the recovery from and resilience to the social and economic impacts of the pandemic; promoting environmental sustainability; and ensuring that population groups that are likely to be left behind are strategically targeted. Success in these efforts will be premised on a stronger, effective, inclusive and just governance system as well as effective partnerships with all development actors.

According to the Sustainable Development Report 2021, Uganda ranks 140 out of 165 countries, with a global index score of 53.5, having improved from 52.6 percent in 2019.

2 Sustainable Development Report (2021). Country Profiles. Available at <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles>

3 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Uganda. (2020). UN Socioeconomic Impact Report of COVID-19 in Uganda. Available at <https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/un-socioeconomic-impact-report-of-covid-19-in-uganda.html>

4 Following job losses and business closures, many people returned to agriculture and other natural resource-dependent activities, further straining natural resources that were already under pressure from rapid urbanization, population growth, a refugee influx and the country's drive towards industrialization (see *Ibid.*).



CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa. It neighbours South Sudan in the north, Kenya in the east, Tanzania in the south and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda in the west. It is a member of the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) and has ratified the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Uganda is populated by 56 tribes and around nine indigenous communities.

The country is located on the edge of the Equator with diverse natural features and resources that create potential for sustainable development, including lakes, mountains, forests and rift valleys. Four of East Africa's Great Lakes – Lake Victoria, Lake Kyoga, Lake Albert and Lake Edward - lie within Uganda or on its borders. Victoria is the second biggest lake in the world, covering 68,100 km². The country is also blessed with rivers and their products, including the Nile River, at 6,700 km. long. A range of foods with high nutritional value and medicinal plants growth throughout the country and multiple species of animals are present. Uganda also has a favourable climate and is characterized by high biodiversity.

Uganda's land area totals 241,037 km² and its population is projected to reach 42.9 million people in 2021. This population is the second-youngest in the world, with 53 percent of Ugandans below 18 years. Overall, 76 percent of the population is below the age of 30, implying a highly growing labour force.⁵ About 75 percent of the population live in rural areas. The population growth rate is high - 3 percent - and the total fertility rate is 5 children per woman. At this rate, the population is projected to increase to 52.3 million by 2025, 59.4 million by 2030 and 74.5 million by 2040.⁶ Almost one-third of households are headed by women; they experience higher rates of poverty.

The large and growing youthful population creates both an opportunity and a challenge. Uganda has a great opportunity to accelerate socio-economic transformation through strategic investments in health, education, skills development, decent employment, and promotion of ICT and innovations. However, if the youth bulge is not well planned for, it is likely to create socio-economic challenges and the country may not reap the demographic dividend. Uganda is a young democracy, having gained its attained independence from Great Britain in 1962. The country's current political landscape is largely defined by a key event that occurred in 1986 when the National Resistance Movement (NRM) led by President Yoweri Museveni rose to power.

Even though the 2005 constitutional referendum introduced a multi-party system, the NRM has remained the dominant political party since 1986. Other key political parties include the Forum for Democratic Change, National Unity Platform, and the Democratic Party. The country has a presidential system of government with a parliament made up of 556 members. They include 353 constituency representatives; 146 district woman representatives; 10 Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) representatives; five representatives of the youth; five representatives of persons with disabilities (PWDs); five representatives of workers; five representatives of the elderly; and 27 ex-officio members. As in previous parliaments under the multiparty system, NRM representatives are in the majority, so the party can easily push through its agenda in Parliament.

5 Uganda, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2020). 2020 Statistical Abstract, available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/11_2020STATISTICAL_ABSTRACT_2020.pdf

6 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, custom data acquired via the website. Available at <https://population.un.org/wpp/>

Preparation of Common Country Analysis (CCA) report

The initial United Nations CCA report (2020) resulted from a collaborative effort among the United Nations agencies working in the country and technical development experts. It was based on extensive desk review and analysis of relevant documents and data from national and international sources, supplemented by discussions with relevant government ministries, departments and agencies and non-state actors, including the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda, the Uganda National NGO Forum, academia, youth, and special groups, including PWDs. The UN Team of Experts set up by the UNCT conducted background analytical work and prepared the first draft of the report, which was reviewed and informed by inputs/comments from heads and technical experts from various UN agencies. The Resident Coordinator's Office organized a two-day retreat for the Team of Experts to review and refine the draft CCA. Inputs from non-resident UN agencies and departments were also taken into consideration when preparing the final report. UNCT Uganda reviewed and approved the draft final report.

The initial CCA described and analysed Uganda's political, socio-economic, and environmental situation and the factors that explain the current status of the country's efforts to address the SDGs. From the perspective of the "Leave No One Behind" principle, the CCA also identified groups left behind and/or at risk of being left behind in the process of Uganda's socio-economic transformation. The report also articulated challenges and opportunities to accelerate the achievement of NDP III and SDG targets. Having concluded the CCA in June 2020, the UNCT conducted a review of the initial report between September and December 2021. The objective of the update was to take stock of the progress, emerging challenges, opportunities and risks that have an impact on Uganda's journey to achieving the SDGs.

It was also intended to provide information on which to base changes in the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework joint work plans and to support preparation of the relevant joint UN programmes. The UN SDG Technical Working Group provided technical leadership on behalf of the UN Deputies Team and UNCT. Useful inputs were received from the technical experts in various UN agencies.

Public consultation and voices for SDGs

Uganda developed three online platforms to engage the public and obtain feedback on the SDGs and other sustainable development issues. To capture those voices, e-platforms were established and popularized on several social, broadcast and print media channels. One of the platforms, UNICEF U-Report, gave young people the opportunity to share their views on SDG implementation and issues affecting their lives. The content from this platform provided information for the second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2020 and for Uganda's preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit held in September 2021. The UN developed a concept with the government to use the U-Report as an innovative component that offers a platform in complement to national dialogues, thus showcasing as many voices as possible on food systems in Uganda. About 941,720 responses were received and, combined with outcomes from other dialogues, informed Uganda's position at the summit and the country's food systems transformation plan for the next decade.⁷ This platform also provided an opportunity to familiarize Ugandans across the country about the SDGs. Uganda is scheduled to report its progress on the 2030 Agenda at the 2023 High-level Political Forum (HLPF), and there are plans to further use the U-Report to seek and incorporate citizen voices in Uganda's 2023 VNR Report. The challenge, therefore, is to make it more accessible to the public, especially people in marginalized and fragile regions and those in vulnerable groups.

⁷ UN Uganda. U-Report Poll Results from Uganda for the UN Food Systems Summit Dialogues 2021. Available at <https://uganda.un.org/en/145136-u-report-poll-results-uganda-un-food-systems-summit-dialogues-2021>



CHAPTER 2:

**Uganda's progress
towards the
2030 agenda**

2.1 Uganda Vision 2040 for sustainable development

Launched in 2013, Uganda Vision 2040⁸ aims to transform Uganda from a peasant society to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. This is to be implemented through the CNDPF, articulated in three 10-year development plans and six five-year NDPs. The country is currently implementing its Third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21-2024/25,⁹ whose goal is to increase Ugandans' household incomes and improve their quality of life. This is expected to be achieved through resource-led sustainable industrialization, with a focus on key growth opportunities in agriculture, tourism, oil and gas, and minerals. Having missed the lower middle-income status target that had been envisaged by 2020, the country is focusing on increasing productivity and accelerating growth to propel the economy into lower middle-income status, with per capita GDP equivalent to US\$1,198, by 2025.

The NDP III is also informed by key regional and global aspirations and frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Africa Agenda 2063, EAC Vision 2050, COMESA and AfCFTA. The plan also recognizes the challenges and threats that regional and global trends pose, including climate change, regional conflicts leading to large-scale population movements and loss of markets, cybersecurity concerns, terrorism, epidemics and brain drain stifling innovation, research and entrepreneurship capacity. The NDP III objectives include:

1. Enhance value addition in key growth opportunities;
2. Strengthen the private sector to create jobs;
3. Consolidate and increase the stock and quality of productive infrastructure;
4. Enhance the productivity and social wellbeing of the population; and,
5. Strengthen the role of the state in guiding and facilitating development.

The Country is currently implementing its third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21-2024/25, whose goal is to increase household incomes and improve the quality of life of Ugandans.

NDP III presents a shift from the previous two NDPs. The key changes include: i) introducing a programmatic approach to focus on delivery and eliminate the previous silo approach in an effort to enhance synergies across sectors and actors; ii) increasing the state's role by investing strategically, either alone or with the private sector, to lower the cost of production and increase the country's competitiveness as an investment destination; iii) increasing the targeting of investment in infrastructure and human capital, with a heightened focus on vocational education; and, v) strengthening the focus on digitalization in service delivery to increase efficiency and reduce corruption.

The Plan identified 18 programmatic areas:

- Agro-industrialization
- Mineral development
- Sustainable development of petroleum resources
- Tourism development
- Natural resources, environment, climate change, land and water management
- Private sector development
- Manufacturing
- Integrated transport infrastructure and services
- Sustainable energy development
- Digital transformation
- Sustainable urbanization and housing
- Human capital development;
- Innovation, technology development and transfer
- Community mobilization and mindset change
- Governance and security

⁸ Uganda, Office of the President. Uganda Vision 2040. Available at <http://www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/VISION-2040.pdf>

⁹ Uganda, NPA, NPDIII.

- Public sector transformation
- Regional development,
- Development plan implementation.

2.2 NDPIII: A platform for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals

The country held the Presidency of the United Nations General Assembly when the Member States adopted the SDGs in September 2015. Uganda was one of the first countries to participate in the first High-level Political Forum in 2016, developing the SDG implementation readiness report at that time.¹⁰ The report indicated significant alignment between the SDGs and the Second National Development Plan (NDPII). The NDPIII focuses on improving household incomes and welfare; achieving balanced development across the country's regions; using the Parish Development Model (PDM) as a vehicle to deliver NDPIII; and addressing the silo approach by taking programmatic approaches to planning and budgeting. It been fully aligned to the 2030 Agenda, including SDG indicators, in its results framework. The National Planning Authority (NPA) is committed to working with stakeholders to align the national and local government level development plans to the NDPIII.¹¹

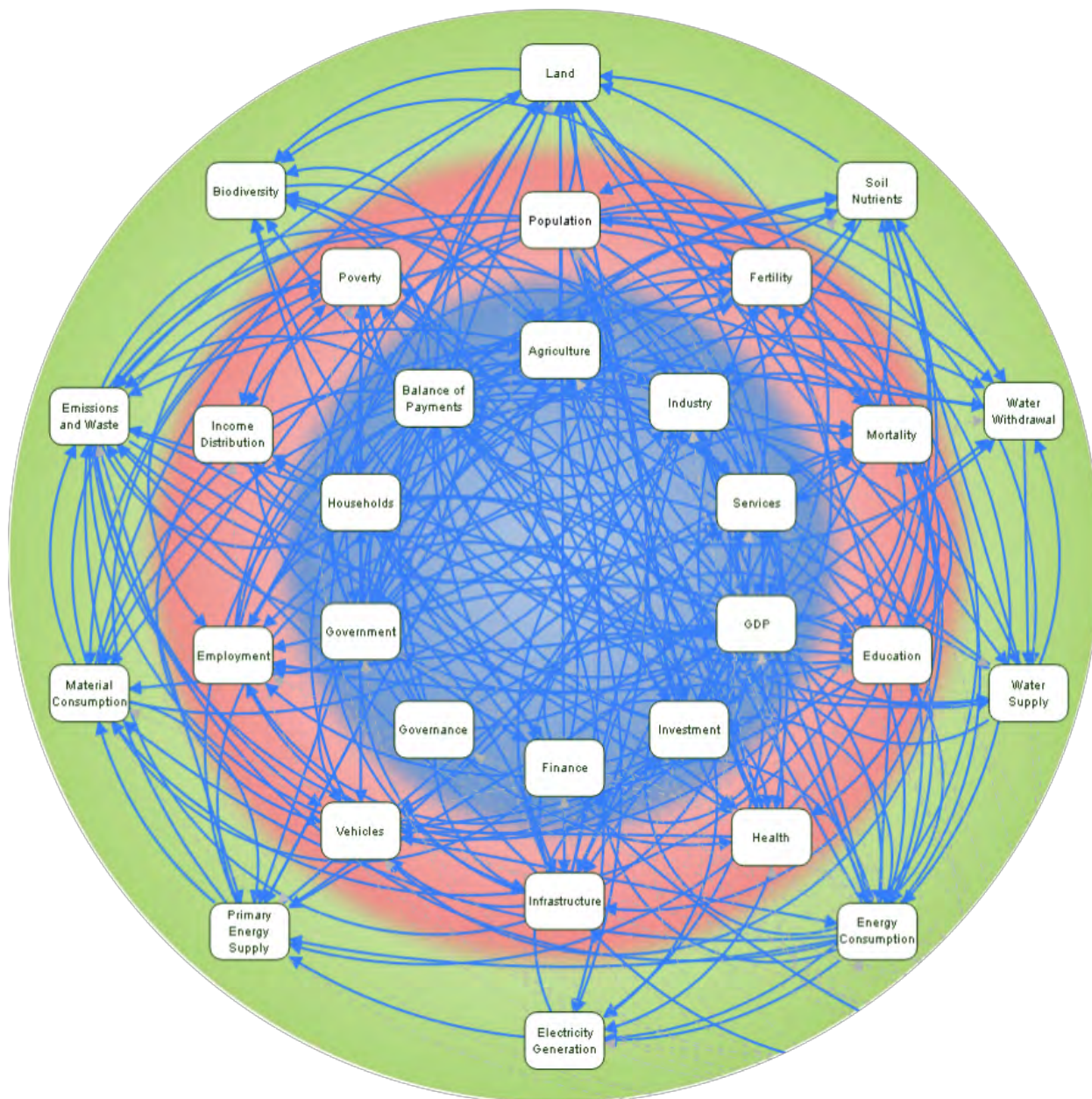
To harmonize efforts to guide implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the government has set up the National SDG Coordination Framework under the Office of the Prime Minister. Anchored within existing government coordination structures, the framework provides strategic guidance on the roles and responsibilities of key institutions and is steered by a multi-stakeholder national SDG taskforce. It sets out and allocates responsibility for coordination, monitoring and reporting; planning and mainstreaming; resource mobilization and financing; data systems; and communication and popularization.

For purposes of inclusiveness, non-state actors are also represented in the SDG coordination structures through the Uganda National NGO Forum and the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda. At the upper political level, the Parliament of Uganda has set up the Parliamentary Forum on SDGs, which continues to advocate for implementation and reporting on the Agenda. Most recently, the Prime Minister appointed the Minister for General Duties as the Cabinet's focal point on issues related to SDG implementation. To create and manage a coherent implementation architecture, the government, in partnership with the United Nations in Uganda and other development actors, has established the National SDG Secretariat to support the SDGs' coordination architecture. This coordination structure has been the entry point for harmonized UN support to the government on SDGs.

To guide SDG priority-setting in national development planning, the government has rolled out the integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) simulation model to analyse and identify SDG accelerators. The analysis identified governance, environment, and industry as SDG accelerators for Uganda as they are linked to 12 of the 18 NDPIII programmes, also noting that the human capital development sectors of health, education, water and sanitation are vital to attaining the SDGs (Diagram 1).

¹⁰ Uganda, National Planning Authority and UNDP (2016). Review Report on Uganda's Readiness for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10689Uganda%20Review%20Report_CDs1.pdf

¹¹ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UN System in Uganda (2018). Roadmap for Creating an Enabling Environment for Delivering on SDGs in Uganda. Available at https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/human_development/Roadmap_for_creating_an_enabling_environment_for_delivering_on_SDGs_in_Uganda.html

Diagram 1: A conceptual overview of the core iSDG-Uganda model structure¹²

Source: National Planning Authority, 2020.

¹² The iSDG-Uganda, a system dynamics model, is designed to support national development planning. It is structured to analyse medium- and long-term development issues at the national level. The model presents SDG accelerators (priority action areas) where targeted investment could have a direct and positive impact on other development priorities, thus accelerating progress towards the SDGs. The model's structure has 30 modules divided into economics, social and environmental dimensions. See: Uganda, National Planning Authority (2020). Dynamic Analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals: Achieving the SDGs with Uganda's Third National Development Plan. Available at <https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/-isdg-report.html>

The 30 modules are divided into economic (blue), social (red) and environmental (green).

- **Economic modules:** include the production area (agriculture, industry and services), which are characterized by an expanded Cobb-Douglas production function with inputs of resources, labour, capital and endogenous total factor productivity.
- **Social module:** includes population dynamics by sex and age cohorts; health and education challenges and programmes; basic infrastructure (roads and rails) and vehicles; employment; and poverty levels and income distribution. The module considers, for example, the interaction among income, healthcare, nutrition and adult literacy rates and the effect of this interaction on fertility and life expectancy, which in turn determine population growth.
- **Environmental modules:** track the consumption of natural resources – both renewable and non-renewable – and estimate the impact of the use and depletion of such resources on production, health and other modules. They cover changes in land use (for example from forest to agricultural or settlement land), resource stocks (such as fish

stocks and forest cover), and quality of soil based on their nutrient level and assess their impacts on other modules, such as agricultural productivity, nutrition and biodiversity.

2.3 Summary of progress on the SDGs

Uganda has embraced the principles of sustainable development broadly and the 2030 Agenda in particular in order to address the constraints that prevented the Millennium Development Goal targets from being fully attained and to ensure a development path that is not detrimental to the well-being of the future generations.

According to the Sustainable Development Report 2021,¹³ Uganda ranks 140 out of 165 countries, with a global index score of 53.5, having improved from 52.6 percent in 2019. The country is on track to achieve Goal 13 on climate action and make moderate improvements on Goals 2, 3, 7 and 8, but is stagnating on Goals 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 16 and 17. Progress is slowing on Goal 15 and no information is available on Goals 4, 10, 12 and 14.

Figure 1: Uganda's SDG Dashboard, 2021

13 Sustainable Development Report (2021).



Although the country is fully committed to reporting on the Agenda, Uganda was able to report on only 92 out of 201 SDG indicators applicable to Uganda's context in the 2020 VNR.¹⁴ Thanks to intensified efforts by the government and its partners, the number of indicators for which data is available has increased to 117 and is expected to reach 125 by the end of 2021. Despite these developments, most of the indicators are not appropriately disaggregated by gender, age, disability, income and other required characteristics. In addition, the country faces challenges in using evidence adequately in decision-making. As part of efforts to address some of these gaps, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) has partnered with the UN system to set up an Open Data Platform to improve access to data on the SDG indicators. Furthermore, the UN has committed to work with the government to develop a joint UN data and statistics programme to address these issues.

A study covering the overarching commitment themes was conducted in 2021 to determine progress in implementing the 2020 VNR recommendations. It showed that knowledge and visibility of SDGs needed to attract broader stakeholder participation remain low, partnerships between the central government and local governments do not operate effectively, and interaction between local governments on SDGs remains limited.

This has implications for local resource mobilization and the expression of SDGs in planning and citizen participation and could derail the concept of leaving no one behind.¹⁵ Interaction between the private sector and local government on SDGs is also limited. The engagement of young people with SDG-focused innovation tends to be concentrated at the national/urban level, not at the local level, and those efforts are scattered.

2.4 Status of progress on the SDGs

Uganda fully recognizes all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – in its national development policies and strategies. Details of progress on each of the goals are summarized below.

SDG 1: No poverty.

Progress on SDG 1 has stagnated. The 2019/2020 Uganda National Household Survey estimated that 20.3 percent of Ugandan households live in poverty, corresponding to 8.3 million people.¹⁶ This represented a decrease from the 2016/17 rate of 21.4 percent, but an increase from the 19.7 percent rate in 2012/13. This survey's results also indicate an alarming rate of poverty in the Acholi subregion, where it has nearly doubled since 2016/17 and stood at 67 percent of the population in 2020.

The subregion is on a par with Karamoja (65 percent) on overall poverty levels and the proportion of the population in the bottom 40 percent of the nation (88 percent and 78 percent, respectively).

Even though overall poverty in 2019/2020 was slightly lower than that registered in 2016/17, the household survey shows that COVID-19 has had serious negative impacts on poverty trends. Poverty increased from 18.7 percent to 21.9 percent during the first COVID wave in Uganda, which can be explained by the change in employment structure. Prior to COVID, 52 percent of the population held formal employment, 47 percent worked in subsistence agriculture and 0.3 percent were in unpaid apprenticeship. Following the first lockdown in 2020, more people shifted to the agricultural sector, rising from 41 percent before March 2020 to 52 percent after that date. Those in formal employment fell from 57 percent to 47 percent in the same period. This trend was still visible in April 2021, a year after the pandemic had begun.¹⁷

¹⁴ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister (2020). Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/national-voluntary-national-review-report-2020.html>

¹⁵ Uganda National NGO Forum (2021). Progress on the Implementation of the 2020 Uganda Voluntary National Review Report Commitments. Available at <https://action4sd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Progress-Implementation-of-2020-VNR-Commitments.pdf>

¹⁶ Uganda, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2021). The Uganda National Household Survey Report 2019/2020.

Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf

¹⁷ Ibid.

About 23.4 million people (62.4 percent) were reported to be vulnerable to poverty, implying that they are at risk of falling below the national poverty line. In the last four years, that group grew by 9.3 percent, for an annualized growth rate of 2.1 percent. If this trend is sustained, assuming that comprehensive and inclusive poverty reduction strategies are not implemented or ineffective - and given climate-related, social, and economic disasters and shocks - the number of individuals in vulnerable groups could total approximately 27.6 million and 30.6 million in 2025 and 2030, respectively. About 47 percent of Ugandan households and 56 percent of Ugandan children below 18 years of age experience multidimensional poverty (disaggregated by gender, the figures are 50 percent for female-headed households compared with 46 percent for male-headed).¹⁸

However, those poverty rates are based on a poverty line of \$1 per person/day that was constructed three decades ago. The current national poverty line is far below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per person/day and does not give a true picture of poverty in the country. This calls for efforts to revise the poverty rate to reflect the current context. In the 2019/20 household survey, the proposed new national poverty line is \$1.77. Based on that figure, 12.3 million (30.1 percent) Ugandans are estimated to live in poverty. The number of poor Ugandans increases to 16.9 million (41.4 percent) when using the international poverty line of \$1.90.

The persistent poverty levels are due to the fact that the economy is generally rural-based. A relatively large proportion of households (39 percent), corresponding to 3.5 million households, remain trapped in the subsistence economy. Of those households, 43.5 percent are female-headed, compared to 37.1 percent male-headed households. Current statistics indicate that the majority of Ugandans - 68 percent - earn their living in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector, with a female-to-male comparison of 73 percent to 63 percent. However, this sector contributes only 24 percent to national income/gross domestic product (GDP), demonstrating a lack of shared prosperity.¹⁹

SDG 2: Zero hunger.

While Uganda has put in place a zero hunger policy framework, the number of children who are stunted must be reduced further and attention should be paid to regional disparities. Despite some progress in reducing hunger and children's stunting, food and nutrition insecurity prevail in most parts of Uganda, especially in the fragile regions of Karamoja, northern and western Uganda. Poverty, disease, disasters and low productivity affect the availability of, access to and use of food. The prevalence of undernourishment is at its highest since 2001, with some 41 percent of the population (17.6 million people) reported as undernourished in 2018.²⁰

¹⁸ UNICEF Uganda (2019). The Extent and Nature of Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation (Vol. 1). Available at <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/reports/multidimensional-child-poverty-and-deprivation-uganda-report-volume-1>

¹⁹ Uganda, UBOS (2021) and UBOS (2020).

²⁰ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), FAO Statistics (FAOSTAT) (2019). World Food and Agriculture Statistical Pocketbook 2019. Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/ca6463en/ca6463en.pdf>



About 23.4 million people (62.4 percent) were reported to be vulnerable to poverty, implying that they are at risk of falling below the national poverty line.



A relatively large proportion of households (39 percent), corresponding to 3.5 million households, remain trapped in the subsistence economy.



The prevalence of undernourishment is at its highest since 2001, with some 41 percent of the population (17.6 million people) reported as undernourished in 2018.

Dietary energy supply adequacy, as a measure of food availability, has been falling recently. In 2005, it stood at 113 percent but fell to 95 percent in 2019. Moderate to severe food insecurity prevails in hot spot areas of the Karamoja region and northern Uganda. The most recent national Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) reported stressed conditions within 35 percent of the population in Karamoja region, 16 percent in Acholi region, and 17 percent in East Central region.²¹ The first two have the highest number of people in the crisis phase of the classification. Between March and July 2021, 30 percent of the population in the Karamoja subregion faced severe food insecurity (Phase 3+). Key drivers of acute food insecurity include insecurity, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and high food prices. The food security situation in the Karamoja region is expected to improve during the projection period (August 2021 – January 2022). Of the nine districts in the region, three are anticipated to be in IPC Phase 3 (crisis), and six districts in IPC Phase 2 (stressed) during the projection period.²²

Twenty-nine percent of children under the age of five are reported as stunted and nearly 4 percent of children under five are affected by wasting.²³ Steady progress has been made in reducing the national prevalence of stunting among children under 5 (from 33 per cent in 2011 to 29 per cent in 2016).²⁴ However, this has not significantly reduced the absolute number of stunted children, which has remained at about 2.15 million because of rapid population growth. Despite the improved Average Annual Rate of Reduction from 1.47 per cent in 2012 to 1.79 per cent in 2016, Uganda is not on track to achieve the World Health Assembly's 2025 target on stunting.²⁵ To meet this target, Uganda's average annual rate must rise to at least 2.5 per cent. Regional inequalities also exist, with Bugisu, Karamoja, West Nile, Bunyoro and Tooro showing higher rates of stunting than the national average.

A relatively low prevalence of global acute malnutrition in children under five (4 per cent in 2016)²⁶ masks a high national prevalence of severe wasting (1.3 per cent), which is nine times higher than what would be expected in a well-nourished population (0.14 per cent). It also hides significant regional inequities with Karamoja and West Nile, which record particularly high wasting levels of 10 percent and above.

After large reductions in the prevalence of anaemia in children under five years (24 percent) and among women of reproductive age (19 percent) between 2006 and 2011, it increased (by 4 and 9 percentage points in children and women, respectively) between 2011 and 2016.²⁷ Anaemia remains a severe public health issue for children (53 percent) and a moderate public health issue for adolescent girls (33 percent) and women (32 percent). Its severity is more pronounced in women during pregnancy (38.2 percent) and lactation (34 percent), and the country is not on track to meet the World Health Assembly target of halving the number of women of reproductive age with anaemia. In Uganda, it is associated with poor dietary diversity, micronutrient deficiencies, genetic disorders such as sickle cell anaemia, and malaria.

Complementary feeding practices remain highly inadequate. In 2016, only 15 percent of children between 6 and 23 months of age received the minimum acceptable diet, with wide regional variations (from 2.8 per cent in Acholi to 26.6 per cent in Ankole). The low dietary diversity and low minimum meal frequency for children drive the poor complementary feeding practices as reflected by that diet. Only four out of 10 children aged 6–23 months consumed iron-rich foods.²⁸ Persistent inadequate complementary feeding practices appear to be related to poverty, inadequate knowledge and cultural practices, high disease burden, and chronic food insecurity in some regions of Uganda.

21 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (2018). Available at <http://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/en/>

22 Ibid.

23 FAOSTAT, 2019

24 Uganda, UBOS (2018), Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR333/FR333.pdf>

25 The target is a 40 percent reduction in the number of stunted children.

26 Uganda, UBOS (2018).

27 Uganda, UBOS (2007). Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2006. Available at <https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR194/FR194.pdf>;

Uganda, UBOS (2012). Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/fr264/fr264.pdf>; and Uganda, UBOS (2018).

28 Uganda, UBOS (2012) and Uganda, UBOS (2018).

Given below-normal crop production and low capacity to earn income following a reinstated national lockdown, many refugees are expected to face crisis outcomes, meaning that at least 20 percent of them in each settlement are likely to experience slight to moderate food consumption gaps or engage in negative and unsustainable coping strategies.²⁹ Humanitarian food assistance, estimated at a 60 percent ration, is likely to prevent worse outcomes but is insufficient to meet all basic food needs for many refugee households.

The percentage of the population with titled land (by region) has increased considerably, from 21.7 percent in 2016 to 36 percent in 2017,³⁰ but no updated data has been released. If the trend is maintained, the increase is consistent with the policy action to accelerate the systematic registration of land, as recommended by researchers on land issues in Uganda. However, women and other marginalized and vulnerable groups continue to face challenges in ownership, control and access to land in multiple regions.

SDG 3: Good health.

Progress on good health and well-being indicates a positive trend in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, as well as in cancer diagnostics and treatment. While there has been improvement in service coverage, the quality of health and nutrition services remains poor and some of the potential cross-sectoral contributions of the health sector are not being fully exploited. Life expectancy at birth in Uganda has increased from 52 and 48.8 years in 2002 to 64.5 and 62.8 in 2014 for females and males, respectively.³¹ Although the maternal mortality ratio in Uganda fell from 438 deaths per 100,000 live births in the 2011 to 336 in 2016,³² it is still high despite improvement in service coverage. This highlights the need to improve the quality of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health care and of emergency services. Twenty-eight percent of maternal mortality is among young women aged 15-24 years. Unmet need for family planning in Uganda has declined but remains high (32 percent), with adolescents aged 15-19 years at 30 percent. The modern contraceptive prevalence rate is 35 percent, with wide regional, rural and urban disparities. The adolescent pregnancy rate has remained constant at 25 percent among girls age 15-19 years, with 12 percent of adolescent girls being married. Despite improvements in skilled birth attendance rates (74 percent) and health facility deliveries (73 percent), the shortage of health workers, inadequate emergency obstetric care (especially at referral points), gender inequality and socio-cultural factors inhibit access to high-quality care, particularly in rural areas and within the marginalized and vulnerable regions.³³

29 IPC, Phase 3. Available at <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/ipc-overview-and-classification-system/ipc-acute-food-insecurity-classification/en/>

30 Uganda, UBOS (2021). 2021 Statistical Abstract. Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/01_20222021_Statistical_Abstract.pdf

31 Uganda, UBOS (2020).

32

33 Uganda, UBOS (2018); Uganda, Ministry of Health (2017). Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response Guidelines, Available at <http://library.health.go.ug/publications/maternal-health/maternal-and-perinatal-death-surveillance-and-response-guidelines>; UNICEF (2016). Uganda: Maternal and Newborn Health Disparities. Available at <https://data.unicef.org/resources/maternal-newborn-health-disparities-country-profiles/>

60%

Humanitarian food assistance, estimated at a 60 percent ration, is likely to prevent worse outcomes but is insufficient to meet all basic food needs for many refugee households.

25%

The adolescent pregnancy rate stagnated at 25 percent among girls aged 15-19 years, with 12 percent of adolescent girls being married.

Although immunization rates have improved, full coverage is relatively low, leading to a high risk of vaccine-preventable diseases outbreaks. Increasing frequency and the impact of re-emerging disease outbreaks (such as COVID-19, Ebola and Marburg) pose additional challenges to Uganda's health system. Limited institutional and human resource capacity of the health sector adversely affects opportunities to scale up priority nutrition-specific interventions during pregnancy, postpartum, early childhood and adolescence at health facility and community levels. This also affects testing and referral for and treatment of non-communicable diseases like cancer. Uganda has only one cancer centre that offers specialized services in treatment, research and prevention. With a population of over 40 million, Uganda has only 20 oncologists, while the demand for these experts has grown in large numbers due to steady growth of cancer-related illnesses, with more than 60,000 new cases annually.³⁴

Mental health concerns increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation measures. Mental health wards in hospitals were transformed into COVID-19 isolation units, leaving people with mental disorders without treatment. On average, Butabika Mental National Referral Hospital receives about 800 – 900 patients annually. However, by September 2020, the facility had treated 1,050 patients, attributed to factors including the pandemic.³⁵ Experts report that the pandemic has caused anxiety among the public in general and worsened the situation for people with existing mental health issues. The continued closure of schools and other recreational activities continued to have a particular impact on the psychosocial well-being and mental health of children and adolescents.

Traffic safety is also a significant concern in the country and road traffic accidents constitute a major source of death. According to the Global Road Safety Facility,³⁶ more than 3,500 people lose their lives in traffic accidents in Uganda annually (WHO estimates these deaths at 12,036).

34 Uganda Cancer Institute, <https://www.uci.or.ug/>

35 Vox Populi, "Covid-19 pandemic: Ugandans grapple to escape mental health bondage," September 30, 2020. Available at <https://voxpopuli.ug/covid-19-pandemic-ugandans-grapple-to-escape-mental-health-bondage>.

36 World Bank Group, Global Road Safety Facility. Road Safety Country Profile Uganda. Available at <https://www.roadsafetyfacility.org/country/uganda>

37 Uganda, Ministry of Health Knowledge Management Portal. Available at <http://library.health.go.ug/publications/health-information-systems/hmis>

38 Uganda, Uganda Aids Commission. HIV and AIDS Fact Sheet (2020 and 2021). Available at https://uac.go.ug/index.php?option=com_sppagebuilder&view=page&id=24&Itemid=140

Such accidents cost the country about 10 percent of GDP. Epidemics are among the common biological hazards across the country. Uganda reported 2,524 deaths from epidemics between 1990 and 2018 (14 percent of total deaths from hazards). Data show that districts along international borders appear to be affected more than others. The recent Ebola outbreak in DRC, and its spillover impact in Uganda, and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 are a few examples of disease outbreaks. Their socio-economic impact on household income and loss of livelihoods is directly linked to increased poverty and limited capacity to build resilience for a better quality of life. As of December 2020, the country has responded to several large-scale public health emergencies, including COVID-19, yellow fever, cholera, measles, zoonotic disease outbreaks and the protracted refugee crisis. While the government has intensified efforts to fully vaccinate the population at highest risk, there have been massive delays in reaching the targeted vaccination coverage rate due to both supply and demand side issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further strained an already weak health system, putting pressure on basic and essential lifesaving services for women and girls, particularly during its first and second waves. Most preventive and promotive health care services, such as sexual and reproductive health services, were affected negatively. The number of teenage pregnancies has increased due to a lack of sexual reproductive health information and services. According to an analysis by the Ministry of Health, that rate rose in 67 districts between 2019 and 2020.³⁷

HIV/AIDS remains a major public health and socio-economic challenge, with 1,414,183 individuals living with HIV in 2020. Of those, 62 percent are females and 7 percent are children below 14 years of age. AIDS-related deaths declined by 61 percent, from 56,000 in 2010 to 22,000 in 2020, and new HIV infections declined by 60 percent, from 94,000 to 38,000, during the same period.³⁸

Uganda is one of 14 countries that achieved the 90-90-90 targets by 2020 and has since adopted the 95-95-95 targets for epidemic control. HIV prevalence is high among key and priority populations, including female sex workers (31.3 percent) and partners of those workers (18 percent), men who have sex with men (12.7 percent), and men in uniformed services (18.2 percent). Female sex workers account for 20.2 percent of new HIV infections in Uganda, with their clients constituting 12.2 percent and boda-boda taxi-men (7.5 percent). Young women and adolescent girls are also disproportionately affected, as 33 percent of new HIV infections occur in this group. HIV prevalence among young women aged 20-24 years is four times higher (5.1 percent) than among their male counterparts (1.3 percent). The spread of HIV among young women is facilitated by inadequate knowledge of HIV prevention measures (45.7 percent), unequal power dynamics between men and women, with young women particularly disadvantaged, reinforced high-risk behaviours, partner violence, gender-biased laws and harmful traditional practices. HIV among refugees remains a challenge because they are excluded from mainstream planning and health sector budgeting. Furthermore, adolescent girls and young women are highly vulnerable to HIV infection due to exposure to high-risk factors arising from their low socio-economic status and the unhealthy nature of refugee settlements.

The clinical cascade for children and adolescents is the weakest where finding infected children is the most significant bottleneck (the first 95). The second 95 is also weak as a result of challenges in maintaining the link between testing and retention on treatment. Last, viral suppression (the third 95) is low due to poor treatment adherence and higher prevalence of HIV drug resistance, compared to adults.

Much work is needed to change the behaviour of priority populations. Only 45 percent of young people have comprehensive knowledge of HIV³⁹ and the teenage pregnancy rate stands at 25 percent. In addition, the legal environment for effective HIV service provision and use by key and priority populations needs to be changed.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted HIV and related services, health systems and the wider socioeconomic context. This makes it more difficult for Uganda to achieve the goals set in the NDP III and the SDGs. Clinic attendance was reduced due to challenges to facility access (lockdowns and high transport costs); fear of COVID-19 infection; healthcare worker absenteeism; and lack of personal protective equipment (PPE). In the period April-June 2020, tuberculosis (TB) case notification declined by 43 percent with a projected 14 percent increase in mortality; HIV testing reduced by 41 percent, thus delaying diagnosis; and antiretroviral therapy (ART) enrolment fell by 31 percent. During that period, the number of people living with HIV who received antiretroviral therapy declined by 0.4 percent, representing over 5,000 patients lost-to-follow up. The number of HIV-positive women identified during antenatal care fell by 4 percent.

³⁹ Ibid.



HIV prevalence among young women aged 20-24 years is four times higher (5.1 percent) than among their male counterparts (1.3 percent).

SDG 4: Quality education.

The right to a basic education for every Ugandan is embedded in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. However, the share of the national budget allocated to the education and sports sector fell from 16.7 percent in FY2013/2014 to 14.7 percent in FY2018/2019. About 63.3 percent of children under five years of age are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial wellbeing. The net primary school enrolment rate is 80 percent (rural 79 percent, urban 84 percent), while the net secondary school enrolment rate is only 27 percent (rural 24 percent, urban 43 percent). Children from poor households, especially those in fragile regions and informal urban settlements, have limited access to quality education and training. Children with disabilities are less likely to attend school than their peers without disabilities; only 74 percent of children with disabilities attend some level of school compared with 83 percent of those without.⁴⁰ Data on learning outcomes in basic education (primary and secondary levels) indicate dismal learning outcomes/attainment. Many children, especially those from poor households, have not attained the appropriate level of learning competencies. This area requires urgent attention within the context of SDG 4 because any lost opportunities in early childhood learning will have ramifications on the attainment of SDGs in the next 10 years.

While Uganda has achieved gender parity in primary education enrolment and completion rates for boys and girls, girls are less likely to complete secondary education (34 percent) than boys (36 percent) or transition to higher levels (21 percent), where gender disparities persist in enrolment in favour of boys (28 percent). Additionally, fewer females (37 percent) than males (63 percent) enrol for skills development in business, technical, vocational education and training institutions. The literacy level of women and girls aged 10 years and above is also lower (72 percent) than that of their male counterparts (81 percent).⁴¹

Very small numbers of girls study the sciences and their performance levels are low compared to boys'. For example, level 2 (S2) proficiency in biology for girls is 5.9 percent, compared to boys at 18.3 percent. However, demand is growing for professionals in science, technology, mathematics and engineering, where girls remain under-represented. Overall, the Gender Gap Index identifies high levels of gender-based disparities in educational attainment, ranking Uganda 131st out of 156 countries.⁴²

Analysis indicates that only 38 percent of children aged three to five years of age are enrolled in formal pre-primary education.⁴³ Pre-schools are predominantly private, with similar proportions of rural and urban children aged 3 to 5 years in school: 37.9 percent (rural) and 38.7 percent (urban). Community-based early childhood development centres receive very little state funding, are under-equipped, often lack essentials such as clean water and toilets, and are managed by untrained volunteers. Other growing concerns in the education sector include limited systematic capacity in the education sector, poor infrastructure, limited access and participation of marginalized/vulnerable groups, poor quality education, and low transition from primary to secondary education. In addition, public investment in early childhood development and education is limited, as is investment in skills development (technical and vocational education and training and apprenticeship). In addition, there is insufficient investment in technology-based education and limited access to and use of information and communication technologies for teaching, learning, supervision and assessment, especially for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

The World Bank's analysis of cross-country data on human capital indicates that Uganda is underinvesting in the future productivity of its citizens.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Uganda, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) (2020). Situational Analysis of Persons with Disabilities in Uganda.

Available at <https://www.developmentpathways.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Webready-DP1294-ESP-Disability-Uganda-Sept-2020.pdf>

⁴¹ Uganda, UBOS (2021).

⁴² World Economic Forum (2021), Global Gender Gap Report 2021. Available at <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

⁴³ Uganda, UBOS (2021).

⁴⁴ World Bank (2019). Uganda Economic Update 13th Edition: Economic Development and Human Capital in Uganda: A Case for Investing More in Education. Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/925741559163051034/pdf/Economic-Development-and-Human-Capital-in-Uganda-A-Case-for-Investing-More-in-Education.pdf>

A child born in Uganda today will only be 38 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she had access to comprehensive education and health care. Uganda ranks among the countries in the lowest quartile of the Human Capital Index (HCI)⁴⁵ distribution, with an index slightly lower than the average for the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region, and below what its income level would predict. Uganda's low HCI ranking is due primarily to the country's low education outcomes. A child born today in Uganda is expected to complete only seven years of education by age 18, compared to a regional average of 8.1. Because of low levels of learning achievement in Uganda, this is only equivalent to 4.5 years of learning, with 2.5 years considered as "lost" due to poor quality of education. Uganda's score on this component is the lowest among the comparator countries and below the SSA average.

Starting in March 2020, the COVID 19 pandemic has severely disrupted the education sector. Children have been in and out of school since then and those in early childhood development and lower primary and secondary classes have not returned to class. Efforts to ensure continuity of studies through online platforms have been hampered by low access and high taxes on internet data (which were increased in July 2021) and lack of access to electricity and the required computer equipment. This has rendered internet-based learning unaffordable for most children from low-income households and the many communities that are not connected to the national electricity grid.

SDG 5: Gender equality.

Data indicates that women's political participation is on track, with 45 percent women's political participation at the local government level, which is well above the national standard of 30 percent. Uganda has also made progress in eradicating female genital mutilation. Today, 1 percent of girls and women aged 15-49 years have undergone the procedure.⁴⁶ Gender inequality is also a significant identity-based disadvantage and a key driver of women and girls' heightened vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). For example, while women are employed in the agricultural sector, constituting over 70 percent of the agricultural workforce, they own only 7 percent of land. In addition, only 18.6 percent of women in the sector have access to extension services, compared to 81.4 percent of men, and just 28 percent of women own agricultural land.^{47,48,49} In waged public sector jobs, the average pay for women is 40 percent less than it is for men.

Data available indicate that women in Uganda are more than twice as likely than men to experience sexual violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse. National statistics show that over half of adult women (15-49 years of age) have experienced violence and more than one in every five women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. Estimates for violence against children also show that violence is high against girl children, with up to one in two young women experiencing violence prior to age 19.⁵⁰ Gender inequality is a significant contributor to persistent food insecurity, malnutrition and morbidity among adolescents, women and children in Uganda. Women, who are primary caregivers for young children, have limited time, resources and energy to provide adequate care and nutrition due to high workload (farming, household chores, other income-generating activities) and limited decision-making power.

45 The World Bank's Human Capital Index measures the impact of underinvesting in human capital on the productivity of the next generation of workers. It is defined as the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to achieve in view of the risks of poor health and poor education currently prevailing in the country where that child lives.

46 UNWomen, Global Database on Violence against Women (Uganda).

Available at <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/uganda>

47 Uganda, UBOS (2012). "Agricultural Sector Gender Statistics Profile." Available at <http://library.health.go.ug/sites/default/files/resources/Agriculture%20Sector%20Gender%20Statistics%20Profile.pdf>

48 FAO, Policy Support and Governance Gateway (2018). National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods - Uganda. Country Gender Assessment Series. Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/i8436en/i8436EN.pdf>

49 Uganda, NPA. "NDP Midterm Review Reports." Available at <http://www.npa.go.ug/development-performance/ndp-mid-term-reviews-2/>

50 Ibid.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted progress towards eliminating child marriage and reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy, which has ticked up since the onset of the pandemic.

SDG 6: Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

The government has made considerable progress in increasing access to WASH services. Between 2000 and 2016, the percentage of the population with access to safe water in Uganda rose from 57 to 78 percent. Despite these positive trends, 8.5 million Ugandans still lack access to safe water. Most of the population resides in rural areas where access to improved water is significantly lower (75 percent) compared to urban areas (92 percent).⁵¹ More than half (55 percent) of rural households spend at least 30 minutes (round trip) to fetch drinking water, compared with about a quarter (23 percent) of urban households. Water fetching particularly affects women and children. Urban households (50 percent) are more likely than rural ones (24 percent) to report that water has been unavailable for at least one day. Overall, access to safe water grew at a faster rate in urban areas compared to rural ones. This is attributed to significant investments in urban water supply by major bilateral and multilateral agencies. The operation and maintenance of water points represents another important challenge to ensuring access to safe water as 15 percent of improved safe water sources are non-functional.⁵² Operations and maintenance challenges are particularly acute in rural areas. It should be noted, however, that the demand for and access to quality water across Uganda is not just a basic right but also a health necessity. The COVID-19 pandemic has made WASH a key priority across Uganda.

In refugee settlements, access to improved water varies from 18 litres per person per day (1 lppd) to 21 lppd in settlements hosting refugees, against the service level benchmark of 20 lppd. It should be noted that host populations' access to improved water sources is sometimes lower than that in refugee settlements due to higher levels of investments in WASH for refugees over the past years. These investments have taken into account the needs of children on the move and have helped to address drivers of gender-based violence (GBV). Ongoing efforts need to expand to address these inequities.

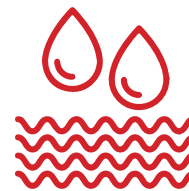
The main challenges facing water systems in districts that host refugees include integrating refugees into district development plans and transitioning water systems, established with support from development partners, to ensure sustainability. Access to improved sanitation improved only marginally in Uganda, from 15 percent in 2000 to 19 per cent in 2016.⁵³ This translates into an estimated 31.4 million Ugandans who lack access to improved sanitation. Of that number, 2.7 million (7 percent) practice open defecation. More than half of households in Uganda (55 percent) use unimproved toilet facilities, with nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of rural households and one-quarter (25 percent) of urban households using such facilities.

⁵¹ Uganda, UBOS (2021).

⁵² Uganda, Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) (2020). Water and Environment Sector Performance Report 2020. report, 2018.

Available at <https://mwe.go.ug/library/sector-performance-report-2020>

⁵³ Uganda, UBOS (2018).



Between 2000 and 2016, access to safe water supply in Uganda increased from 57 to 78 percent.



The 2019 Global Baseline Report on WASH in Health Care Facilities indicates that only 31 percent of health facilities in Uganda have basic water, 12 percent basic sanitation, and 43 percent basic waste disposal.

Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) data show that urban households are likelier to use shared sanitation facilities (46 percent) than rural households (11 percent).

The urban poor are the most disadvantaged in terms of access to sanitation, which severely affects the health and development of children and poses significant public health risks, such as cholera. Refugee settlements provide access to latrines to 65 percent to 98 percent of residents. Similarly, progress in scaling up hygiene promotion programmes and in improving access to handwashing facilities has been very slow. Only 44 percent of the population has access to soap and water. Their availability is significantly lower in the poorest quintile (24 percent) as compared to the richest (54 percent).

The status of WASH in institutions such as schools and health facilities remains highly inadequate. In schools, the children-to-latrines stance ratio of 72:1 (compared to the national standard of 40 children per stance) has remained virtually unchanged over the last five years.⁵⁴ In many schools, latrines are not separated by sex or responsive to those with disabilities. The situation is further compounded by the lack of a functional model for emptying school latrines.

The availability of handwashing facilities in schools remains low and progress has been limited, increasing from 31 percent in 2008 to 40 percent in 2018. Poor access to WASH in schools negatively affects children's health and nutrition, as well as school attendance (especially for girls) and protection from violence.⁵⁵ UNICEF estimates that one in 10 menstruating girls misses school four to five times a month or drops out of school altogether.

A girl who is absent from school due to menstruation for four days of every 28-day cycle loses 13 learning days each school term - the equivalent of two weeks of learning and 104 hours of school. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Sports estimates that around 23 percent of adolescent girls in the 12–18 age group drop out of school after they begin menstruating.

The 2019 Global Baseline Report on WASH in Health Care Facilities indicates that only 31 percent of health facilities in Uganda have basic water, 12 percent basic sanitation, and 43 percent basic waste disposal. The proportion of health care facilities with basic water varied significantly between urban (52 percent) and rural (38 percent) settings, as well as by facility type (hospital: 61 percent vs non-hospital: 42 percent), and whether the facility was private (41 percent) or government-owned (22 percent). Up to 72 percent of government facilities were found to be on the limited-service ladder, meaning that even though an improved water source is available within 500 metres, its distance from the facility introduces an additional time factor for collection and storage. At critical times or during an emergency, those quantities may not be adequate.

On the sanitation front, basic coverage was significantly lower than for water (at 12 percent) and a higher proportion of health facilities had limited service (79 percent).⁵⁶ Poor WASH in health facilities contributes to high maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, nosocomial infections and poor quality of care and poses privacy issues.

⁵⁴ Uganda, MWE (2020).

⁵⁵ UNICEF (2018). Scoping Study of WASH in Schools Programming in Eastern and Southern Africa: A review of evidence, bottlenecks and opportunities to meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, 2018. Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/scoping-study-wash-schools-programming>

⁵⁶ UNICEF (2019). WASH in Health Care Facilities: Scoping Study in Eastern and Southern Africa. Available at <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/wash-health-care-facilities-unicef-scoping-study-eastern-and-southern-africa/>

SDG 7: Affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.

Additional efforts are needed to achieve SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy. Access to electricity is progressing steadily. The total proportion of the population with access to grid electricity rose from 5 percent in 2002 to 28 percent in 2019, while only 2 percent of the rural population had access to hydroelectricity. A slightly higher proportion of male-headed households (52.4 percent) than female-headed ones (48.4 percent) have access to the grid or other sources of electricity; that difference is more pronounced in rural households. More male-headed households (66 percent) can access the national grid than female-headed ones (58 percent).⁵⁷ Further, biomass is still the most important source of energy for most Ugandans.

About 90 percent of total primary energy consumption is generated through biomass, which is composed of firewood (78.6 percent), charcoal (5.6 percent) and crop residues (4.7 percent).

About 90 percent of total primary energy consumption is generated through biomass, which is composed of firewood (78.6 percent), charcoal (5.6 percent) and crop residues (4.7 percent). The use of canister-wick lamps (kerosene) declined from 58 percent to 28 percent between 2013 and 2017. Uganda also intends to reduce the share of biomass energy in cooking from 85 percent to 50 percent and, correspondingly, increase the proportion using clean energy for cooking from 15 percent to 50 percent. Achieving these targets will have a positive impact on the lives and health of women and girls, who carry out most food preparation tasks in the home.

⁵⁷ Mpagi, J. and Kooijman, A. (2020). Gender and energy country briefs – Uganda, ENERGIA.

Available at https://www.energia.org/assets/2021/02/Country-brief-Uganda_Nov2020_final.pdf

⁵⁸ Uganda, NPA, NDP III.

⁵⁹ World Bank Group (2021). Uganda Economic Update 18th Edition, Putting Women at the Center of Uganda's Economic Revival.

Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/36825?locale-attribute=es>

⁶⁰ To become eligible for graduation from the LDC category, a country has to meet graduation thresholds for two of the three LDC criteria set by the United Nations Committee for Development Policy. While Uganda already meets the threshold for the economic and environmental vulnerability index, it is significantly below the thresholds for gross national income per capita and, despite noticeable progress, the human assets index.

SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth.

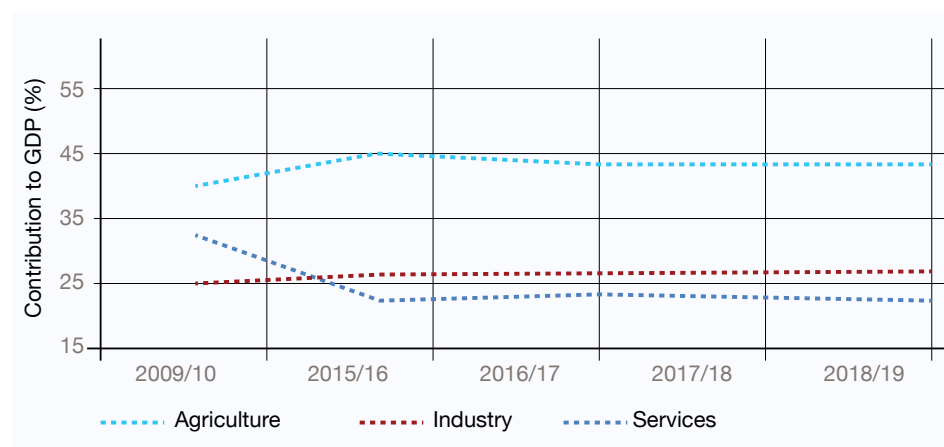
Uganda is making slow but steady progress to realize its national aspirations as set forth in Vision 2040. Its economy doubled from UGX 64 trillion in FY2010/11 to UGX 128 trillion in FY2018/19 in nominal terms. The economy was recovering well, having experienced a significant slowdown during most of the Second National Development Plan (NDPII) period and was projected to grow from 6.2 percent in 2018/2019 to 6.3 percent in 2019/2020, and to at least 7 percent over the NDP III period, driven by expansion in the manufacturing and construction sector.⁵⁸

However, the earlier projected growth rate was cut by half, to 3 to 4 percent, in 2019/20 due to the COVID-19 outbreak, which continues to have far-reaching negative impacts on the economy and people's livelihoods. Following a sharp contraction in FY2019/2020, after the initial COVID-19 shock, real GDP rebounded strongly to over 13 percent in Q4 of FY2020/2021, driven by improvement in consumption and public investment. However, this rebound tapered off in early FY2021/2022 due to a more severe second wave of COVID-19 and related lockdown measures. Even with stronger growth in FY2021/2022, per capita GDP will remain well below the NDP III target.⁵⁹

For most of the NDPII period, growth averaged 4.7 percent, which was significantly below the annual target of 6.3 percent envisaged to transition the country to a lower middle-income economy. Per capita GDP increased from \$807 in FY2015/16 to \$878 in FY2018/19, which was below the 2020 target of \$1,039. This slow progress, specifically in growth, was also evident during NDPI implementation, which was characterized by 5.5 percent growth against the 7.2 percent target. Below-target growth, coupled with a high population growth rate, had a dampening effect on per capita income, which reduced Uganda's prospects to graduate from the least developed country (LDC) category.⁶⁰ The discovery of oil was viewed as the potential push factor that could enable the country to cross this threshold.

However, the discovery and protracted negotiations between the government and the multinationals that bid to develop the oil sector have been embroiled in opaque contractual and operational matters that have rendered the previous projections of oil production in Uganda by 2021 untenable.

Figure 2: Sectoral contribution to GDP (%)



Source: UBOS rebased estimates (2019)

The services sector continues to grow and is the most significant for Uganda's economy as it accounts for 43 percent of total GDP.⁶¹ The sector has employed over 28 percent of the working population since 2016/17.

Gender inequalities and harmful gender norms and attitudes persist throughout Uganda, negatively impacting Uganda's economic growth. The World Bank estimates that achieving gender equality in Uganda could raise per capita wealth to \$1,619, an increase of 11.8 percent.⁶² Inequalities in human capital wealth between men and women in Uganda remain substantial (W: 39 percent; M: 61 percent). Women's employment rate is significantly lower than men's (W: 31 percent; M: 47 percent), representing an underutilized labour force and opportunity for economic growth.

Creation of quality and gainful employment, especially for women and youth, remains a challenge for accelerating sustainable and inclusive growth. According to the Uganda National Household Survey (2017), the working-age population (14 – 64 years) was estimated at 21.4 million, of which 53 per cent are female and 47 percent male. The share of the working population engaged in subsistence agriculture increased to 47 percent in 2019/20 from 39 percent in 2016/17, with the share in subsistence work higher for females (55 percent) than males (38 percent).⁶³



The share of the working population engaged in subsistence agriculture increased to 47 percent in 2019/20 from 39 percent in 2016/17, with the share in subsistence work higher for females (55 percent) than males (38 percent)

61 Uganda, UBOS (2021).

62 Wodon, Q. and A. Onagoruwa. (2019), Gender Inequality, Human Capital Wealth, and Development Outcomes in Uganda.

The Cost of Gender Inequality Note Series. Washington, D.C: The World Bank. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32787/Gender-Inequality-Human-Capital-Wealth-and-Development-Outcomes-in-Uganda.pdf?sequence=1>

63 Uganda, UBOS (2021).

The overall unemployment rate was 8.8 percent in 2019/20, with females experiencing higher unemployment (8.9 percent) compared to males (8.7 percent).⁶⁴ The proportion of females in paid employment is 37 percent, while females are the majority of self-employed persons (53 percent). Overall, women account for 62 percent of all persons engaged in vulnerable employment.

When employed, women earn more than 50 percent less than their male counterparts on average (UGX 120,000 compared with UGX 250,000).⁶⁵ Youth unemployment remains high at 13.3 percent in Uganda and is higher than the national average unemployment rate of 8.8 percent. It is equally important to note that prior to the pandemic, Uganda's economic growth was non-inclusive and jobless, as most strategies assumed that everyone could participate in and benefit from development equitably.⁶⁶ However, those growth experiences have clearly failed to create enough jobs and employment opportunities for most Ugandans.

That said, unemployment as defined by the ILO is inadequate to characterize Uganda's labour market. For example, the youth unemployment rate neither provides for underemployment nor gives a full and adequate description of the difficulties youth face in the labour market. The test for this decade of action is to ensure that unemployed or underemployed youth can contribute effectively to national development and expand their opportunities to exercise their rights as citizens. The World Bank suggests that Uganda will need to create more than 700,000 jobs per year before 2030 and create more than one million jobs per year by 2040 to keep up with the pace of labour force entrants.⁶⁷ This far exceeds the 75,000 jobs that are currently being created annually.

While Uganda has generously provided the right to work (per the Refugees Act of 2006) and access to land for housing and farming, among other resources, the country also faces a general lack of decent employment opportunities to support sustainable livelihoods for refugees. Yet, evidence shows that refugees are an untapped source of labour.^{68,69} Today, three out of four refugees are unemployed, which represents both a challenge and an opportunity.

This calls for integrating refugees into the local labour markets, which would enable them to contribute to the local economy and benefit them and the country at large. Overall, the labour market can thus be described as struggling with the following key issues:⁷⁰

- A rapidly expanding working-age population that is not effectively integrated into the formal labour market;
- An employment-unemployment dichotomy hiding deeper labour market challenges;
- The existence of stark disparities in working conditions and wages among segments of communities;
- Pervasive gender-based inequalities across the labour market; and,
- Considerable influx of refugees who suffer from labour market challenges, similar to their national counterparts.

Given the high levels of unemployment, underemployment, working poverty and informality, job creation has been prioritized as a national objective in the country's development framework. The NDP III proposes to create 2.5 million jobs over the course of its implementation.

64 Uganda, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) (undated). State of Uganda Population Report, 2017. Available at <http://npcsec.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/SUPRE-REPORT-2017.pdf>

65 Uganda, UBOS (2021).

66 Uganda, MGLSD (2021), Employment Governance Framework for the National Employment Strategy.

Available at <https://mglsd.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/EMPLOYMENT-GOVERNANCE-FRAMEWORK-MGLSD.pdf>

67 World Bank, "The World Bank in Uganda." Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/overview#1>

68 World Bank (2019). "Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey," factsheet. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2019/10/01/informing-the-refugee-policy-response-in-uganda-results-from-the-uganda-refugee-and-host-communities-2018-household-survey>

69 World Bank (2019). "Uganda: Supporting Refugees and Host Communities to Become Secure and Self-Reliant." Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/publication/uganda-supporting-refugees-and-host-communities-to-become-secure-and-self-reliant>

70 International Labour Organization. "Employment Diagnostic Analysis."

Available at https://www.ilo.org/africa/countries-covered/uganda/WCMS_551093/lang-en/index.html

SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure.

As of 2021, Uganda has 4,900 factories located in well-organized industrial parks that were built following the President of Uganda's June 2019 directive.⁷¹ Data indicate that manufacturing value added (as a percentage of GDP) in Uganda was 15.9 percent in 2019/20⁷² for a modest level of manufacturing value added. The growth in Uganda's industrial sector occurred mainly through the construction sector, rather than growth in the essential raw materials and investment in machinery and equipment that are essential for agro-processing, overall industrial expansion and future economic growth.

A critical bottleneck is that manufacturing activities are either of the end-product assembling type or food processing, both of which are characterized by low value-added manufacturing. Second, Uganda's young population still has only a limited skills set, which hinders industry productivity. For instance, most of the country's growing industries complained of inadequate skilled personnel to run operations competently.⁷³ Financial and insurance activities grew by 9.8 percent in 2019/20, which was 0.4 percentage points higher than the growth recorded in 2018/19, contributing 6.4 percent to total services value added.

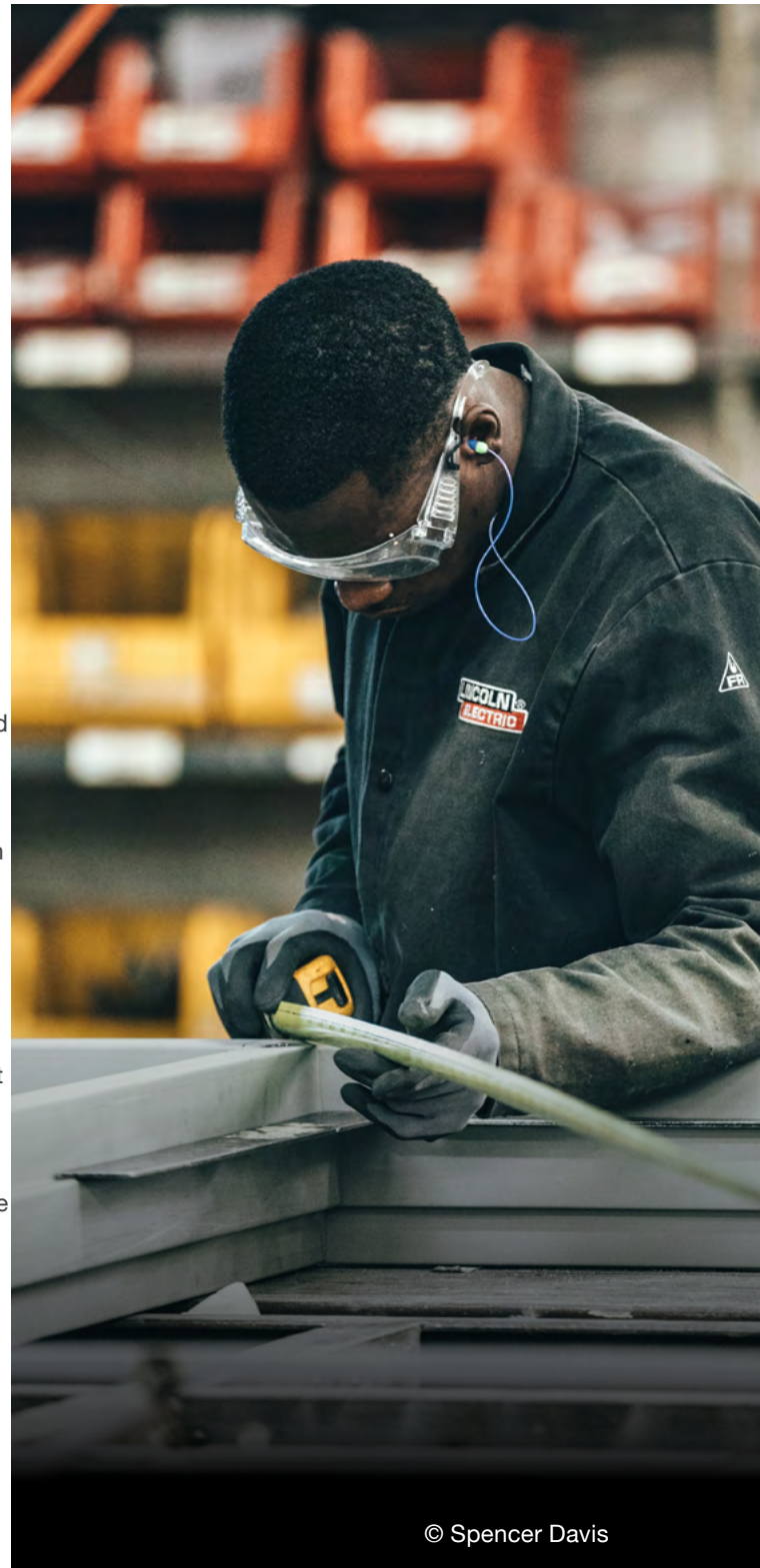
However, commercial bank activities recorded slow growth of 7.8 percent in 2019/20 compared to 8.0 percent in 2018/19, attributed primarily to the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistics show that 48 percent of Ugandan adults have access to formal and regulated financial services, 9 percent have access to informal financial institutions and 43 percent are financially excluded.⁷⁴ Mobile money is the main driver of financial access and inclusion, as 47 percent of adults reported using mobile money services. Of those excluded from both formal and informal financial services, 47 percent are female compared to 39 percent male. The 2020 Global Innovation Index ranked Uganda 6th among the 16 low-income economies, 13th out of the 26 economies in SSA and, overall, 114th country among the 131 economies that were featured, with an index of 20.5. Its 2020 overall position is lower than the 102nd rank that Uganda attained in 2019, which showed that Uganda outperformed other countries with similar per capita GDP in terms of innovation.

71 Ramathan Ggoobi, Skills for Industry, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Uganda 2021). Available at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/uganda/18544.pdf>

72 Uganda, UBOS (2020).

73 MGLSD (2018).

74 Uganda, UBOS (2021).



Women comprise 40 percent of all business owners,⁷⁵ yet generally operate smaller, more informal enterprises due to difficulties accessing finance for business growth, lack of access to ICT and lack of opportunities for skills development.

SDG 10: Reduced inequalities.

Uganda's progress on SDG 10 is mixed as the country's growth has been characterized by limited shared prosperity. While the economy has grown and poverty levels have fallen over the long term, income inequality decreased by a small margin - from 0.428 in 2016/17 to 0.41 in 2019/20. Studies indicate that the richest 10 percent of Uganda's population enjoy more than one-third (35.7 percent) of national income. This share has grown by nearly 20 percent over the past two decades. Gender inequalities remain a persistent challenge: women represent 62 percent of all persons engaged in vulnerable employment; female-headed households experience higher rates of multidimensional poverty than male-headed ones; and women and female youth experience higher rates of unemployment and, when employed, earn more than 50 percent less than their male counterparts (UGX 120,000 compared with UGX 2,500,000).⁷⁶ Inequality poses a major obstacle to achieving SDG 10 as it affects critical development dimensions, presenting a significant challenge that requires concerted effort in terms of Uganda's response to inequality. Despite this picture, only 35 percent of the population report that they feel discriminated against.

The richest 10 percent of Uganda's population enjoy more than one-third (35.7 percent) of national income.

While most women were employed in the informal sector, COVID-19 has left them unemployed and 58 percent of the women surveyed reported that their unpaid care work has increased.

⁷⁵ World Bank Group (2021).

⁷⁶ Uganda, UBOS (2021).

⁷⁷ Uganda, MoFPED (undated).

⁷⁸ UNICEF, Uganda. "The National Budget Framework FY 2019/20. Investing in Social Development." Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/3931/file/UNICEF-Uganda-2019-2020-Social-Development-Budget-Brief.pdf>

Over the NDPII period, the government focused its empowerment efforts on women, youth, children, PWDs and other marginalized and vulnerable persons. This involved flagship initiatives and programs such as the Youth Livelihood Programme, the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme and Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment.⁷⁷ With frequent risks and shocks, such as landslides, floods, high temperatures, droughts, locust invasions, the COVID-19 pandemic and rising water levels in Lake Victoria, the number of marginalized and vulnerable people across Uganda who need economic and social protection has increased. The challenge is to protect and cushion them from loss of productivity and livelihoods, enhance their access to basic social services, and thus help them avoid drifting into poverty. Social protection expenditures as a percentage of GDP are still low at 0.04 percent.

In 2019/2020, 0.6 percent of public spending was allocated to the entire social development sector.⁷⁸ Despite social protection investments by the government and partners, financing for and targeting of groups left behind should be improved, particularly in marginalized and vulnerable regions. It should extend beyond the elderly to cover other vulnerable groups, especially children, adolescents, and PWDs, through comprehensive social protection. However, financing challenges threaten the scale and sustainability of social protection programmes in Uganda. SDG 10 also addresses migration, which is one of the three components of population change, complementing fertility and mortality. Uganda faces interlinked migration-related dynamics that impact its ability to achieve the SDGs. Bordered by five countries, many with highly volatile political and economic histories and pronounced development disparities within its own borders, Uganda has been the locus of significant population flows. Migration drivers are both internal and cross-border and include migration as a livelihood strategy, especially for women, youth and those with limited socio-economic opportunities, human-made conflict, induced displacement and migration due to seasonal needs.



Migration may also be disaster- and environmentally-induced, linked to both climate change and environmental degradation. According to the Uganda Demographic and Household Survey, 5 percent of Uganda's population had lived somewhere else prior to their current residence. Four in every 10 persons (42 percent) moved from one rural area to another, while 12 percent moved from rural to urban areas.

Gender inequality and protection-related issues are further reflected in women's lack of access to adequate and quality health services during the migration process. For women migrants, the lack of protection mechanisms is severe due to the sectors where they typically find work, including entertainment, domestic work and caregiving. The lack of guaranteed access to protection during the migration process further enhances their vulnerability and puts them at increased risk of exploitation and abuse, social exclusion, and inequalities, including in integration efforts. To unlock the potential of migration in Uganda, these issues must be addressed: lack of a comprehensive national policy on migration; fragmented approach to migration issues; lack of comprehensive data to provide an evidence base to policy makers; weak coordination system for involving local actors and private sector in migration; weak information management systems; and lack of systematic referral systems.

SDG 11: Cities, human settlements and Uganda's spatial system.

As of 2019, almost a quarter (24.4 percent) of Uganda's population lived in urban areas. Urbanization is taking place rapidly and urban areas are expected to be home to half of the country's population by 2050. Uganda's urban population currently stands at 11.8 million and is projected to increase to 46.7 million by 2050. During the plan's 10-year period from 2020 to 2030 alone, Uganda's urban population is projected to grow by 69 percent, adding 8.1 million people to the country's cities. At the same time, the rural population is projected to increase by 24 percent, or 8.5 million people. Rural-to-urban migration, natural increase and reclassification are all contributing to Uganda's fast-paced urbanization.

Uganda's national spatial system is dominated by the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area, which comprises 10 percent of the country's population, 40 percent of its urban population, 46 percent of formal sector workers and 70 percent of manufacturing firms with five or more employees. Uganda's other cities are also economically important. Urban areas are home to 23.8 percent of its population and account for 70 percent of GDP. Urbanization has also had welfare enhancing effects. On average, workers receive higher wages in the main urban corridors compared with rural areas and poverty headcount rates fall dramatically the closer that people get to urban areas, particularly large cities.

Poverty rates were found to drop from 24.3 percent in rural areas to 17.4 percent in rural areas close to large cities, 14.6 percent in urban areas, 7.9 percent in large cities and 0.8 percent in Kampala. Uganda's urban areas are already the engine for the country's development. Its future growth will continue to occur in urban areas. With more than 70 percent of net new job opportunities to be generated in urban areas, urban Uganda's population is expected to increase by an additional 20 million to 40 million people between 2019 and 2040. Therefore, leveraging the benefits of urbanization in Uganda will require strong institutions, adequate infrastructure and a clear spatial layout. Only an estimated 46 percent of industrial employment and 47 percent of service employment is urban, partly due to the rural nature of the population.

Surprisingly, only an estimated one-third of manufacturing jobs are urban, with 80 percent of manufacturing output generated by micro, small, and medium enterprises and the largest share of manufacturing activities (39 percent) in agro-processing, which is tied to rural areas. The Government of Uganda (GoU) is prioritizing urban development in recognition of the important contribution that cities make to economic growth and job creation. As a result, in line with the Uganda Vision 2040 and NDPIII, 15 municipalities have been elevated to or are to attain city status by 2023 (Arua, Gulu, Mbale, Mbarara, Fort Portal, Hoima, Jinja, Masaka, Lira, Entebbe, Moroto, Nakasongola, Soroti, Kabale and Wakiso). The initiative to create new cities is timely and meets the country's development needs, but its implementation requires better institutional coordination and significant resources.

Although Uganda is urbanizing at a fast pace, the quality of urban growth remains inadequate in terms of living conditions, infrastructure, housing, service delivery, productivity and environmental sustainability. Income inequality in urban areas rose between 2012/13 and 2016/17, largely driving total national inequality (0.42 Gini points compared to 0.38 in rural areas).⁷⁹ Women and girls as well as other marginalized groups have been affected disproportionately, both socially and economically. This is reflected in the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have resulted in greater loss of income and jobs among women and growing violence against women and girls (VAWG). Violence in Kampala's public transport system – both experience of and exposure to it - remains a problem, with eight out of 10 ten women reporting that they feel unsafe using public transport between 10 pm and 7 am. In addition, 35 percent of women report experiencing sexual harassment when using public transportation and 60 percent have witnessed harassment, in addition to other forms of violence and abuse. Despite these conditions, more than 50 percent of women in Kampala need to use public transport regularly to travel to work.⁸⁰

Moreover, the weak and struggling private sector is incapable of creating sustainable new jobs to absorb the growing population in urban areas. Urbanization in Uganda is also characterized by encroachment on green space and wetlands and conversion of agricultural land into built-up areas. The distressing reality of many cities across Uganda is that their public spaces and land are shrinking and disappearing even as they face increasing climate change risks.

⁷⁹ Uganda, UBOS (2018).

⁸⁰ Uganda and UNWomen (2021). Statistical Evidence of Women's Use and Experience of Public Transport in Kampala, October 2021. Available at <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/statistical-evidence-womens-use-and-experience-public-transport-kampala-and-nairobi>

40%

percent of the capital's (Kampala) population is estimated to live in informal settlements and/or slums

90%

Over 90 percent of urban residents use charcoal and wood for cooking, 74 percent use pit latrines, 77 percent have no access to handwashing facilities, and over 70 percent have no access to regular waste collection services.

Access to basic infrastructure for services such as waste, water, transport and energy, albeit higher than in the rural areas, remains low by continental standards. More than 90 percent of urban residents use charcoal and wood for cooking, 74 percent use pit latrines, 77 percent lack access to handwashing facilities, and more than 70 percent lack access to regular waste collection services.

Informal settlements (slums) are home to 60 percent of the urban population and are characterized by a lack of basic services – from water to storm drainage, sewage treatment and solid waste collection – and by social conflicts and crime. Forty percent of the population of Kampala, the main city, is estimated to live in informal settlements and/or slums.⁸¹ Slum populations in secondary cities vary from 61 percent in Mbarara to 16 percent in Jinja and Kabale, with a median value of about 45 percent (Mbale and Arua). In general, the percentage of slum dwellers decreases with the size of the urban centre.

Cities and urban areas in Uganda have thus not yet realized their full potential as engines of structural transformation and sustainable and inclusive growth. Secondary cities and towns may become game changers, but have not yet demonstrated their investment readiness to incentivize business activities in higher productivity sectors. This is an area of particular importance to secondary cities and towns because they are relatively neglected by both the central government and private investors. This challenge requires a comprehensive approach and substantive changes in the applicable regulatory framework to allow municipalities to expand their fiscal space. Most importantly, municipal authorities have not yet developed the business mentality needed to manage their cities as business centres, not government offices, and to effectively engage the private sector. This includes adopting basic concepts of comparative advantage and risk-return trade-off.

To achieve this, Uganda will need to summon political will and invest in the fundamentals, such as capacities and systems for urban governance and management at all levels. The approach taken to planning and managing urbanization today will be critical to the quality of Uganda's growth over coming decades and in, particular, to the achievement of structural transformation, the 2030 Agenda and the national development objectives. Public investments in urban areas (including smaller cities and towns) are therefore critical. This should be guided by a commitment to the New Urban Agenda.⁸²

SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production.

Several green growth strategies establish the approach to pursuing progress toward sustainable consumption and production targets. For Uganda, Vision 2040 provides the context for green growth.

It emphasizes that a green economy will contribute to eradicating poverty as well as sustain economic growth, enhance social inclusion, improve human welfare, and create opportunities for employment and decent work for all, while maintaining healthy ecosystem functioning. Uganda is taking steps to address these challenges by: conducting massive campaigns to distribute free energy-saving bulbs to households to enhance energy efficiency; promoting the use of charcoal-saving stoves to households; distributing free agriculture seeds and livestock, especially to rural areas; promoting social protection grants to the most vulnerable elderly persons for basic consumption expenditure; implementing tree planting programmes and projects that focus on small and medium scale industries.

Access to public transport in Kampala is limited and at times challenging, yet nearly four in 10 women (38.3 percent) use it daily and an additional 44 percent use it once a week or more often, but not daily.⁸³ Given that women rely more on public transport overall than men, investment in energy efficient modes could yield large benefits for the environment and for women.

⁸¹ Reddy, P.S. and H. Wissink. Reflections on African cities in transition: selected continental experiences. Cham, Switzerland Springer, 2020.

⁸² In October 2016, the New Urban Agenda was unanimously adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), serving as a new vision for our cities and municipalities for the next 20 years.

See <https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

⁸³ Uganda and UNWomen (2021).

SDG 13: Climate action.

Uganda's economy is highly vulnerable to climate change and its impacts are likely to adversely affect the ability of physical and biological systems to sustain human and socio-economic development.⁸⁴

Uganda has abundant natural resources, including a diverse range of minerals. Approximately 65 percent of the population is involved in agriculture.

Uganda's natural environment and resource base have been in continuous decline. The National Forest Authority reports that Uganda's forest cover declined significantly from 24 percent (4,933,271 hectares (ha)) of land area in 1990 to less than 9 percent (1,956,664 ha) in 2018, driven by heavy reliance on biomass for energy (90 percent).⁸⁵

Wetland area also declined to 10.9 percent in 2017 from 15.6 percent in 1994 due to encroachment for settlement, infrastructure, agricultural production, urban development, growth of urban centres and industrialization. With the ongoing energy generation initiatives and current power generation capacity of about 1,254 MW already sufficient to meet demand, including appropriate levels of spinning reserve, the population with access to electricity increased marginally from 20.4 percent in 2017 to 23 percent in 2018. Increased transmission, distribution and evacuation of the generated electricity is expected to reduce reliance on biomass and diminish pressure on forests.⁸⁶ Environmental pollution is a primary concern for Uganda. Transport is the main cause of air pollution, particularly rapid motorization in urban areas, along with open waste burning and mining.

The GoU recognizes the importance of fulfilling its commitments under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. Considering this, the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) provides the basis for the country to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Uganda's NDC aims to pursue a low-carbon development pathway and reduce the vulnerability of the population, environment

and economy to the impacts of climate change by implementing measures and policies that build resilience. Building on existing policies, plans and strategies and related legal instruments such as the National Climate Change Act 2021, Vision 2040, NDP III, National Climate Change Policy and Uganda Green Growth Development Strategy. Uganda has taken steps to implement the NDC and increase its ambition. For instance, Uganda was the first African country to develop the National NDC Partnership Plan.

While Uganda's INDC had a strong bearing on mitigation, the NDC, updated in the interim, that was submitted in October 2021 gave priority to adaptation (focusing on agriculture, livestock, forestry, infrastructure, water, energy and health). It also commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring that all people and communities are resilient to climate impacts. Effective coordination, prioritization, and monitoring and reporting on climate actions and response are key to achieving Uganda's climate goals.

A revised NDC is to be submitted on or before 31 December 2021. The preparatory work for the first NDC was carried out in collaboration with the National Planning Authority, ensuring that the document is aligned to and builds on the Vision 2040 and development aspirations highlighted in the NDP III. Uganda plans to have an NDC target for 2030. The NDC's ambition will be raised by the addition of new sectors and sector-specific emission targets. The new sectors to be introduced will include energy, transport, waste and industry. This is a significant development, as the INDC target focused only on the agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) sector. The country intends to feature both a conditional and unconditional component in the new economy-wide emissions reduction target.

84 Uganda, Ministry of Water and Environment (2015). Uganda National Climate Change Policy, Theme: Transformation through Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation. Available at <https://www.mwe.go.ug/sites/default/files/library/National%20Climate%20Change%20Policy%20April%202015%20final.pdf>

85 Uganda, National Forestry Authority. 'Press Statement on the National CSR-Tree Planting,' 25 September 2018. Available at <https://www.nfa.go.ug/index.php/12-nfa-news/134-press-brief>

86 Uganda, NPA. "NDP Midterm Review Reports."

Women represent 76 percent of labourers in agriculture and are largely engaged in crop production. This suggests that they are more vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather and climate change. In this regard, Uganda adopted its third National Action Plan (NAP) on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (Women Peace and Security) in 2021, leading the way on the continent for implementation of this agenda. The NAP takes a comprehensive view of security and participation - with the government recognizing that women and girls are disproportionately affected by issues arising from natural and human-made disasters - and therefore aims to ensure that they are equal partners in disaster mitigation and management, including on issues such as climate change-related conflicts, conflicts between refugees and host communities, and disease outbreaks.

SDG 14: Life below water.

Although Uganda is a landlocked country without ocean-based resources, it has several freshwater lakes and rivers and a vibrant fisheries sector. Natural water bodies cover some 42,000 km², or about 18 percent of Uganda's total area, and fisheries play a very important role as a foundation for subsistence and commercial livelihoods.

Lake Victoria is the largest and most economically significant of the national fisheries bodies. However, other large lakes, including George, Edward, Albert and Kyoga, along with the Nile River. A variety of minor lakes around each of the large lakes, swamps and streams also contribute substantially to the annual national fish catch. Overall, fisheries activities along the value chain contribute 3 percent to national GDP and 12 percent to Uganda's agricultural sector GDP. The fisheries subsector employs up to 1.7 million people directly and over 3.5 million people indirectly. In addition, fish accounts for over 50 percent of animal protein food with a per capita domestic consumption of 10kg. Capture fisheries production is projected to increase by 530,000 metric tonnes by 2020, while aquaculture production is projected at 300,000 metric tonnes. Therefore, Uganda must manage these water bodies to promote sustainable and economically profitable use of the resources.



The Net is in the Air.
© Speaking of Pictures

SDG 15: Life on land.

Uganda has put in place several policies and legal and institutional reforms and measures aimed at promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the country's forest resources. These include: adopting the National Forestry Policy 2001 and National Forestry and Tree Planting Act 2003; creating the Forest Sector Support Department, the National Forestry Authority and the District Forestry Services; and, instituting enforcement measures through the Environmental Protection Police Unit. Uganda is working to reverse trends in depletion of forest resources in this context.

The water level in Lake Victoria began to rise in 2019. By 30 April 2020, it had risen from 12 meters to 13.32 meters.⁸⁷ This quick rise has been accelerated by human activities, particularly environmental degradation. Loss of forest cover, encroachment on wetlands, lakeshores and riverbanks, and poor land use practices, have resulted in soil erosion leading to siltation of water bodies. The result is speedy movement of water into lakes and rivers with considerable silt, which has further reduced the water storage capacities of Uganda's water bodies.

In addition, urbanization has created highly impermeable surfaces like roads, roofs and pavements that have reduced water infiltration into the soil, interception, and the evapotranspiration capacity of forests and wetlands. Rising water levels have had negative impacts, including flooding of hospitals, schools and infrastructure. This has disrupted businesses, destroyed property and displaced thousands of people living and working by lake shores.

Uganda is under threat from multiple hazards that strike vulnerable communities and systems. The country has experienced widespread natural and human-induced hazards, including droughts, floods, earthquakes, hailstorms, windstorms, lightning, landslides, fires, conflicts, desert locust inversion and disease (human, crop, and livestock), including, today, COVID-19, and the regular risk of Ebola imported from neighbouring DRC.

⁸⁷ Uganda, Uganda Media Centre. Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, May 1, 2020. "Statement on the Rising water levels of Lake Victoria and the Nile System." Available at <https://www.mediacentre.go.ug/media/statement-rising-water-levels-lake-victoria-and-nile-system>

Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda

© Social Income





Uganda ranked 20th out of 54 countries on overall governance, 23rd on safety and rule of law, 23rd on participation and human rights, 15th on sustainable economic opportunity and ranked 21st on human development in the 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

Though their magnitude and coverage vary, these are common phenomena in almost all districts of Uganda. The country's population is exposed to windstorms (68 percent), earthquakes (67 percent), hailstorms 57 percent), lightning (53 percent), drought (52 percent), floods (26 percent), volcanic eruptions (9 percent) and landslides (7 percent).⁸⁸ For example, the July 2021 torrential rains in western and northern areas caused of the Nyamwamba River (Western region) and Lake Kyoga (Northern region) to overflow, resulting in loss of lives, damage to infrastructure and localized crop losses. In addition, as of mid-June 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization's Agricultural Stress Index warned of severe drought conditions affecting cropland in several eastern and northern districts.

The rains were better, but still below average, in central and southern areas, with a negative impact on vegetation conditions and yields in some districts.⁸⁹ By August 2021, the OPM had received at least 18 alerts from district local governments regarding decreased crop production and the associated risks for food security and livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

⁸⁸ Uganda and UNDP (2018). Integrating Disaster Risk Management Concerns into National and Sector Development Plans for Resilience and Sustainable Development.

⁸⁹ FAO, "GIEWS Country Brief: Uganda, 27 August 2021." Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UGA_18.pdf

Additionally, various socio-economic indicators (such as food prices, household food stock and labour wages) were reported to be outside of normal ranges, a sign that these hazards were affecting communities. In terms of infrastructure, flooding was blamed for 93 percent of damage to health facilities (129 of the 138 facilities) between 1993 and 2018, while storms and earthquakes accounted for 5 percent and 1 percent, respectively. About 89 percent and 6 percent of health facilities destroyed were lost to floods and fires, respectively, while storms destroyed 4 percent of the total 49 health facilities destroyed by hazards. In terms of exposure, of the 11 sectors assessed, the social development sector, followed by agriculture, appears to be the most sensitive to the seven prominent hazards included in the National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas and, certainly, to other hazards as well.

The education and sports and the lands, housing and urban development sectors are highly exposed to four of the major hazards while water and environment; and works and transport are highly exposed to three.⁹⁰ For over a decade, disasters have increased and risks of loss and damage have risen in Uganda, with grave socio-economic consequences for citizens' survival, dignity and livelihood, particularly the poor. Uganda is exposed to an array of hazards striking vulnerable communities and systems and affecting the country's GDP growth. Disasters are estimated to have reduced GDP performance by an average of 3.5 percent between the years 2010 and 2014 and their impact was calculated to total 7.5 percent of GDP in 2010.⁹¹

The government established the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Centre in 2014. It was established under the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management to contribute to an integrated and multi-sectoral system approach to disaster planning, preparedness and management that is fundamental to sustained productivity and socio-economic growth.

The policy is the guiding domestic resource mobilization document, but does not recognize that disasters disproportionately impact women, children, the elderly and PWDs. Advocacy is needed to press for revisions to ensure that the policy is highly gender-responsive and includes preventing and responding to GBV.⁹² Uganda has taken a comprehensive approach to gender-related issues in the third NAP on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The policy, which has been localized at the district level, commits to including women in decision-making on disaster risk reduction. Recognizing that disaster- and environment-related issues can trigger conflict, the local action plans make strong commitments regarding women's role in mitigating these conflicts.⁹³

SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Uganda is a young democracy, having achieved independence from Britain in 1962, and is one of the few African countries where relative peace has been sustained for more than two decades. Although the political environment remains fragile, the country has moved from recovery to development. Current discourse focuses on moving the country to the next frontier of development, into middle-income status. To avoid a reversal in the development gains achieved to date, peace and security must be sustained.

While the 2005 constitutional referendum introduced a multi-party system in Uganda, multiparty democracy still faces a myriad of challenges, including political intolerance, political patronage and ethnic-based political parties. The ruling NRM remains the dominant political party. Other key parties include the National Unity Platform, Forum for Democratic Change, Uganda People's Congress and the Democratic Party (DP). Some analysts described the January 2021 general election as the most violent in the country's history. These elections were characterized by persistent arbitrary arrests and detention of members of the opposition and pre-election riots resulted in the death of at least 54 people.

⁹⁰ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister. Draft National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas, 2018.

⁹¹ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister. National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas, 2018; MSB Disaster Risk Issues in Uganda and Containing Alternatives, 2020.

⁹² UNICEF (2021), Gender Responsive Disaster Risk Management: An analysis of gender integration in national and regional disaster risk management frameworks in Eastern and Southern Africa. Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/gender-responsive-disaster-risk-management>

⁹³ "Kasese District Local Government Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 (January 2021).

Challenges of political patronage, weak governance institutions, limited accountability, shrinking civic space, human rights abuses, gender inequality and limited access to justice are some of the key areas that affect Uganda's ability to fulfil the 2030 Agenda. Uganda ranked 20th out of 54 countries on overall governance, 23rd on safety and rule of law, 23rd on participation and human rights, 15th on sustainable economic opportunity and ranked 21st on human development in the 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

Uganda ranked 20th out of 54 countries on overall governance, 23rd on safety and rule of law, 23rd on participation and human rights, 15th on sustainable economic opportunity and ranked 21st on human development in the 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

After forming the government in 1986, the NRM initiated decentralization reform on a large scale. Decentralized governance was included in the new regime's political strategy to install a new and revolutionary concept of democracy, one that is participatory, grass-roots based and popular. The Local Government Act 1997 sets out clearly which levels of government oversee which functions and services. To empower local governments to fulfil their responsibilities, they are entitled to levy, charge and collect local taxes and fees to receive several intergovernmental grants.

Regarding taxes and fees, districts and urban local governments are allowed to impose property tax and collect several forms of non-tax revenue (including market dues, trading licenses, parking fees and education contribution). Under the law, proceeds from local taxes and fees are retained locally and shared among levels of local government administrative units, but not with the central government.

However, since these proceeds are extremely low, local governments receive intergovernmental transfers from the centre in the form of unconditional, conditional and equalization grants. Remarkable progress has been made on some indicators related to internal security. Data from the National Governance, Peace and Security Survey indicate that overall, 61 percent of respondents reported that they felt safe walking in the streets (55 percent for women and 65 percent for men).⁹⁴ For both men and women, the feeling of safety was more marked during the day than at night.

The feeling of safety also increased significantly from 51 percent in 2013 to 94.3 percent in 2017 for those reporting feeling safe during the day. However, sporadic incidents of insecurity, including widespread VAWG in some parts of the country, have undermined these feelings of safety and security. In mid-2021, for example, the southern region of the country was rocked by incidents of machete-wielding killers who terrorized citizens, leading to the death and injury of hundreds. The survey indicated that 66 percent of respondents felt local councils were doing well, although bribery is still a critical concern for Uganda. Twenty-one percent of Ugandans report that they have paid a bribe to a public official.

Violence in all forms remains a challenge across Uganda. More than half of women and men aged 15-49 reported that they had experienced physical violence since age 15 (M:52 percent; W:51 percent) and one in five experienced physical violence in the 12 months preceding the survey (M:20 percent; W:22 percent).

94 Uganda, UBOS (2017). Report of the National Governance Peace and Security Survey 2017. Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/12_2018The_NGPSS_Report_2017.pdf

Women and men who have been divorced, separated or widowed report that they experience higher rates of physical violence (W:64 percent; M:62 percent). Twenty-two percent of women and 8 percent of men have experienced sexual violence during their lifetime, while 13 percent of women and 4 percent of men experienced sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey. Women and men with disabilities are significantly more likely than those without a disability to experience sexual violence.⁹⁵ Studies show that children aged 1-17 years still experience physical punishment and violent disciplinary measures. Five percent of women and 1 percent of men reported that they first experienced sexual violence by the age of 18.

Regional peace and security: Instability, conflict and insecurity in the Great Lakes region have negatively affected Uganda, stretching available resources and having a negative socio-economic and environmental impact. The poorest districts in Uganda are among those hosting the largest number of refugees, with 53 percent of the total refugee population in Uganda in West Nile. In some cases, the refugee numbers are almost equal to those of the host population. Much of the country has been free from armed conflict since 2006 when the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) relocated from Northern Uganda to the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. However, the threat of armed conflict remains prominent, with rebel groups such as the Allied Democratic Front still active in Eastern DRC and engaged in terrorist activities in Uganda. In addition, armed conflicts in neighbouring countries continue to pose a threat to national security.

Uganda currently hosts 1.5 million refugees, the largest such population in Africa and the third largest in the world.⁹⁶ In FY2016/17 alone, 800,000 refugees sought refuge in Uganda, mainly escaping political insecurity in South Sudan and DRC. Since 2017, Uganda has implemented the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, whose approach is among the most progressive in the world.

1.5million

Uganda currently hosts 1.5 million refugees, the largest such population in Africa and the third largest in the world.

It creates a favourable legal and policy environment for refugees, including freedom of movement, right to work, right to documentation and right to access government services on par with nationals. Uganda has adopted a settlement and self-reliance approach, under which all refugee families receive a plot of land for subsistence farming. This additional population increases pressure on natural resources and demand for social service delivery, particularly health and education, as 60 percent of the refugee population are children.

Additionally, women and girls are at high risk of and particularly vulnerable to forms of gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against children. Given the operating environment, refugees are also subject to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by aid workers in refugee settlements. Refugees need to be informed, on a continuing basis, of the services and benefits to which they are entitled and of their rights, where to report GBV and SEA, and investigation/feedback process regarding allegations of SEA. It is also important to put SEA risk mitigation measures in place in the refugee settlements.

Human rights: Uganda has a broad institutional and legislative framework that protects human rights. Over the years, the country developed a NAP on Human Rights (awaiting Cabinet approval). A NAP on Business and Human Rights was approved and launched in 2021. Uganda has also established human rights bodies and structures to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights.

⁹⁵ Uganda, UBOS (2018).

⁹⁶ Uganda (Office of the Prime Minister) and UNHCR Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal, available at <https://ugandarefugees.org/en/country/uga>.

Those institutions include the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the National Council for Disability. Uganda engages with international and regional human rights mechanisms and with the Universal Periodic Review; the third review is expected in January 2022.

Nonetheless, the human rights situation in Uganda remains of concern, with evidence of restricted civic space and media freedom, as well as arbitrary arrests and excessive use of force by security forces. In the run-up to the January 2021 general elections, the human rights and democracy situation deteriorated significantly, with political freedoms and civic activism restricted.

The period was characterized by tension as opposition members, the media and other voices critical of the government were increasingly intimidated and targeted through arrests and detention. In addition, opposition political party activities met with serious repression, culminating in the November 2020 incident during which at least 54 individuals were killed in Kampala.⁹⁷ During the election period, civic space was restricted, the internet was censored and media freedoms were curtailed overall. Under the guise of the government's COVID-19 restrictions, opposition rallies were dispersed and political leaders arbitrarily arrested and detained.⁹⁸ Restrictions on civic space continued in 2021.

Recently, the National NGO Bureau, the government agency charged with registering, regulating and monitoring activities of NGOs in Uganda, suspended 54 NGOs, noting that they had failed to comply with the NGO Act of 2016. Despite the existing protective legislative framework, including Article 29 of the Constitution of Uganda,⁹⁹ the interpretation and misuse of existing legislation and ongoing police practices indicate a drift towards restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly and association, mainly targeting opposition groups, media and civil society organizations.

This includes targeted arrests of media workers and opposition members as well as stricter controls on and disruption of peaceful gatherings and the media's work.

Continued misinterpretation and excessive discretionary powers exercised by the Uganda Police Force (UPF) under the Public Order Management Act, 2013 have often resulted in unlawful restrictions of peaceful public assemblies, particularly those organized by opposition groups. Since that act entered into force, gaps in this law enabled the Uganda Police Force (UPF) to use discretion in implementing it. Hence, the security forces have faced criticism for using excessive force in responding to the protests and causing unnecessary harm to individuals, while demonstrating conduct that is inconsistent with the principles of proportionality, legality and necessity in policing. While protestors did block roads and, in some instances, burn car tyres, the use of live ammunition by the security forces could be deemed to be excessive and an unjustified response to the threat posed by the crowds. On 26 March 2020, Uganda's Constitutional Court annulled Section 8 of the Public Order Management Act, which granted the police wide and discretionary powers to disrupt public meetings. The UPF has indicated its intention to appeal this decision and may, in practice, continue to suppress public meetings until a ruling on the appeal is issued.

⁹⁷ European Union External Action Service (2021), 2020 EU Annual Human Rights Report – Uganda Update. Available at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/101396/2020-eu-annual-human-rights-report-uganda-update_uz

⁹⁸ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country/chapter/uganda>

⁹⁹ Article 29 of the Ugandan Constitution provides that "Every person shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression which shall include freedom of the press and other media." Available at <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/44038/90491/F206329993/UGA44038.pdf>

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals:

Recognizing the role of partnerships among actors in successful implementation of SDGs, the government set up the National Coordination Framework to implement the 2030 Agenda under the leadership of the OPM. The coordination structures include representatives of development partners, civil society and the private sector. The framework provides strategic guidance on the roles and responsibilities of key institutions and is steered by a multi-stakeholder National SDG Taskforce. It sets out and assigns responsibility for coordination, monitoring and reporting; planning and mainstreaming; resource mobilization and financing; data systems; and communication and popularization. Several coordination and partnership arrangements exist today, including those led by the government and partners.

The Local Development Partners' Group (LDPG), which is co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator, was established in 2006. It coordinates development partners' engagement with the GoU on issues related to development cooperation at the policy, program, and project levels. With its subgroups, the LDPG is composed of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/ Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors and the associated multilateral and vertical funds.

Under the National Partnership Policy, the National Partnership Forum was established in 2014 to ensure efficient and targeted cooperation between the GoU and its development partners, as well as to promote transparency and accountability. However, its effectiveness in addressing the development partnership challenges, trends, and needs has been questioned. In addition, the Forum has not been convened since 2018 and does not involve all the key development actors – including civil society, new donors, and the private sector - who need to respond to the rapidly evolving development partnership landscape.

Under the National Partnership Policy, the National Partnership Forum was established in 2014 to ensure efficient and targeted cooperation between the GoU and its development partners, as well as to promote transparency and accountability.

The 2019 Development Finance Assessment (DFA)¹⁰⁰ and a review of the partnership arrangements in Uganda¹⁰¹ show that an increasingly complex and diversified development finance landscape is emerging.

This has implications for the government's approach to development finance mobilization and management. In the 1990s and early 2000s, Uganda relied heavily on donor funding and while traditional official development assistance (ODA) continues to play an important role, the overall picture has changed significantly: new donors have emerged and new forms of private finance are increasingly present. Joint accountability mechanisms were also negatively affected by the collapse of budget support arrangements in 2012, in connection with the corruption scandals that rocked the country and its development partners that year. As a result, more development financing is channelled directly through the private sector and civil society.

Today, the COVID-19 pandemic has created multiple macro- and micro-level risks and vulnerabilities domestically and externally, posing fiscal and external financing gaps. The Bank of Uganda projects the nominal debt-to-GDP ratio to rise to 52.8 percent in 2021/22, exceeding the EAC debt convergence

¹⁰⁰ UNDP Uganda (2019). Development Finance Assessment.

¹⁰¹ Uganda, MoFPED 2020. Uganda's Development Partnership Review: A Country Pilot of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Available at https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-09/undp-ug-Uganda_Partnership%20Review-2020.pdf

threshold of 50 percent. New approaches are thus required to better integrate development partnership, planning and financing. Creation of an effective mechanism through which the diverse range of actors can jointly identify and address challenges, share knowledge and leverage resources more efficiently must be revived to overcome the country's development challenges. In particular, all available resources, both on and off-budget, need to be consolidated and aligned with core government development priorities.

The National Partnership Forum could be reformed to provide for both a more inclusive and vibrant coordination mechanism, as well as an anchor for a consolidated development support approach that is aligned to national priorities, fully transparent and accountable to the people of Uganda and their partners.

2.5 Socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Uganda

Like many other countries in the world, Uganda has experienced negative impacts from COVID-19. As a result of the pandemic, earlier economic growth projections for FY2019/20 have been slashed by half. In response to the outbreak, the UN system undertook a study to ascertain the potential socio-economic impacts of the pandemic to provide evidence that can inform interventions for the short, medium, and long term.¹⁰² Findings indicate that COVID-19 has and will have multiple impacts on the economy, poverty, employment, livelihoods and vulnerability, including increased incidence of domestic violence, a surge in the crime rate, and a worrying lack of access to emergency sexual and reproductive health and rights services. The pandemic's impact will be distributed unevenly, with the service and the manufacturing sectors being most affected and agriculture being the least affected.

The study estimated revenue loss of more than \$5 billion over the period 2020-2025 and projected that close to 65 percent of workers will be laid off temporarily or will not be paid regularly.

The widespread impact of COVID-19 across economic sectors will most likely slow the pace of economic transformation, expansion of the industrial base, job growth, and delivery of essential social and protection services as envisaged in the NDP III. It will also have negative impacts on achieving the SDGs. The challenge is to protect people, especially the marginalized and vulnerable, from loss of livelihoods, hunger and limited access to quality social and protection services.

The pandemic has interrupted and negatively affected the provision of quality health, education, social protection and other basic services across the country. Health services are stretched beyond their capacity and all focus is on preventing the spread of the virus and tracing and treating those already infected. Learning and training institutions have been closed since COVID's outbreak in early 2020 and are expected to provide education virtually (e-learning). However, many learners lack access to e-learning platforms and content, especially those from marginalized and vulnerable households in rural areas and informal urban settlements.

¹⁰² UNDP Uganda (2020).

CHAPTER 3:**Factors supporting
progress toward
SDGs in Uganda**

3.1 Causes of economic slowdown

Prior to 2020, Uganda's economy had been on a steady trajectory and was regarded as one of the fastest growing in SSA, having expanded by over 6 percent in FY2017/18 and FY2018/19.¹⁰³ The same level of growth was expected to continue to the end of the NDPII period in FY2019/20. The NDPIII 2020/21-2024/25 projected average economic growth of 7 percent over that time.¹⁰⁴ However, the outbreak of COVID-19 has had far-reaching negative impacts on the economy and livelihoods, dampening the economic growth projections. The growth rate slowed to 3 and 3.4 percent in FY 2019/20 and FY2020/21, respectively.¹⁰⁵ Government projections indicate that the economy is expected to grow by 3 to 4 percent in FY2021/22, a rate that is still far below the 7 percent NDPIII target.¹⁰⁶ The relatively strong economic performance before the pandemic was partly attributed to the relative peace and security that the country has enjoyed over the years. Macroeconomic stability and robust investment in infrastructure, particularly roads and energy sectors, contributed to expansion in the manufacturing and construction sectors. In addition to the pandemic, several structural issues were already inhibiting Uganda from achieving its full economic potential. The economy is rural-based and a large proportion of households – 68.9 percent, with the majority being women and youth – are still trapped in a low productivity subsistence economy.¹⁰⁷ A significant segment of society – constituting 85 percent of all non-agriculture employment – is employed in the informal sector without any form of security.¹⁰⁸ Hence, many women and youth face the risk of labour exploitation, including child labour, trafficking, exploitative externalization of labour, sexual harassment and violence.

3.2 Causes of increased poverty and inequalities

During the Millennium Development Goals era, Uganda was hailed as one of the leading African countries in poverty reduction. The proportion of Ugandans living below the national poverty line declined from 31.1 percent in FY2006/07 to 19.7 percent in FY2012/13. However, during the first five years of the 2030 Agenda, more people have been pushed into both monetary and multidimensional poverty as the proportion of the population in income poverty increased to 21.4 percent in FY2016/17. Although the percentage of the population in poverty fell by 1.1 percentage points to 20.3 percent in FY2019/20, the absolute number of persons in poverty increased from 8 million to 8.3 million. Similarly, the number of households in the subsistence economy grew from 3.3 to 3.5 million over the same period. These are mainly women and other vulnerable groups who have no other sources of income.¹⁰⁹



Macroeconomic stability and robust investment in infrastructure, particularly roads and energy sectors, contributed to expansion in the manufacturing and construction sectors.



The number of households in the subsistence economy grew from 3.3 to 3.5 million. These are mainly women and other vulnerable groups who have no other sources of income.

103 Uganda, UBOS. "National Accounts." Available at <https://www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/9/>

104 Uganda, NPA, NDPIII.

105 Uganda, UBOS. "National Accounts."

106 Uganda, MoFPED, Macroeconomic Policy Department. Performance of the Economy Monthly Report, July 2021. Available at https://www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/POE-2021-07-JUL_0.pdf

107 Ibid.

108 Uganda, UBOS (2020).

109 Uganda, UBOS (2021).

According to the UBOS, poverty remains rampant in all four subregions of Acholi, Teso, Karamoja and West Nile. Collectively, the four subregions are home to 43 percent of people in poverty in Uganda. The Acholi subregion leads at 67.7 percent, followed by Karamoja at 65.7 percent, Teso at 21.9 percent, and West Nile at 16.9 percent. A large segment of Uganda's poorest 40 percent also lives in the Northern region. In this regard, Acholi and Karamoja are the top two, with 86 percent and 73 percent of their populations, respectively, in the poorest 40 percent.

The increase in poverty has been driven by the fact that Uganda's economic growth has not kept pace with its population growth. The number of people in vulnerable situations is also increasing. Pervasive gender inequalities continue to limit women's economic empowerment, contributing to poverty at the household level. In addition, the modest growth experienced over the last five years was driven by the service sector, but that sector represents a small proportion (20.9 percent) of total employment compared to agriculture (72.1 percent), which has strong forward and backward linkages and spill-over effects in the economy.¹¹⁰

Raising productivity within the agricultural sector, which still employs the largest share of the population, will remain crucial to reducing poverty and inequalities and to improving livelihoods in Uganda. The country's agricultural sector is mainly subsistence. Its low productivity is directly linked to lack of accessibility of quality inputs, the presence of pests and diseases, limited affordable and accessible agricultural financing, ineffective extension services, deficient market information, and lack of access to markets, as well as climate change and environmental hazards. Further, tenure insecurity, gender inequalities in land ownership, inheritance, and decision-making negatively impact agricultural productivity,¹¹¹ growth,

and uptake of sustainable land management practices. This is despite the fact that women constitute a larger proportion of land managers and labour than men, contributing up to 75 percent of total agricultural labour.¹¹² Moreover, labour productivity in agriculture is much lower than that in other economic sectors. Agriculture value added per worker in Uganda, a key average measure of productivity, totalled \$753 in 2019.¹¹³ By comparison, the same measure for workers in low and middle-income countries is an average of \$3,333.

3.3 Ecological and climate-related factors

Increasing poverty, slowing economic growth and rising inequalities across Uganda are also attributed to the negative effects of environmental destruction and climate change, in particular drought, floods, landslides, high temperatures, pests that affected agricultural production for most households that had previously been able to move above the poverty line, and the lack of social protection systems. Uganda is affected by global warming, which is expected to increase the earth's temperature by 3°C (5.4°F) in the next 100 years, resulting in multiple adverse effects on the environment, livelihoods and human well-being, including widespread species loss, ecosystem damage, flooding, increased natural disasters and displacement of people.

Despite meeting the conditions required for increased agricultural production and food security, a large proportion of the population, especially those in the fragile regions of Karamoja and Northern and Western Uganda, falls victim to droughts and floods regularly. However, the magnitude of disasters and risks results more from the country's limitations and, in some cases, lack of planning and building of resilient systems than from natural climatic or geological conditions.

110 World Bank, Data. "Employment in services (% of total employment) (modelled ILO estimate) – Uganda."

Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.SRV.EMPL.ZS?locations=UG>

111 In 2015, the World Bank estimated that the gender gap in Uganda's agricultural productivity is equivalent to losses of 0.42 percent of the total GDP, or nearly \$67 million, including the multiplier effects of benefits to other sectors in the economy. UNWomen, UNDP-UNEP PEI Africa and the World Bank (2015). The Cost of the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda.

Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22770/The0cost0of0th0Tanzania00and0Uganda.pdf?sequence=1>

112 World Bank Group (2021), Uganda Economic Update: From Crisis to Green Resilient Growth: Investing in Sustainable Land Management and Climate Smart Agriculture, 17th edition. Available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/87102>

113 World Bank Data. 'Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added per worker (constant 2015 US\$) – Uganda.'

Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.EMPL.KD?locations=UG&view=chart>

In Uganda, increased population growth and increased use of natural resources for farming, grazing and fuel has led to severe environmental degradation, which poses economic, social and governance challenges. Ecological injustices have increased and perpetuate poverty and inequality. For over two decades, Uganda's forest and natural resources have faced severe pressure primarily from agricultural conversion because of population increase, urban demand for charcoal, overgrazing, uncontrolled timber harvesting and failure to effectively implement the existing relevant policy and legal frameworks on environmental and natural resources management. The current annual rate of deforestation is estimated to be approximately 1 percent. Deforestation occurs mainly on privately owned land or ungazetted public forests, but is minimal on gazetted forest reserves. Military warfare has also contributed to deforestation in the western part of the country.

Agricultural encroachment, logging, charcoal production, and harvesting for firewood consume more wooded areas each year. Besides mismanagement, growing population, conservation, underutilization, weak law enforcement and poverty, Uganda faces growing corruption in government bodies with conservation mandates, coupled with weak law enforcement institutions. Poor planning, weak regulations and inappropriate technology to process charcoal (with lower yields than expected) have led to further destruction of forests and contributed to poverty. Both central and local governments lack sufficient institutional capacity and resources to regulate forest exploitation. There are also limited incentives for the private sector to improve its performance in the forest sector. Wetland area also fell to 10.9 percent of total land area in 2017 from 15.6 percent in 1994, due to encroachment for settlement, infrastructure, agricultural production, urban development, growth of urban centres and industrialization.

Artisanal and small-scale mining that dominates the mining sector in Uganda is characterized by unethical and unsustainable mining methods, dire health and safety conditions, child labour, gender inequalities, exploitative pricing and environmental degradation, among other challenges.

In addition, the institutions charged with managing the country's mineral wealth are weak and corrupt. This has led to clashes between local communities and government operators.

Frequent environmental and climate-related disasters and risks across Uganda have a negative impact on the country's socio-economic development, affecting production, productivity and livelihood and reducing the quality of life.

3.4 Governance, peace and security factors

Uganda experienced political violence and conflict between 1966 and 1986. This turbulent period was punctuated by unconstitutional changes in government and rebel activities in parts of the country. Although these conflicts were politically driven, they were intertwined with other forms of conflicts and alliances in the region. Ethnic fragmentation was evident in the cycles of the conflict and has persisted during some electoral activities, including campaigns and elections. The economic, social and psychological effects of the 20-year conflict in northern Uganda has fuelled forced displacement and heightened the risks of physical and SGBV, particularly for women and girls. This has further exacerbated economic and regional inequalities in growth and food security and has diverse negative impacts for women and children. To end these conflicts in some areas, such as the West Nile region, the government entered into peace pacts with the insurgents. These have remained largely unfulfilled, creating dissatisfaction and potential for new waves of conflict.

Further, political conflicts have at times been fuelled by long-standing tensions between the central government and traditional cultural institutions. Restored in 1993 by the current government, these cultural institutions are constitutionally apolitical. However, in practice this is not so. Conflicts between the central government and some of these cultural institutions, such as Buganda and Rwenzori, have claimed lives and led to loss of property. Although the relationship is largely fractured, an uneasy coexistence exists, at times enforced by use of force or a form of government patronage.

The NRM leadership has increased the centralization and control of political power. As a result, governance, accountability, corruption, weak policies and laws, limited adherence to human rights, and limited access to justice remain areas of concern. Additionally, restriction of civic space and media freedom, as well as arbitrary arrests and detention and excessive use of force by security forces, are among issues of major concern in Uganda. The security apparatus has been used to reduce democratic space and curtail the enjoyment of human rights. Under the Constitution, institutions such as the Parliament, Judiciary, and Human Rights Commission are expected to be independent, but have been accused of lacking impartiality. Although Uganda is a signatory to and has ratified international and regional commitments and frameworks on human rights, gender equality and social and economic rights, the political environment poses challenges to implementing them.

Governance and human rights:

Civil and political rights continue to be at stake in Uganda due to a growing trend to limit the exercise of civic and political rights. This was witnessed during the period leading to the general elections in January 2021 and thereafter. Authorities stepped up restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly ahead of the 2021 general elections. They broke up opposition rallies, arrested government critics and opposition members, and placed restrictions on the media. Security forces used COVID-19 restrictions as an excuse to beat, extort and arbitrarily detain people. On 26 March 2020, the Constitutional Court nullified Section 8 of the Public Order Management Act, which the police have used to block, restrict, and disperse peaceful assemblies and demonstrations by opposition groups, often with excessive force. The move came after the court ruled on a 2013 petition by civil society organizations challenging the law as unconstitutional.¹¹⁴ Addressing these human rights concerns would require the government to fulfil its commitment to its international and regional human rights obligations. The onset of COVID-19 came with a raft of measures aimed at curtailing the spread of the virus.

However, they have had widespread consequences for human rights and freedoms, including presidential directives closing schools, churches and other institutions. The President's far-reaching directives were to be enforced immediately, thus often formalized as subsidiary legislation subsequent to their enforcement. This arguably infringed on the non-retroactivity principle in law, at least as affecting criminal matters, and consequently violated various rights, including freedom of assembly and the right to personal liberty and to a speedy and fair trial.

Other developments also seek to restrict civic space and limit participation in public affairs. Those specifically include the closure of the Democratic Governance Facility in 2020 and the suspension of 54 civil society organizations in August 2021. All of these events should be seen as part of a growing pattern of government actions aimed at further shrinking civil space. Instead, the government should create an enabling environment for these groups and see them as partners in development, rather than threats.

Governance and public sector management:

The positive economic growth in the last 10 years has resulted in growth that is skewed toward urban centres, benefitting the few, on the assumption that development will trickle down to rural areas where more than 75 percent of Ugandans live. Investment and specific economic interventions targeting the modernization of agriculture and development of rural areas have been limited. As a result, rural-urban migration has increased, particularly among youth moving to urban centres seeking means of survival. Increasing population growth, with limited economic opportunities in both rural and urban areas, has worsened the situation. Further, areas such as northern and western Uganda, which have experienced prolonged conflict and war, feel that they have been neglected by the central government. Weaknesses exist in the management of public resources for sustainable development. For example, considerable public resources have been allocated to infrastructure at the expense of addressing the myriad challenges facing the social sectors (health, education and social protection).

¹¹⁴ Human Rights Watch. "Uganda: Events of 2020." Available at <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/uganda>

Further, delays in completing public investment projects prevent the social and economic gains that those investments could have offered. Low domestic revenues have created challenges in funding public infrastructure projects. As a result, the government has been forced to increase its domestic borrowing to finance the government budget. This crowds out private investment and may worsen the challenge of limited access to private sector credit, thus delaying the growth benefits of public investment. The debt burden has been growing faster than the government's own resources. Debt as a percentage of revenues has risen by 54 percent since 2012. External and domestic public debt increased by 18.0 percent and 19.4 percent, respectively in FY2019/20.¹¹⁵ The deteriorating debt situation is reflected in the government budget, where interest payments are now the government's second largest expenditure item after the works and transport sector.

For example, interest payments will consume 11.9 percent of the government's total budgeted expenditure for FY2020/21, up from 9.6 percent in FY2019/20.¹¹⁶ Uganda's non-concessional borrowing is more costly and offers shorter grace and repayment periods. This in turn increases the debt service burden on the budget. The high cost of this non-concessional borrowing also affects the resources available to other sectors, such as health and education.¹¹⁷

Corruption and mismanagement of public resources:

Corruption is a major obstacle undermining Uganda's socio-economic development. Although substantial investments have been made to end corruption, it continues to impose wide-ranging costs on society and, as such, contributes to worsening poverty and inequality. The Corruption Perception Index 2020 ranks Uganda at 142 out of 180 countries, having fallen from 137 in 2019. The total cost of corruption in Uganda is estimated to be UGX 9.144 trillion per year, which is equivalent to 44 percent of total 2019 government revenue.

115 Bank of Uganda (BoU). State of the Economy, September, 2020. Available at <https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/bouwebsite/bouwebsitecontent/publications/StateofEconomy/publications/StateOfEconomyReports/2020/Sep/State-of-the-Economy-September-2020.pdf>

116 Uganda, MoFPED. National Budget Framework Paper FY2020/2021. Available at <https://www.finance.go.ug/content/national-budget-framework-paper-fy-202021>

117 Ministry of Finance and Planning. Debt Sustainability Analysis Report, Dec. 2020

118 Cost of corruption in Uganda – IGG's Office

The debt burden has been growing faster than the government's own resources. Debt as a percentage of revenues has risen by 54 percent since 2012. External and domestic public debt increased by 18.0 percent and 19.4 percent, respectively in FY2019/20.

The highest cost was estimated for the environmental protection sector, at about UGX 2.28 trillion a year. The other top four categories of losses include: an estimated UGX 2.3 trillion in salaries paid despite absenteeism in the health care and education sectors; an estimated cost of corruption in contract royalties of UGX 859 billion; bribes to judicial officers totalling UGX 762 billion; and corruption in procurement, estimated at UGX 614 billion. If Uganda could eradicate corruption, the potential savings would be equivalent to a 23 percent increase in the annual government budget. Those funds could be used to increase access to public services.¹¹⁸

Regional stability, peace and security:

Uganda is located in the Great Lakes, a region that continues to experience active conflicts. Within the region, South Sudan, DRC and Burundi are still troubled by civil strife. The insecurity in these neighbouring countries has led refugees to seek protection in Uganda and has created losses in terms of regional trade since South Sudan and DRC are emerging as significant trading partners for Uganda.

In 2018, the parties to the South Sudan conflict signed an agreement of cessation of hostilities, protection of civilians and humanitarian access in December 2017 under the auspices of the IGAD and through the High Level Revitalization Forum. The refugee crisis has stretched resources in the host communities, contributed to environmental degradation and required the government to divert resources that would have been used for Ugandans' other development needs.

3.5. Factors hindering human well-being in Uganda

Ugandans experience high levels of undernutrition, especially among children (29 percent of children under 5 years are stunted). This is due to inadequate diet and meal frequency, weaknesses in health care provision, and sub-optimal childcare and feeding practices. Persistent inadequate complementary feeding practices are related to poverty, inadequate knowledge, cultural practices and chronic food insecurity in some regions of Uganda. However, adequate nutrition is crucial for brain development, especially during the first 1,000 days of life. Nutritional deficiencies prior to conception, during pregnancy and in the first years of life put children at greater risk of failing to reach their developmental potential in cognitive, motor and socio-emotional spheres. In terms of food consumption and dietary diversity, households with PWDs have higher levels of food insecurity than those without. Among these, female-headed households are twice as likely to have a poor food consumption score than male-headed.¹¹⁹

In Uganda, transport is the main cause of air pollution, especially given the rapid motorization that is being experienced in urban areas. (Other causes include open waste burning in mining.) This results from the import of older vehicles that emit environmentally harmful gases and the expansion of industrial activities that do not meet the basic environmental and ecological standards. While over 80 percent of the population relies directly on land, agriculture, and fishing for their livelihoods, environmental indicators reveal trends showing, among other changes, increased pollution, degradation of agricultural land, soil erosion, deforestation, drainage of wetlands, loss of biodiversity and reduced rangeland capacity.

Poor sanitation, coupled with unsafe water sources, increases the risk of water-borne disease and illness due to poor hygiene, contributing immensely to the disease burden in Uganda. Households without proper toilet and sanitation facilities are more exposed to diseases such as dysentery and cholera. The growth of the urban population throughout Uganda is placing stress on municipalities that already lack the infrastructure to meet current water and sanitation needs. Flooding, poorly constructed latrines and the resultant runoff of solid waste contaminates waterways and further exacerbates diarrheal disease outbreaks.

The main challenges to accelerating progress in the areas of sanitation and hygiene promotion, as well as WASH institutions, are fragmentation of the WASH portfolio across various government ministries, departments and agencies, limited domestic funding with an over-reliance on support from development partners, and the lack of robust monitoring systems in these areas. Allocations for and spending on sanitation and hygiene promotion are under-prioritized and not easily traceable in the broader budget categories of the Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Health and district local governments. Total government spending on WASH over the past years has hovered around 3 percent, compared to the national commitment of 6 per cent. Epidemics are among the common biological hazards across the country, with districts along international borders appearing to be affected more than others.

The recent Ebola occurrence in DRC, its spillover impact in Uganda, and the COVID-pandemic in 2020 are a few examples of disease outbreaks. The pandemic and related border closures, porous borders and weak collaborative border management have increased the risk of irregular migration and associated negative coping strategies and conditions. These increase exposure to communicable diseases.

¹¹⁹ Uganda, MGLSD (2020).

HIV and AIDS epidemic: The HIV/AIDS epidemic deepens poverty as poor and vulnerable people spend their already limited resources on treatment or care. In addition, the death of breadwinners drains household incomes and prevents investment. The low status of girls and women and increased GBV limit the ability to adopt and sustain HIV-preventive behaviours.¹²⁰ Victims face high levels of stigma, discrimination and violence from communities. Stigmatizing attitudes and practices among some health care workers in facilities can prevent those at highest risk of HIV infection from accessing prevention, treatment, care and support services. Restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have aggravated the challenge of addressing limited access to HIV/AIDS care and treatment. In addition, the pandemic has further exposed young girls to the risk of contracting HIV because of the long periods of school closures.

Crop pests and disease outbreaks:

In 2020, the invasion of desert locusts in the northern and eastern parts of the country had a range of effects on agricultural productivity and the environment, negatively affecting the livelihoods of many households in these regions. As swarms continue to breed in the Horn of Africa (and have been found in Kenya as recently as February 2021), Uganda - a country invaded by pests, rather than one where pests are bred - remains on alert for future invasions. Quelea birds, a nomadic bird considered to be one of the most dangerous agricultural pests threatening food security in Africa, were confirmed to have re-entered Uganda from Kenya in June/July 2021, with ongoing surveillance and control efforts as of August 2021.

Changes in the ecosystem driven by climate change, decreasing biodiversity, unsustainable agricultural practices, and increased trade in agricultural products have an influence on pests and disease occurrences. Given the challenges to predicting, monitoring and managing pest and disease outbreaks, vulnerability to pest and disease outbreaks is high.

The use of pesticides is likely to continue as part of managing these outbreaks. Despite their crop protection value, these products have negative consequences for human health and the environment.

Animal pest and disease outbreak: The livestock sector consistently suffers from outbreaks of trans-boundary animal diseases, including foot and mouth disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, contagious caprine pleuropneumonia, parasites, vectors and vector-borne diseases. Early detection, reporting and surveillance are critical to control these diseases. However, the surveillance system's coverage and frequency of reporting are limited. The diseases have greatly affected production and productivity and have hampered livestock markets due to quarantines, export bans and other restrictive safety restrictive measures. The livestock sector is also affected by recurrent droughts, which exacerbate conflicts over resources that often extend across borders.

Limited investment in social protection programmes:

Safety net programs are limited in Uganda, which increases households' vulnerability to falling back into poverty. Uganda spends about 0.7 percent of its GDP on social protection, which is far below the SSA average of 2.1 percent and the continental average of 3.8 percent.¹²¹ Thus, only about 2.8 percent of the population are covered by at least one social protection benefit, leaving the majority vulnerable to social, economic and health shocks. This lack of adequate social security means that 35 percent of Ugandans rely on their life savings and 25 percent rely on their families. Most are thus highly likely to fall back into poverty. The coverage and design of social protection programs are currently inadequate to lift marginalized and vulnerable households out of poverty in any meaningful way or to address the range and scope of vulnerability to shocks. The existing direct income support programs have low coverage, with the two main programmes reaching only approximately 3 percent of the population.¹²²

120 Uganda AIDS Commission (2018). Acceleration of HIV Prevention: A Roadmap Towards zero new HIV infections by 2030. Kampala, Uganda. While UDHS 2016 put comprehensive HIV knowledge at 45.7 for young women and 44.8% young men, the UPHIA indicates that only 24.8% of the boys and 26.3% of the girls aged 13 – 14 years had comprehensive knowledge of HIV (UAC, 2019); Uganda, UBOS (2017). Demographic and Health Survey 2016, Key Indicators Report. Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/03_2018Uganda_DHS_2016_KIR.pdf

121 International Labour Organisation (ILO) 2020. World Social Protection report

122 World Bank Group (2020). Uganda Economic Update. 16th Edition, December 2020: Investing in Uganda's Youth. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34893>

Given the needs across the country, this is very low. Direct income support in Uganda involves two major and several minor programmes. The two major ones are the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment and the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund 3 (NUSAF 3) cash grants. Spending on them totalled approximately 0.14 percent of GDP in FY2017/18, which is lower than neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Rwanda, which spend 0.4 percent and 0.3 percent of GDP, respectively, on direct support.¹²³ In addition, donor grants and concessional loans provide a larger share of the Social Assistance Grants and NUSAF 3 budgets than do the government's contribution. This raises concerns about the medium and long-term sustainability of financing for the sector.

3.6 Social and gender inequality

Despite extensive efforts to achieve gender equality and empower all Ugandans, women and girls continue to be subject to discrimination, disempowerment, violence and harmful practices that deny them full realization of their human rights. The 2019 female Human Development Index value for Uganda is 0.503, compared to 0.582 for males, resulting in a Gender Development Index (GDI) score of 0.863. This places Uganda in group 5,¹²⁴ composed of countries with the lowest level of gender equality in human development.¹²⁵ Harmful social norms, attitudes, behaviours, and practices – particularly discriminatory gender norms and inequitable power relations between women and men – are a root cause of gender inequality, GBV, sexual exploitation and abuse, and child/early marriage. For example, 49 percent of women and 41 percent of men believe a man is justified in beating his wife in certain circumstances.¹²⁶ Moreover, 63 percent of men and 50 percent of women believed that men's work is more important than women's.¹²⁷ The patriarchal system in Uganda upholds values, beliefs and practices that reinforce the privilege of men and their role in society and within the household. Women and girls with disabilities, those living with HIV/AIDS, informal sector workers, the poor, widowed, divorced or separated, and other marginalized groups often face additional intersectoral forms of discrimination.

As a result, women confront extensive barriers in realizing their economic rights due to entrenched gender stereotypes and negative social norms. These promote women's economic dependence on men and limit women's equal access to land, property, inheritance and financial services, as well as to quality education, especially at secondary and tertiary levels.



Harmful social norms, attitudes, behaviours, and practices – particularly discriminatory gender norms and inequitable power relations between women and men – are a root cause of gender inequality, GBV, sexual exploitation and abuse, and child/early marriage.



The patriarchal system in Uganda upholds values, beliefs and practices that reinforce the privilege of men and their role in society and within the household.

¹²³ Uganda, MGLSD (2018). Uganda Social Protection sub-sector report 2018.

¹²⁴ Countries in this category have an absolute deviation from gender parity of more than 10 percent absolute deviation from gender parity of more than 10 percent

¹²⁵ UNDP. Human Development Report 2020. The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene (2020). Available from <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf>

¹²⁶ Uganda, UBOS (2018).

¹²⁷ Uganda, UBOS (2019). Time Use Survey Report – Uganda 2017/18.

Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/06_2020Final_Time_Use_report_published_June_2019.pdf

This shapes outcomes for women in labour markets, entrepreneurship and innovation. Since women tend to have less education and fewer formal business skills, they find it harder to deal with basic business requirements such as tax, branding, marketing and sales management.

The high and inequitable burden of unpaid care work also significantly constrains women's ability to engage in profitable enterprises. On average, women and girls in Uganda spend 40 percent more time on unpaid care work than men and boys (24 hours and 14 hours per week, respectively), with higher levels of gender disparity for adults. Less than 30 percent of men aged 31-64 engage in any form of unpaid care work, compared with 91 percent of women of the same age.¹²⁸ As a result, women have less time to engage in paid labour, lowering the quality of jobs they can access and levels of pay they can earn. This has long-term effects as a lifetime of low-paid part-time work results in diminished savings, pensions and resilience to shocks. It also means that women have less time and opportunity for education, training and political participation. Gender norms and stereotypes undermine efforts to redistribute unpaid care more equitably among spouses and family members as 81 percent of women and 79 percent of men believe that women are responsible for taking care of the home and family.¹²⁹

Gender-based violence and sexual harassment not only violate the human rights of women and girls, but also constrain their educational attainment and economic empowerment. A 2012 study estimated the annual economic burden of domestic violence in Uganda at UGX 77.5 billion (then equivalent to 0.35 percent of Uganda's GDP). Of that amount, survivors of domestic violence spent an estimated UGX 19.5 billion on direct costs of that violence and lost an estimated UGX 2.4 billion in earnings due to injuries suffered.¹³⁰

The risk of GBV and sexual harassment also discourages women from entering more profitable jobs such as engineering, which are considered more traditionally male dominated. The pervasive practice of child marriage and teenage pregnancy robs girls of their agency and decisions about their lives, disrupts their education, and prevents their full participation in economic, political, and social spheres.

In terms of women's leadership and governance, Uganda has policies and laws that promote their participation in elected leadership positions at all levels of government. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the Parliamentary Elections Act (2005) and the Local Government Act (1997) support affirmative action by requiring women's representation of women at all levels of leadership and have led to significant progress in women's representation, particularly in Cabinet and Parliament. Following the 2021 general elections, women made some key gains in leadership positions, including the appointment of a female Vice-President, Prime Minister, and First Deputy Prime Minister, in addition to the appointment of women in other key Cabinet positions such as education, health, lands and housing, energy and mineral development, science and technology, and gender. Overall, the proportion of women in Cabinet has increased from 33 percent in 2016 to 45.2 percent in 2021. This is in addition to 48 percent of state minister positions currently held by women, up from 36 percent in 2019 and 28 percent in 2014.¹³¹ However, despite these positive leadership developments, challenges remain to women's political participation. The 11th Parliament now consists of 175 (34 percent) female members and 338 (66 percent) male members, with just under 6 percent of women elected through open seats. Compared to the 10th legislature (2016-2020), women's representation has fallen slightly. Factors that may have affected these results include pre-electoral violence that kept many women away, limited access to campaign finances and prevailing discrimination among the population against women in leadership.

128 Uganda, UBOS (2021).

129 Uganda, UBOS (2019).

130 Center for Domestic Violence Prevention. *Economic Costs of Domestic Violence in Uganda, 2006.*

Available at <https://www.cedovip.org/download/economic-cost-of-domestic-violence-in-uganda/>

131 UNDP (2020).

A photograph showing three young girls in a rural setting, likely in Uganda, engaged in washing dishes. They are gathered around a large black plastic tub. One girl in a blue shirt is leaning over the tub, another in a green patterned dress is washing her hands, and a third girl in a dark patterned dress is holding a black bowl. In the foreground, there are several stacks of dishes, including blue and green plates and metal pots. The background shows a simple building and a bright, hazy sky, suggesting a rural environment.

CHAPTER 4:

**Groups left
behind likely to
be left behind**

The **'Leave no one behind'** principle is a central promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, hence, a priority for the country. It represents a clear commitment of all United Nations Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind.

From a human rights-based perspective, it is critical to provide opportunity for everyone to meaningfully and effectively participate and access resources.¹³²

The UNCT has identified marginalized/vulnerable groups that could be left behind if not deliberately targeted and planned for in Uganda's development and social transformation programmes and interventions. These include, among others, orphans and vulnerable children, women and girls, children and youth, PWDs, persons with albinism, older people, indigenous people, ethnic minorities, people living in remote and hard-to-reach areas, sexual minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrants/mobile population, refugees, and stateless persons.

Orphans and vulnerable children

Child rights are among the founding principles of Uganda's 1995 Constitution. Uganda has 23 million children under the age of 18 and they constitute 54 per cent of the population. The Constitution recognizes children's rights, as specified in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). Poor and vulnerable children include orphans, street children, children affected by armed conflicts, child-headed households, those working under exploitive labour conditions, and those who suffer sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, and other forms of discrimination. These groups have limited or no access to basic and social protection services. Uganda's population includes significant numbers of orphans and widows because of high levels of mortality from HIV, malaria and other preventable diseases as well as years of conflict.

According to the 2014 Census, 2.5 million children are orphans, of which 1.2 million are due to HIV/AIDS. Orphaned children face significant physical, emotional and sexual challenges related to abuse. Available evidence indicates that 56 percent of children below 18 years of age experience multidimensional poverty, implying that they are deprived of six or more socially perceived necessities.¹³³ Orphans in Uganda are cared for primarily by extended families, but the resilience of this traditional society safety net is eroding and giving rise to extremely vulnerable categories of orphans such as street children, child-headed and grandmother-headed households. Hence, these children are exposed to various forms of abuse and discrimination and poverty and are driven into child labour and exploitation. Widows and orphans are routinely denied land and inheritance rights.

Children in marginalized and fragile regions of Karamoja, Northern Uganda and West Nile experience the highest rates of multidimensional poverty because of their socio-economic and environmental conditions, including conflicts and insecurity.

Women and girls

Despite extensive efforts to achieve gender equality and empower all Ugandans, women and girls continue to be subject to discrimination, disempowerment, violence and harmful practices and are denied the full realization of their human rights. Gender inequalities are still at the core of multidimensional inequalities across Uganda. Sector-based gender and equity impact studies reveal the gender gaps and women's disempowerment in various sectors.¹³⁴

132 UNDP Committee for Development Policy (CDP) (2018). "Leaving no one behind." Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2018-1.pdf>; UNDP (CDP) (2019). "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality." Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2019-1.pdf>

133 UNICEF. Going Beyond Monetary Poverty: Uganda's Multidimensional Poverty Profile.

Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6146/file/UNICEF-Uganda-Multi-dimensional-child-poverty-2020.pdf>

134 See publications by Equal Opportunity Commission on Gender and Equity Compact on various sectors in Uganda (2016/2017 – 2019/2020).

Women and girls experience gender inequality and violence in countless ways throughout their lives that are widely accepted as a normal part of what it is to be a woman or a girl. Harmful social norms, attitudes, behaviours and practices such as discriminatory gender norms and inequitable power relations, are a root cause of gender inequality, feminized poverty, SGBV and child/early marriages. The patriarchal system in Uganda upholds values, beliefs and practices that reinforce the privilege of men and their role in society and within the household. In this context, economic inequality and VAWG are accepted as an integral part of gender relations. Women and girls continue to suffer discrimination because public institutions' attitudes towards gender equality change slowly, implementation and enforcement of existing laws and policies are weak, and perpetrators of SGBV enjoy impunity. These challenges are aggravated by a lack of accountability mechanisms for duty bearers and of knowledge and information among rights holders enabling them to assert their rights and demand accountability.

Women and girls suffer from high levels of violence and harmful traditional practices that have short- and long-term consequences in their lives, communities and the country at large. National statistics show that 56 percent of women (age 15-49) experience spousal violence and 22 percent experience sexual violence.¹³⁵ About 35 percent of girls experience sexual violence and 59 percent of females report having experienced physical violence during childhood.¹³⁶

While gender inequality, feminized poverty, VAWG and other harmful practices cut across all ages, economic, geographical and cultural spheres, certain groups of women and girls are particularly at risk of SGBV due to multiple forms of vulnerability and marginalization. In Uganda, those at greatest risk of being left behind are women and girls who are also exposed to poverty and lack of education. They may live at a distance or remote from government services and protection systems or be at greater risk because of their status as widows or orphans.

¹³⁵ Uganda, UBOS (2018).

¹³⁶ Uganda, MGLSD (2018). Uganda Violence Against Children Survey: Finding from a National Survey.

Available at <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/2156/file/Violence%20Against%20Children%20Survey%202018.pdf>

¹³⁷ Uganda, UBOS (2019). Persons with Disability. Bridging the Gap Through Statistics.

Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2019DISABILITY_MONOGRAPH_-_FINAL.pdf

¹³⁸ Uganda, MGLSD (2020).

Refugees, adolescent girls and youth, PWDs and people living with HIV/AIDS are also at greatest risk.

Persons with disabilities

PWDs are vulnerable by virtue of their impairment and of negative societal attitudes arising from fear, ignorance, superstition, neglect and lack of awareness of their rights. Historically, they have been marginalized, discriminated against and deprived of the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Women and children with disabilities generally suffer double discrimination and abuse. Uganda has a rich policy and legislative framework intended to achieve their inclusion; it emphasizes a rights-based approach to disability. Article 21 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda bans discrimination based on disability. Uganda has also adopted national disability legislation and policies, including the National Council for Disability Act in 2003, the Persons with Disabilities Act and the National Policy on Disability in 2006 (currently under review). Uganda was also among the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008. In 2016, the CRPD Committee reviewed Uganda's record and made several recommendations to fulfil the rights of PWDs, including the need for legislative reforms to modify provisions that use derogatory language against them. Uganda has not yet ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

In 2017, UBOS undertook a country-wide functional difficulties survey, which was followed in 2019 by a situational analysis of PWDs.¹³⁷ It found that overall, 8.5 percent of Ugandans have a disability. Prevalence increases sharply with age; thus, approximately 40 percent of persons aged 65 and older have a disability. However, in absolute numbers, the majority of PWDs are under 15 years of age. Approximately 4 percent of children aged two to four and 7.8 percent of children aged five to 17 were found to have some form of disability.¹³⁸ Among children, psychosocial and/or intellectual difficulties were the most common.

Adults faced a wider range of disabilities, such as difficulty with vision, hearing and walking/climbing, in addition to psychosocial and/or intellectual challenges and difficulties remembering or concentrating. Prevalence rates also differ between men and women. Until age 40, men/boys are slightly more likely to experience disability, but prevalence is higher among women after age 40.

Persons with albinism

Persons with albinism are a unique group whose human rights issues have generally gone unnoticed for centuries. As a result, they face deeply embedded stigma, discrimination and violence in a host of countries. The complexity and uniqueness of the condition means that their experiences touch on several human rights issues, significantly and simultaneously. Those range from discrimination and stigma to limited accessibility to special services in health and education, harmful traditional practices, violence including killings, trade and trafficking of body parts for witchcraft, infanticide, and abandonment of children. Albinism often results in varying degrees of visual impairment and high vulnerability to skin damage from ultraviolet rays, which can cause skin cancer. The inclusion of albinism as a form of disability in the Persons with Disability Act 2019, was a positive step and has the potential to address marginalization and ensure greater inclusion of persons with albinism in government programs. However, because this is only a recent development, the UBOS has never included albinism in any census of persons with disability. Thus, comprehensive data on the number of persons with albinism is lacking.

Older persons

In Uganda, older persons are defined as those aged 60 years and above and they constitute 1.7 million (4 percent) of the population.¹³⁹ The majority of older persons live in rural areas where poverty is rife and economic activities are limited. For example, two out of every 10 persons (19 percent) aged 60 years and above live below the poverty line, with the majority in the Eastern region (29 percent). In addition, 85 percent of active older persons are engaged in crop farming and have no social security, rendering them totally vulnerable.

¹³⁹ Uganda, UBOS (2020).

The inclusion of albinism as a form of disability in the Persons with Disability Act 2019, was a positive step and has the potential to address marginalization and ensure greater inclusion of persons with albinism in government programs.

Their economic situation is worsened by the burden of looking after orphans and other vulnerable children left by young people who have either migrated to urban areas or died. As noted above, older persons (especially older women) are also far more likely to experience one or more forms of disability.

Older persons face challenges of loneliness, poverty, poor housing, poor health and nutrition, among others. Income shortfall is also a major challenge that could force almost three in 10 older persons to remain actively engaged in income-generating activities well beyond the age of 60, which could continue to cause them stress and strain. Although the National Council for Older Persons Act, 2013 provides for the human rights of older persons, gaps still exist in addressing the challenges facing them.

Indigenous peoples

The term 'indigenous peoples' is an international human rights construct that has been contextualized and given an African-grounded specific meaning by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. In the human rights context, the concept of indigenous peoples in Africa refers to a limited number of African traditional communities whose land-based cultures and livelihoods face extinction as a result of prejudiced views or negative perceptions of their ways of life, which are considered 'backward, savage and Stone Age,' in contrast with 'the modern lifestyle.'

These are mostly hunter-gatherers and nomadic pastoralist communities, whose traditional use and occupation of land were historically considered as inferior, requiring ‘modernization’ and not deserving of legal protection. Although different understandings exist in Uganda regarding the international concept of the term, the government has indicated that indigenous peoples include the Batwa, Benet, Ik and Karamojong pastoralists and the Tepeth in Karamoja. This is consistent with the understanding of the term set out by the African Commission.

Existing data show that indigenous peoples in Uganda experience disproportionately high rates of poverty and exclusion and their human rights often are not respected on an equal basis with others’.

Key issues include lack of land rights, political representation and participation in decision-making processes that affect them; loss of culture and languages; and high rates of poverty, combined with lack of access to health care and social services.¹⁴⁰ Gender-based violence is also an issue of great concern because most indigenous people do not know their rights and entitlements and are often excluded from processes by which to report their grievances.¹⁴¹ Indigenous people have been displaced by the establishment of national parks and conservation areas, leading to negative impacts including loss of livelihood and higher poverty levels. In 2019, the government formed a National Indigenous Peoples Reference Committee and initiated a drafting and consultation process for a National Affirmation Action Programme on Indigenous Peoples in Uganda.

Ethnic minorities

Ethnic minority groups are scattered across Uganda, but are specifically found in the north – Alur, Ik (Teuso), Kakwa, Karamojong cluster, Lugbara, Luluba, Ma’di and Nubian; the east – Bagungu, Bakenyi, Bavuma, Ik (Teuso) and Soo; and the west – Abayanda (Batwa),

Ba’amba and Bakonzo. While some progress has been made in ensuring that ethnic minorities are represented adequately in political spaces through the creation of special constituencies, challenges remain. The usual retrogressive assumption is that minorities are ‘temporary’ societies destined to disappear because of modernization. This leads to attempts to assimilate them into the dominant society, an approach that has had a tremendous impact on Ugandan minority groups. The majority of Uganda’s ethnic minorities still suffer an acute lack of access to basic social services such as education, health, water and sanitation. Most schools are near urbanized areas of the country, which are distant from where rural poor ethnic minorities live. In many cases, members of ethnic minority communities experience poor health and rely on traditional knowledge of medicinal herbs. People living in remote and hard-to-reach areas, including children, living in remote and geographically inhospitable areas located in mountainous terrain, impenetrable rain forests, islands and floodplains are highly vulnerable to multi-dimensional poverty due to their physical separation from economic and social opportunities. Long distances to urban centres, impassable roads and lack of affordable transport (especially during rainy seasons) are some of the barriers to accessing market and socio-economic services such as education, health, agricultural extension services and credit.

Sexual minorities

Sections 145 and 146 of the Penal Code Act, Cap 120, criminalize ‘unnatural offences’ and attempts to commit such offences. Homosexual acts are considered among them and are punishable by imprisonment for life. Attempts to commit such acts are punishable by seven years of imprisonment. Sexual minorities have historically suffered isolation, marginalization and discrimination by family members and communities.

¹⁴⁰ A 2009 report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) noted, for example, that in Karamoja, an estimated 82% of the population lived in poverty (compared to 31% nationally); 9% had access to sanitation units (compared to 62% nationally); 31% had access to safe water (compared to 63% nationally); maternal mortality rates (per 100,000 live births) were 750 in Karamoja (compared to 435 nationally); and literacy rates were 11% (compared to 67% nationally). OCHA, Focus on Karamoja, Special Report No. 3 – October 2008 to January 2009, available at: <http://www.cultura21.net/karamoja/docs/FocusKja-SpecRep3.pdf>

¹⁴¹ A 2010 study reported that 100% of Batwa women who participated in individual interviews had experienced some form of violence. See: Minority Rights Group International (2010). Uncounted: The Hidden Lives of Batwa Women. Available at <https://minorityrights.org/publications/uncounted-the-hidden-lives-of-batwa-women-may-2010/>

There is a general social tendency to express aversion towards individuals who are or are perceived to be sexual minorities. In Uganda, the situation facing sexual minorities remains of concern because the atmosphere for engaging with these issues is difficult. This community has faced continued backlash in recent years, including through the 2005 presidential ban on same-sex marriage, the 2012 temporary ban on NGOs accused of 'promoting homosexuality' and 'undermining the national culture,' and the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014 (later annulled by the Constitutional Court). Criminalization and limited protection of sexual minorities has potentially increased their vulnerability to SGBV. They continue to face arrests by security forces on the pretext of violating COVID-19 regulations.

People living with HIV and AIDS

While the country has made significant progress in reducing the prevalence of HIV, many factors continue to drive the HIV epidemic. They include behavioural, socio-cultural and biomedical factors, including concurrent sexual partnerships, sero-discordance and lack of disclosure, transactional and commercial sex, low and inconsistent condom use, low male circumcision and alcohol and drug abuse. Structural, socio-cultural and economic aspects include poverty, gender inequalities, stigma and discrimination as well as gaps in access to prevention, care and treatment services.¹⁴²

Migrants and mobile populations

Migration in Uganda is multi-faceted and exists within diverse social, political and economic contexts driven by poverty, rapid population growth and the porosity of international borders. It is characterized by voluntary and forced migration both within the country's borders and across international borders. The United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs' 2019 migrant stock estimates place the number of international migrants in Uganda at 1.7 million people, constituting 3.9 percent of its total population. That same year, approximately 740,000 Ugandans were living outside the country.

Ugandans' participation in regional, continental and, even, global labour markets is growing, contributing an average of 4.5 percent of GDP through remittances received. Since most Ugandans migrated within Africa (76.5 percent), the recently adopted African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) would provide further opportunities for the Ugandan diaspora to contribute to the economic development of their country. Rural-urban migration is mostly driven by the search for employment, with people heading primarily toward urban centres or regions with high economic activity.¹⁴³ While the government has shown significant interest in migration in recent years and considers it a cross-cutting issue, gaps remain in the governance framework. Indeed, there is no comprehensive migration management policy and interventions are fragmented and ad hoc.

Migrants and mobile populations are highly vulnerable and at risk of being left behind in development efforts. They include migrant workers facing sexual exploitation and abuse, victims of trafficking, migrants in detention, unaccompanied children, stranded migrants, displaced persons, and pastoralists. They find themselves in vulnerable situations requiring protection and assistance at various points during their journeys, in transit, upon arrival at their destinations, and as they try to rebuild their lives. Diminished access to social protection and disempowerment due to poverty, food insecurity and limited or no access to information exacerbate the risks facing migrant populations and have led to significant exclusion of vulnerable migrants.

Uganda has adopted both the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. In line with the Global Compact on Migration, Uganda needs to address and reduce the vulnerabilities that exist along the migration continuum by reviewing and implementing relevant priority objectives and associated commitments to ensure they do not create, exacerbate or unintentionally increase vulnerabilities of migrants.

¹⁴² Uganda AIDS Commission (2018).

¹⁴³ International Organization of Migration (IOM) (2015). Qualitative Research Study on Rural-Urban Labour Migration of Young Ugandans.

Refugees

Poverty remains high among the refugee population, at more than twice the level of the host communities. Despite positive provisions on the right to work for refugees, few are able to achieve self-reliance. This population is excluded from economic growth and benefits only in limited fashion from decent work. While 28 percent of refugees are employed, their wages are 35-45 percent lower than those of the host population. Most earn an income from the small-scale agriculture sector.¹⁴⁴ While refugees in Uganda receive land and mobility rights, they remain food insecure and are heavily dependent on food and nutrition assistance. Employment among refugees is half that of host community members.¹⁴⁵

Children constitute 60 percent of the refugee population, but only 65 percent of them are enrolled in primary education. Secondary school education is virtually inaccessible, with 9 percent net enrolment among that age group in 2018.¹⁴⁶ The high proportion of women and girls within the refugee population (52 percent) poses specific protection challenges. Many experienced trauma, separation, GBV and other forms of violence against children prior to and during flight. Few specialized services are available to provide appropriate support. SGBV against children remains a leading protection concern for refugee women and girls but is massively under-reported due to a combination of a culture of silence within the refugee communities coupled with inadequate services to respond to reported cases.¹⁴⁷ Access to quality maternal health care is limited and compounded by the scarcity of water and sanitation services. Due to lack of livelihood opportunities, women are engaged in survival sex as a coping mechanism, exposing them to sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking, and other health and safety concerns.

In 2017, over 5,000 new cases of SGBV were reported and responded to in the refugee settlements. In the first eight months of 2018, an additional 4,000 incidents were reported. Refugee women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence against women and harmful practices due to their increased vulnerability. For example, SGBV is systematically employed as a weapon of war and has been widely documented in ongoing regional conflicts, most notably in the DRC and South Sudan.



Children constitute 60 percent of the refugee population, but only 65 percent of them are enrolled in primary education. Secondary school education is virtually inaccessible, with 9 percent net enrolment among that age group in 2018.



Despite positive provisions on the right to work for refugees, few are able to achieve self-reliance. This population is excluded from economic growth and benefits only in limited fashion from decent work.

¹⁴⁴ World Bank (2019). Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32511>

¹⁴⁵ ILO (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on Refugee and Host Community Livelihoods: ILO PROSPECTS Rapid Assessment in two Refugee Settlements of Uganda. Available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dgg_p/documents/publication/wcms_796779.pdf

¹⁴⁶ World Bank (2019).

¹⁴⁷ As of May 2019, 458 (419F/39M) SGBV incidents were reported from refugee hosting districts. 71 incidents managed were of child survivors. Physical assault (178) remained the most prevalent incident followed by rape (100), psychological/emotional abuse (80), denial of resources (61), forced/early marriage (33) and sexual assault (6).

Stateless persons

People who do not have a nationality are often invisible and face high levels of discrimination and social exclusion. The stateless and at-risk population in Uganda is currently unknown, although the phenomenon has been reported among some marginalized tribes and segments of undocumented population, including children born of war. Children born in Uganda to non-citizens will be stateless if their parents are stateless or if they possess a nationality but are unable to confer nationality under the laws of their state. In 2015, the government pledged to regularize the status of some 15,000 long-staying refugees who have developed strong social ties in Uganda¹⁴⁸ and is preparing to accede to the 1961 UN Convention on Reduction of Statelessness.

Prisoners

Globally, it is estimated that approximately 10.2 million people are held in penal institutions with an average imprisonment rate of 144 prisoners per 100,000 of the world population. Prison administrations continue to operate based on an occupancy level of over 100 percent worldwide. It is important to highlight that imprisonment disproportionately affects people living in poverty and that imprisoning large segments of society places a significant burden on state budgets.¹⁴⁹

The latest statistics indicate that there are 65,000 prisoners in Uganda, with a prison population rate of 142 per 100,000 of national population.¹⁵⁰ While the planned capacity stands at 17,389, prison facilities operate at 346 percent of their official capacity. Uganda is ranked as having the sixth most crowded prison system in the world. With the prison population increasing by 10 percent annually, the number of prisoners is expected to increase significantly over the next five years, straining the already poor and inadequate facilities.¹⁵¹

Of the prison population, 46.4 percent are pre-trial detainees held on remand. National authorities expressed serious concerns that the existing level of overcrowding in prisons does not allow prison authorities to properly classify prisoners and to adhere to the individualization principle.¹⁵² Even the basic requirement of separating different categories of pre-trial detainees from sentenced prisoners can be implemented only partly; for example, men from women and adults from children.

Overstretched and poorly managed prisons run the risk of degenerating into dangerous places for both prisoners and prison staff and can even turn into 'crime schools' and fertile breeding grounds for radicalization.¹⁵³ If prison inmates are not targeted, planned for and included in the country's development agenda – that is, deliberately included in development interventions – Uganda's progress towards achieving 2030 Agenda will be slowed and may well remain inequitable. As long as people remain poor, peace and security will be affected and the crime rate will not abate.

Youth:

With 54 percent of its population below 18 years and a median age of just under 16 years, Uganda has one of the youngest populations in the world. Young people between 18 and 30 years constitute about 19 per cent of the populace and over 60 per cent of the working age population. The economy has not reached the degree of structural transformation needed to create decent jobs and livelihood opportunities that can absorb the growing working age population. Therefore, a significant number of young people are either unemployed or underemployed and engaged in precarious work that does not offer decent incomes, a situation that has been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

148 These groups include: Rwandans who fled the genocide and who now would fall within the scope of the Cessation Clause, (1959-1998); Congolese who fled in 1961; and the South Sudanese who fled the previous civil strife and who never returned in 2005 after the attainment of self-determination in South Sudan.

149 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (undated). Addressing the global prison crisis: Strategy 2015-2017. Available at https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Strategy_on_Addressing_the_Global_Prison_Crisis.pdf

150 World Prison Brief. "World Prison Brief data: Africa." Available at <https://www.prisonstudies.org/country/uganda>

151 Ugfacts.net. "Uganda Prison Population." Available at <https://ugfacts.net/uganda-prison-population>

152 United Nations Security Council. "CTED Co-Organizes Scoping Mission to Uganda." See <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/news/cted-co-organizes-scoping-mission-uganda>

153 UNDOC (undated).



CHAPTER 5:

**Uganda's Financing
Landscape for
Sustainable
Development**

At the strategic level, the GoU is well positioned to fulfil its ambition to achieve Vision 2040, having established a robust planning framework delivered through its NDPs.¹⁵⁴ Uganda completed implementation of NDPII (2015/16-2019/20) in June 2020 and developed NDP III. Both NDP II and NDP III integrate the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Agenda 2063, and the EAC Vision 2050.

While the direction at that level is clear, several challenges – related to mobilization and efficient use of resources, alignment of budgets, plans, policies and processes – could inhibit the ability to deliver on these aspirations.

According to the Certificate of Compliance report that gauges the country's commitment to achieve its NDPs and the 2030 Agenda through budget interventions and allocations, the national budget was poorly aligned to the NDPII and the 2030 Agenda, estimated to average 60.3 percent over the NDPII period.¹⁵⁴ Deficiencies in planning, budgeting and implementation are partly attributed to capacity gaps (particularly at sector and local government levels), inadequate data and integrated policy analysis to direct the policy and programme mix, and weak accountability and transparency systems. The persistent challenge of weak alignment of plans, budgets and policies compromises effective service delivery, especially for vulnerable groups at risk of being left behind by development processes. Furthermore, shocks related to climate change or, even, the outbreak of pandemics such as COVID-19 strain public finances, which erodes development gains.

These conditions are compounded by the strain on resource mobilization amid competing strategic priorities in different development sectors. For instance, while the country remains at low risk of debt distress, the drive to front-load large infrastructure projects to propel growth has caused debt to rise, putting more strain on the budget, with interest payments accounting for an average of 27 percent of the total budget between FY2015/16 and FY2019/20.¹⁵⁵

The high debt commitments and failure to balance spending between social sectors on the one hand and economic and productive sectors on the other, with a significant shift towards the latter, has not generated higher GDP growth. This has restricted fiscal space for spending on social sectors to address the needs of the most vulnerable, such as women, youth and PWDs.

Uganda has pursued an expansionary fiscal policy in recent years. The pandemic has worsened the situation. This policy has increased fiscal deficits as a percentage of GDP from 4 percent in FY2018/19 to over 9 percent in FY2021/22. In the fiscal projections included in its Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, the GoU projected that the deficit would remain at around 5.5 percent for FY2018/19 and FY2019/20 and would later drop to 3 percent after FY2020/21. This target was set as part of the convergence criteria for the EAC as it aims to form a monetary union by 2024.¹⁵⁶ However, the targets were not achieved because revenue as a percentage of GDP has stagnated at 12 percent for more than 10 years, compared to government expenditure as a percentage of GDP, which rose from 17 percent in 2019 to 24 percent in 2021.¹⁵⁷ As a result of the government's expansionary fiscal policy, the public debt stock rose from 35.3 percent of GDP in FY2018/19 to 40.8 percent for FY2019/2020. According to the World Bank's latest economic update, which corresponds to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) projected debt stock for the year 2020/21, that figure rose further to almost 50 percent in FY2020/21. The World Bank projects that public debt as a percentage of GDP will rise to 52.4 percent in FY2021/22, before starting to fall slightly in the following years.¹⁵⁸

154 Uganda, NPA, NDPIII.

155 Approved budget, several years.

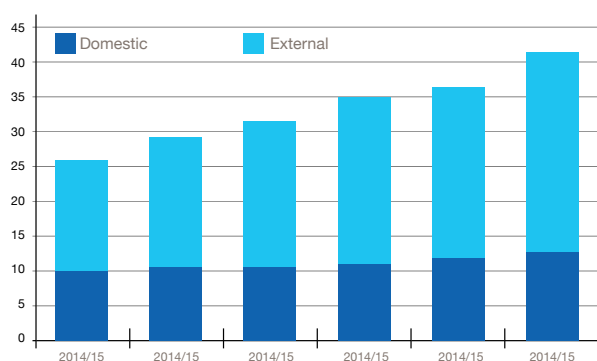
156 International Monetary Fund (2019). Uganda; Article IV consultation, IMF Country Report no. 19/125, May 2019.

157 World Bank (2021).

158 Ibid.

The growing debt stock has also resulted in a higher cost of debt service in terms of interest rates, which in 2021 reached 20 percent as a percentage of total revenues, exceeding government expenditure on both education and health. As of December 2020, Uganda's public debt was 68.4 percent foreign and 31.6 percent domestic.¹⁵⁹ The rise in debt stock is mainly due to an increase in external borrowing to address the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 3: Debt stock by type of debt (% of GDP)



Source: IMF Staff Country Reports 2021, 141

The government expected to mobilize the private sector to finance 42 percent of NDPII and that the private sector would contribute 38.6 percent to implement the NDPIII. However, there is no clear mechanism to engage the private sector in financing the plans. In addition, the tools and mechanisms to identify and facilitate private investment in profit-making opportunities in SDG-oriented sectors and poorer localities are lacking. The overall financing strategies for the country's plans do not adequately articulate how to integrate public and private finance or how the government will develop, implement and manage innovative financing instruments such as green bonds, public-private partnerships and diaspora financing. Local governments continue to grapple with the challenges of mobilizing resources to deliver services and promote local economic development, both of which are key to achieve the SDGs. Central government transfers as a proportion of the national budget have declined consistently from 25 percent in

2003/04 to 15 percent in FY2013/14 and 8.5 percent in FY2018/19,¹⁶⁰ threatening the quality of service delivery and leaving the needs of the most vulnerable, such as women, PWDs and youth, unmet. The growing national emphasis on flagship infrastructure projects to stimulate long-term growth naturally implies that over-reliance on the central government to address local development needs will no longer produce sustainable development results.

In addition, local governments' own-source revenue is insufficient to finance local priorities. Resource constraints have grown with the increasing number of local government districts (from 56 in 2000 to 135 as of July 2020), thereby limiting the ability to meet administrative and service delivery demands at that level. This is taking place amid additional pressure to address weak adherence to public finance management principles, inclusive procurement systems, accountability mechanisms, asset maintenance and local community engagement in resource allocation and implementation.

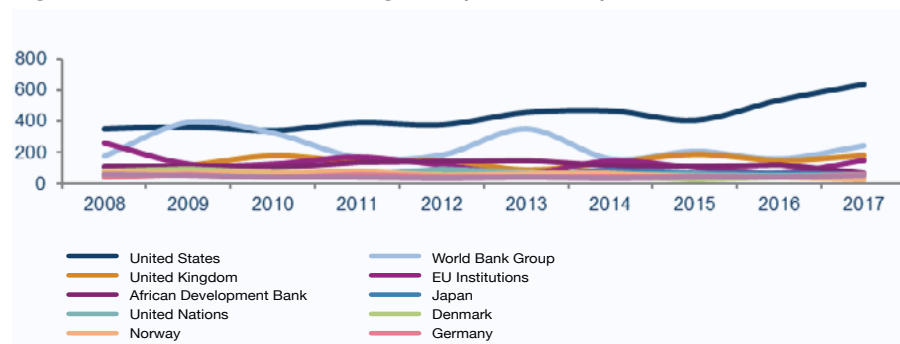
Official Development Assistance (ODA):

The 2019 DFA found that while ODA is declining, it has remained the main source (26 percent) of total public flows in Uganda. The continued strength of ODA is supported by Uganda's solid standing within the donor community and is linked to the refugee crisis in the north and west of the country, which has attracted significant amounts of humanitarian assistance. The volume of support provided by China, mainly in the form of non-concessional loans, is also significant. Non-concessional loans from other donors have also risen in recent years (partly from export credit agencies), while climate financing has remained relatively low, although it is increasing. Compared to its neighbours (except Rwanda), Uganda remains a relatively large aid recipient, averaging 8 percent of GDP in 2017, compared to 5 percent for Tanzania and Ethiopia and 3 percent for Kenya.¹⁶¹ As indicated in the figure below, Uganda's major donors include the United States, World Bank, United Kingdom, African Development Bank, European Union and the United Nations.

¹⁵⁹ Uganda, MoFPED (2020).

¹⁶⁰ Uganda, Local Government Finance Commission. See <https://www.lgfc.go.ug/?q=content/transfers-local-government>; Uganda, MoFPED (undated). Know your budget, FY 2015/16. Available at <https://budget.go.ug/sites/default/files/National%20Budget%20docs/Citizen%27s%20Budget%20-%202015-16.pdf>

¹⁶¹ DFA Uganda, 2019:

Figure 4: Main ODA donors to Uganda (million US\$)

Source: OECD-DAC CRS database

Remittances: The volume of remittances (in US\$) as a proportion of total GDP has increased steadily over the past 20 years, while outflows have remained relatively stable. Remittances increased from \$819 million in FY2010/11 to over \$1 billion in FY2017/18 and to \$1.4 billion in FY18/19 in nominal terms.¹⁶² However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, remittances to Uganda fell \$1.2 billion in FY 2019/20. Despite the reduction in the total amount of remittances received in FY2020/21, Uganda still ranks among the top 10 remittance recipient countries in SSA.¹⁶³ The previous increase in the inflow of foreign exchange through remittances had positive impacts on the economy by boosting aggregate demand and economic growth and increasing the national savings pool available for investment.

Agricultural finance and insurance are critical to reduce the vulnerability of households that depend on the agricultural sector for their livelihood. In 2018, about 87 percent of the working poor were engaged in agricultural activities. Further, nearly 85 percent of all farming households in Uganda are smallholder farmers; their operations are characterized by low levels of productivity. The agricultural sector continues to be highly exposed to risks and access to finance continues to be a major constraint. Therefore, agricultural finance and insurance are crucial to enable the structural transformation needed to accelerate growth in Uganda, alongside other interventions such as investing in irrigation systems.

While new forms of development finance have emerged, traditional forms of aid remain significant, particularly in the social sectors. Uganda has not taken advantage of the opportunities offered by new and innovative financing prospects, such as concessional loans, PPPs and green financing. The NDP III provides a good opportunity to articulate and develop a new development finance strategy that could harness potential resources and deploy them effectively for rapid economic and social transformation.

Uganda has not taken advantage of the opportunities offered by new and innovative financing prospects, such as concessional loans, PPPs and green financing.

¹⁶² Uganda, NPA, NDPIII.

¹⁶³ IFAD, (2021). IFAD, (2021). "Ugandan remittances decline but still are a lifeline for rural people." Available at <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/ugandan-remittances-decline-but-still-are-a-lifeline-for-rural-people#:~:text=But%20remittances%20still%20provide%20crucial,US%241.1%20billion%20in%202020>

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development needs support to strengthen implementation of the Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy, as outlined in the public finance management reform strategy, to ensure that concerns associated with rising cost of debt and the use of domestic debt are addressed. On the one hand, given Uganda's limited access to foreign capital markets, the domestic debt market needs to be developed, and on the other, domestic borrowing must be kept under control.

Although a deep and active capital markets structure is necessary to attract foreign investors, market capitalization in Uganda was only 29 percent of GDP in 2018,¹⁶⁴ and does not fully reflect local funds. Furthermore, there is virtually no secondary trading on the Uganda Stock Exchange (USE) due to a lack of active market makers, with most large investors following a buy-and-hold strategy.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): FDI is a sizable source of external finance for the country. According to Absa African Financial Market Index 2018,¹⁶⁵ Uganda is ranked as the 10th best country in Africa for foreign investors. FDI to Uganda averaged 4 percent of GDP over the past decade, which is better than regional comparators but remains below the average figure of 4.5 percent for low-income countries and 5.5 percent for sub-Saharan African nations. By 2018, FDI flows to Uganda accounted for \$1.3 billion, with the largest volume of investments coming from the Netherlands, UK, France and Switzerland. China dominates South-South cooperation in Uganda and provides about 91.3 percent of all South-South funds.¹⁶⁶ With COVID-19, FDI has fallen drastically as Uganda suffered immensely from border closures and transport disruptions, registering large declines in investments in tourism, transport and construction.

The contribution of FDI to growth and structural transformation has been sluggish, with weakening spillover gains.

Approximately 60 percent of the inflows between 2009–2019 were concentrated in the extractive sector, which has a limited potential to drive inclusive and sustained growth compared to manufacturing and agriculture. The services sector contributed 31 percent of total inflows in the same period; the largest recipient was the financial sector at 12 percent. Beyond extractives, investors are cautious and do not have sufficient confidence to expand, as demonstrated by their commitment to smaller projects and lower reinvestment earnings. Efforts to strengthen investor confidence and intensify investor services will be important policy actions by setting up economic fundamentals that can generate additional FDI in Uganda and diversify its impact on the country's structural transformation.

Significant opportunities exist amid these challenges. The government acknowledges and could harness them. For instance, the programme-based budgeting approach provides an opportunity to better align NDP III priorities to key social sectors. Second, the comprehensive Public Finance Management Reform Strategy (2018–2023) acknowledges the above challenges, demonstrating the government's commitment to address them. The DFA revealed that despite the country's significant financing challenges, substantial upward potential exists for domestic resource mobilization and the use of other innovative financing sources, such as blended finance and, to some extent, public-private partnerships and non-concessional borrowing. The GoU should give priority to these sources to finance its development agenda. The DFA recommended that Uganda develop an integrated national financing framework (INFF), informed by an analysis of all potential sources of financing, to achieve the country's development aspirations. In recognition of the above, during the 2019 UN General Assembly, Uganda was one of the first countries to commit to creating an INFF. The government has already developed a Domestic Revenue Mobilization Strategy 2019/2020 - 2023/24 and is finalizing a Public Investment Financing Strategy that aligns to the INFF principles.

¹⁶⁴ Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum (OMFIF). Absa Africa Financial Markets Index 2018. Available at <https://www.omfif.org/absa-africa-financial-markets-index-2018/>

¹⁶⁵ OMFIF. Absa Africa Financial Markets Index 2018.

¹⁶⁶ Based on the UNDP study on the status of South-South Cooperation in Uganda.



CHAPTER 6:

**Commitments
under International
and Regional
Norms & Standards**

Uganda has ratified key international and regional instruments, many of which have become part of the country's domestic laws. This demonstrates the country's commitment to international and regional norms and standards, in particular those related to advancing and promoting human rights.

At the international level, in addition to being a United Nations Member State under the United Nations Charter, Uganda has ratified eight out of nine core human rights instruments: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the CRC and its two optional protocols¹⁶⁷; the CRPD; the International Covenant on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.¹⁶⁸ After 13 years, the GoU finalized and successfully submitted the State Party Report on the United Nations CRC in May 2021. Uganda also domesticated the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court through the International Criminal Court Act of 2010, intended to allow individuals suspected to have committed crimes of an international nature to be tried in local courts.

Uganda is also committed to key declarations adopted by the international community related to human rights and gender equality, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995 and the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, among others.

At the regional level, Uganda has ratified the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Uganda is also committed to implementing the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Addis Ababa Declaration on the Demographic Dividend, among others.

In terms of labour and employment, Uganda has ratified all eight key conventions under the International Labour Organization. Regarding migration, settlement and refugees, Uganda is a State Party to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and The Hague Convention on the Protection of children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-Country Adoption. At the regional level, Uganda has ratified the Organisation of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons. However, Uganda has yet to adopt a minimum wage that would put it at par with international best practices and reduce labour exploitation.

Uganda's Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative was signed in August 2020, marking a positive step towards increased transparency in natural resource management. It is too early to determine how the initiative will influence the availability of information about oil and gas operations, as well as its impact on protection human rights concerns arising from those operations.

At the national level, the Constitution guarantees the promotion and protection of human rights. Several laws and regulations provide a solid framework for the promotion and protection of human rights.

¹⁶⁷ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict." Available at <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/tools-for-action/optional-protocol/>; United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography." Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/opsccrc.aspx>

¹⁶⁸ Uganda has accepted the individual complaints procedures under ICCPR and CRPD, as well as the confidential inquiry procedure under CAT and CRPD.

In line with the provisions of the Constitution, the country established key oversight bodies, including the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Equal Opportunities Commission and National Council for Disability. Other key institutions called upon to play a key role in upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms are the Judiciary, the Inspectorate of Government, the Electoral Commission and the Uganda Law Reform Commission. The country has also enacted legislation that promotes human rights, including the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act, 2012, the Human Rights Enforcement Act of 2019, and the Access to Information Act, 2005.

Uganda has participated actively in the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, in which the United Nations Human Rights Council reviews every state every five years. To date, Uganda has been reviewed twice – in 2011 and 2016 - and submitted a report in 2021. The third review is expected to take place in January 2022. In October 2011, Uganda received 171 recommendations, of which it fully accepted 129, partially accepted six and rejected 46. In November 2016, Uganda received 226 recommendations, of which 148 were accepted and 78 noted. Uganda has made progress in addressing some of the recommendations. For instance, a Standing Human Rights Committee of Parliament was created in 2012. Its mandate is to ensure compliance with human rights standards in all business of Parliament and with the National Action Plan on Human Rights (NAP) (currently pending cabinet approval) and development of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, which was approved in July and launched in October 2021. In 2014, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights was established to assist with coordination on human rights among ministries, departments and agencies, including reporting to international human rights mechanisms. Uganda has recently made considerable progress in drafting long overdue state reports, as per the reporting obligations under the human rights treaties. These reports are expected to be submitted to the respective treaty bodies during the first half of 2020. In addition, a National Action Plan on Human Rights has been developed and now only needs Cabinet approval.

Uganda has participated actively in the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, in which the United Nations Human Rights Council reviews every state every five years.

Despite this progress, Uganda has still not yet ratified several international and regional human rights instruments. If ratified, these instruments would further strengthen the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Uganda. They include:

- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
- Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR on the abolition of the death penalty, as well as optional protocols under CEDAW, CESCRC and CRC accepting the respective individual complaints procedures;
- 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; and,
- Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

Uganda last accepted a country visit by a Special Rapporteur appointed by the Human Rights Council in 2007. It is hoped that Uganda will soon accept one of the pending invitation requests by several Special Procedures mandate-holders.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Pending country visits. See <https://spinternet.ohchr.org/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?visitType=pending&lang=en>

CHAPTER 7:**Cross-boundary,
Regional and
Subregional
perspectives**

Flags of Republic of Congo, Uganda,
Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda,
the four countries participating in Sub Regional
Heads of State Summit flying high at Ollombo
Airport - Oyo, 24 March 2013" © Paul/Flickr

Uganda has shown its commitment to several continental and regional development cooperation arrangements. The Uganda Vision 2040 states, **“Government will collaborate with its neighbours in the implementation of this Vision and in accordance with existing and future agreements, standards and protocols within the framework of the East African Community, other regional blocs and African Union.”**

It also states, “Government will also support externalization of labour by putting in place relevant legal and institutional frameworks and sign cooperation agreements with other countries where our people would work. Similarly, the government will sign social security agreements with such countries so that Ugandans working abroad do not lose their social security benefits.” Consequently, the GoU has committed to the following policies and protocols:

- a. EAC:** The EAC comprises Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Sudan and Uganda. It has implemented the Customs Union, Common Market and Monetary Union protocols. While EAC Partner States remain committed to establishing a single currency, the Community’s Council of Ministers that met in 2021 agreed that the initial 2024 deadline was not attainable; timelines are being revised in consultation with the Partner States. The delays are largely due to the member countries’ inability to comply with the macroeconomic convergence criteria on inflation, fiscal deficit, public debt and the volume of foreign exchange reserves. Establishment of critical institutions necessary to implement the single currency regime has also lagged. Partner States are undertaking key programmes to harmonize capital markets and payment systems. To date, they have harmonized the critical policies that are essential for a sustainable monetary union. The East African Legislative Assembly has enacted the East African Monetary Institute Bill, 2018 and the East African Statistics Bureau Bill, 2018. The former provides for the establishment of the East African Monetary Institute that was set to come into effect in 2021, with plans for its transformation into the East African Central Bank that would later issue the single currency. EAC Partner States identified infrastructure as one of the most important enablers for ensuring successful regional integration. Infrastructure plays a catalytic role in facilitating growth and development of trade, agriculture and tourism and the movement of labour and other resources. The major focus on infrastructure addresses roads, railway, aviation, communications and inland waterways. It emphasizes alignment with the treaty establishing the EAC, which states that provision of basic infrastructure by the Partner States shall be one of the Community’s operational principles. Uganda has plans to fast track the construction of the standard gauge railway, with two main routes - the Northern (Tororo-Amuru) and the Eastern (Tororo-Kampala) – although the entire process is progressing slowly.
- b. COMESA:** COMESA comprises 21 member states (after the admission of Tunisia and Somalia). It offers a remarkable opportunity for Uganda’s exports and is anticipated to promote further industrialization and job creation. The regional bloc remains the second most important destination for Uganda’s exports, after the Middle East. Indeed, Uganda’s merchandise exports to COMESA increased from \$999 million in 2011, one year before the country joined the bloc, to \$1,244 million in 2012. Trade performance has not changed significantly since that time, reaching \$1,278 million in 2020. During FY2018/19, COMESA embarked on the Digital Free Trade Area programme. It aims to use information and communications technologies to improve efficiency in cross-border trade between Member States by further minimizing physical non-trade barriers to trade among member states. The associated COMESA Online Trade Portal was also established to facilitate information sharing among

Member States on product and price information to facilitate trade during the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, 18 out of 21 Member States, including Uganda, have nominated focal point persons to manage the portal.

- c. AfCFTA:** The AfCFTA agreement secured the minimum threshold of 22 ratifications required to come into force in April 2019. Uganda was among the first 44 countries to sign the AfCFTA in March 2018. In line with the country's industrialization agenda, AfCFTA will offer Uganda a very large market base to support more trade in goods and services produced by industries and enterprises that aim to create jobs and increase household incomes. Between January 2018 and July 2021, the share of Uganda's monthly merchandise exports to Africa (COMESA + rest of Africa) increased from 47 percent to 52 percent, indicating the potential for the country to benefit from AfCFTA as a major export destination. Indeed, a preliminary assessment of AfCFTA's impact on Uganda indicates potential gains in both exports and imports. Export gains amount to \$505 million, with the share of exports going to African countries estimated to reach 50 percent. Export gains are anticipated particularly in heavy manufacturing products (\$248 million), processed foods (\$102 million), and grains and crops (\$75 million). As an LDC, Uganda will have more time to phase out its own tariffs than non-LDCs.
- d. East African Community-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement (EAC-EU EPA):** The EAC finalized negotiations for an EPA with the EU on 16 October 2014. The agreement covers trade in goods and fisheries as well as development cooperation, especially on the sustainable use of resources. It bans unjustified or discriminatory restrictions on imports and exports, which contributes to the EAC's efforts to eradicate non-tariff barriers in intra-EAC trade. The EPA is not yet in place, as Uganda (as well as Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania) have not yet signed it. Since Uganda (and all other LDCs) already has a duty-free, quota-free export arrangement with the EU under the Everything but Arms Initiative, the EPA does not improve market access in the EU.
- e. Policy frameworks on the externalization of labour:** To expand employment opportunities, the GoU developed frameworks that have provided guidance on the bilateral agreements already signed with the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the governments of Jordan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Negotiations are underway on a bilateral agreement with the United Kingdom and Kuwait.
- f. Regional approaches:** Uganda's trade and investment cooperation with the wider international community is increasingly embedded within such approaches, which many of the leading economies have adopted in dealing with African countries. In-year developments within these approaches in FY2018/19 and related plans are highlighted below.
- i. China-Africa Cooperation:** The Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in September 2018 and was attended by several heads of state and government and other delegates from China, 53 African countries with diplomatic relations with China, and the African Union Commission. The summit adopted the Beijing Declaration, 'Toward an Even Stronger China-Africa Community with a Shared Future and the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2019-21).' Uganda and China signed three agreements during the summit: an agreement on economic and technical cooperation worth ¥200 million; a memorandum of understanding on cooperation within the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road Initiative to benefit from the \$60 billion in investments announced by China; and an agreement on emergency humanitarian assistance.
- ii. Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD):** The 7th TICAD was held in August 2019. TICAD is an international conference held under the leadership of the Japanese government. Its aim is to facilitate and promote high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and Africa's development partners on issues that relate to economic growth, trade and investment, sustainable

development, human security, peace and stability, and governance. It is also a multilateral partnership that strongly promotes South-South and triangular cooperation, among other goals. The Japanese government has supported Uganda's infrastructure development in the past, including construction of electricity transmission infrastructure, regional referral hospitals and the new Nile Bridge in Jinja, as well as interventions in other sectors, including agriculture and education. The 8th TICAD, scheduled for 2022, is expected to cement Uganda-Japan relations in these areas.

- iii. **United States-Africa Business Summit:** The 12th United States-Africa Business Summit was held in June 2019 in Maputo, Mozambique. It brought together more than 1,000 U.S. and African private sector executives, international investors, senior government officials and multilateral stakeholders. The Summit serves as a platform for U.S. and African business and government leaders to advance a resilient and sustainable U.S.-Africa partnership by: engaging on key sectors, including agribusiness, energy, health, infrastructure, ICT, finance and more; networking with key private sector and government decision makers; exploring new business opportunities and meeting potential business partners; and advocating to shape effective U.S.-Africa trade and investment policies. Furthermore, the U.S. signed the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act in October 2018. It provided for the creation of the United States International Development Finance Corporation, which introduces new and innovative financial products to improve the flow of private capital to the developing world. Its official goal is to stimulate economic growth in less developed countries by promoting market-based, private-sector development by providing capital to private investors to support commercial projects.
- iv. **The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES):** JAES was launched at the 2007 Africa-EU Summit in Lisbon, Portugal. It sets out the intention of both continents to move beyond a donor/recipient relationship towards long-term cooperation on jointly identified, mutual and complementary interests. In line with this strategy, the 5th AU-EU Summit was held in November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The EU and African leaders adopted a joint declaration, 'Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development.' To further consolidate this position, a new Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs was launched in September 2018. The alliance aims to deepen the EU's economic and trade relationship with Africa, focusing on four key areas: strategic investment and job creation; investment in education and matching skills; business environment and investment climate; and economic integration and trade. The alliance is expected to: lead to the creation of 10 million jobs in Africa in the next five years; provide access for 24 million people to all-season roads thanks to leveraged investments in transport infrastructure; enable 105 students to benefit from Erasmus+ by 2027; and, offer vocational training for skills development to 750,000 people. The second AU-EU Summit, held in October 2021, agreed on four key areas: joint COVID-19 response to increase access to vaccines, medicines and technologies; investing in recovery together through green and digital transformation; working together for inclusive peace, security, and governance; and working together on migration and mobility.¹⁷⁰

170 African Union. "Joint Press Statement Second AU-EU Ministerial Meeting," October 28, 2021. Available at <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20211028/joint-press-statement-second-au-eu-ministerial-meeting>.

- v. **BRICS:** The 10th BRICS Summit is an international relations conference attended by the heads of state and government of the five member states of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. It was held convened in South Africa in 2018 on the theme, 'BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution.' While no other African country has confirmed its intention to join BRICS, several have welcomed the prospect of partnership with the group. H.E. The President of Uganda addressed the BRICS Africa Outreach meeting and held bilateral meetings with other heads of state.
- vi. **Uganda has also demonstrated global leadership in South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC),** having held the presidency of the 19th United Nations High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation. The government appreciates the contribution of SSC and TrC to the achievement of the national, regional and global development aspirations. To this end, Uganda continues to engage and take leadership in initiatives aimed at providing an enabling environment to promote South-South partnerships.

It was one of the countries that contributed to the first African Report on South-South Cooperation, which provided a basis for the Africa side event during the 2019 Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. In addition, a report on the status of South-South Cooperation has been prepared to take stock of the current state of SSC and TrC and create awareness in the country. Uganda also attended the 20th session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation held between 1-4 June 2021. During the session, the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference was discussed, highlighting the approach to achieving the SDGs in the midst of COVID-19 and similar global crises.

While all the above present enormous opportunities for economic growth, poverty reduction and socio-economic transformation, Uganda remains ill-prepared to exploit the prospects. For example, its industrial base is still very small and faces threats of competition from more industrialized economies on the continent. It is therefore imperative that Uganda build its capacity to benefit from the opportunities created by regional and continental integration.



CHAPTER 8:

**Development
Opportunities**

The CCA, informed by triangulation of data from various sources, identified key development and social challenges, which offer simultaneous opportunities that have the potential to accelerate progress toward achievement of the NDP III and SDG targets. The challenges include:

8.1 Sustaining good governance and strengthening capacity for effective service delivery

NDP III identifies governance as one of the key accelerators for achievement of the national development and SDG targets. By deepening decentralization, Uganda aims to bring the government closer to the people and thereby enhance citizen participation in development, effectively address service delivery needs and accountability, and promote sustainable development. Sustainable development will be enabled by anchoring this work on the NDPIII priority programmes (including governance and security, legislature, oversight and representation, and administration of justice) and promoting the rule of law, access to justice, protection of human rights and advancement of gender equality. An efficient public sector, together with sustained peace, security and stability, by mitigating emerging internal and external security threats in all regions, will also be essential in order to influence an enabling environment for development.

With the introduction of the programmatic approach to planning, NDPIII provides opportunities to strengthen synergies for enhanced delivery on development solutions; systems; institutional and people's capacities to fight corruption and mismanagement of resources for development and social transformation; and promote prudent management of public resources at all levels. Further, the government has instituted the Parish Development Model to reach the grassroots by positioning the parish level as the epicentre of multisectoral community development, planning, implementation, supervision and accountability. In addition, Uganda has committed to designing and effectively implementing an INFF that presents opportunities for effective and sustainable financing.

The ongoing preparation of the Local Government Own Source Revenue Mobilisation Strategy will also contribute significantly to strengthening the capacity of local governments to generate resources to fund local priorities and contribute to local economic development.¹⁷¹

8.2 Promoting and sustaining poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth

NDP III identifies industry as one of the key accelerators for meeting critical targets that include agro-industrialization; fast-tracking oil, gas and mineral-based industrialization; promoting local manufacturing; and export promotion. Opportunities exist in several areas:

- With 68 percent of Uganda's population dependent on agriculture as a source of livelihood, the sector presents immense potential to contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive development. Modernizing the sector to increase production and productivity will require investment in and provision of access to quality inputs, resources for women across the value chain, financial services and markets, effective extension services, efficient market information, post-production value addition and other supportive infrastructure.
- With 78 percent of Ugandans under the age of 30, the growing young population provides opportunities as it expands the share of the working age population, which, given the right investments, will result in higher disposable income and produce economic growth. To reap these potential economic benefits and avoid the negative socio-economic challenges of an unplanned youth bulge, strategic social and economic investments should be made in skills development, productivity enhancement and job creation for the young people.

¹⁷¹ EFICON Consulting. Local Government Own Source Revenue Mobilisation Strategy. Consultancy Services to Review the Legal, Policy and Administrative Framework for Local Government Revenue. January 2020. Available at https://www.ldpg.or.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LG-Own-Source-Revenue-Mobilisation-Strategy_Draft-v01.pdf

- The growing women's empowerment agenda in Uganda is an opportunity that can be maximized to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, better health, inclusive education and welfare. To realize this requires addressing structural factors that limit women's ability to take advantage of economic opportunities, such as lack of access to finance, land and inheritance rights and tenure security; harmful social and gender norms; and STEM and ICT capacities.
- The commitment to regional economic platforms - such as EAC, IGAD, COMESA and AfCFTA - provides great opportunities for industrialization, trade enhancement and economic transformation. Uganda should aggressively develop strategies, policies, laws, institutional arrangements and other enablers that will prepare the country to position itself appropriately.
- The commercial production of oil and gas, which is expected to begin by 2025, will create growth opportunities in various sectors of the economy. For example, the agreements related to the East Africa Crude Oil Pipeline signed in 2021, will create opportunities for service subcontracting in areas ranging from engineering to housing construction, road infrastructure design and construction, environmental hazard controls, hospitality services and vocational training services. Continued efforts to articulate the local content provisions in this sector will greatly contribute to inclusive development gains. Interventions that promote skills development will be critical to ensure the participation of Ugandans at all levels of the oil and gas value chain.
- The ongoing efforts of the government and the United Nations to further strengthen partnership with other actors, such as the private sector, youth, academia and development partners, creates opportunities to mobilize the development resources needed to achieve national and global development goals. Full exploitation of this potential will require creating inclusive partnership platforms and developing policy and regulatory frameworks to guide engagement.

8.3. Addressing human rights, gender equality and SGBV

Uganda's commitment to mainstream SDGs in NDP III provides an opportunity to promote the principles of sustainable development, while ensuring leaving no one behind under the Community Mobilisation and Mindset Change Programme. The goal of this programme is to empower families, communities and citizens to embrace national values and actively participate in sustainable development. This is in line with the country's 1995 Constitution, which mandates the State to mobilize, organize and empower its citizens to build an independent and sustainable foundation for development and social transformation. The Local Governments Act (Cap 243) also offers a statutory role for local authorities to take the lead in community governance and promote the community's well-being. The existing institutions, government ministries, departments and agencies, and policy and legal frameworks provide enabling environments and platforms to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and human rights and to combat SGBV and other discriminatory and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. These platforms will be effective if they are strong, have the necessary capacities and are effectively monitored.

The National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, adopted in August 2021, offers an opportunity for the government to address human rights issues arising within the business sector. It comes at a time when Uganda has seen its FDI increase, driven by the construction, manufacturing, agriculture, infrastructure, technology and mining sectors. The action plan will address concerns such as deprivation of land and its associated rights, disregard for environmental safeguards, absence of meaningful participation of people affected by business operations, and a lack of an effective remedy for victims of human rights violations arising from such operations. The NAP will also reduce challenges related to discrimination against women and other vulnerable groups and threats to human rights and environmental activists.

8.4. Harnessing the transformative potential of digitalization

Global and local restrictions on the movement of people and goods and the provision of services to contain the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in lower consumption, loss of jobs and a reduction in remittances. The increased use of digital technologies during the COVID-19 lockdown, such as mobile money, online shopping, online education, digital disease surveillance and monitoring, and dissemination of public health messages underscore the great potential to support faster economic recovery and strengthen resilience against similar shocks. While Uganda has made strides in digital transformation, with increased access to digital connectivity and digitally enabled services, it continues to lag behind its peers. This denies the country the potential of digital-enabled socio-economic transformation. Through its transformative potential across various sectors and spheres of life, digitalization has the potential to propel Uganda towards achieving the SDGs. Harnessing it will enable new approaches to sustain livelihoods, support vulnerable people, reduce inequalities and improve public service delivery. These prospects remain promising as the government identifies the ICT sector as one of the fundamental opportunities to enable Uganda to achieve its Vision 2040. Uganda's resolve to embrace ICT is set out clearly in its digital vision,¹⁷² NDP III and the latest national Fourth Industrial Revolution strategy.¹⁷³

Realizing these opportunities will require: ensuring effective and harmonized policy implementation with a whole-of-government approach to reflect the focus on digital transformation of the economy; addressing the challenge of affordability of digital devices and data; effectively mainstreaming digitalization across all sectors of the economy; addressing deficiencies in digital skills; fully connecting rural Uganda; focusing on inclusivity in the digital transformation agenda; and enabling a vibrant digital innovation ecosystem that can deliver relevant solutions to community challenges.

8.5. Partnerships, coordination and collaboration

As emphasized in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, the government and the United Nations alone cannot achieve the SDGs and will need to leverage other small and large development actors. In Uganda, many of these non-state actors, such as business establishments, academia, civil society and philanthropists, have shown a willingness to collaborate with the government and the United Nations on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. To unlock this potential, the following areas will need attention: multi-sectoral integration of VNR commitments at central and local government levels and across sectors to harness intersectoral linkages that will help to achieve the SDGs; streamlining youth and innovation hubs through local government structures; strengthening public-private partnership models across sectors; strengthening the data revolution among civil society organizations, the private sector, academia and government and; embracing a collective policy advocacy agenda for the SDGs.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Uganda, Ministry of ICT & National Guidance (MoICTNG). "Digital Uganda Vision." Available at <https://ict.go.ug/initiatives/digital-uganda-vision/>

¹⁷³ Uganda, MoICTNG (undated). Uganda's National 4IR Strategy: A continental 4IR hub that enables a smart and connected Ugandan society. Available at <https://ict.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Executive-Summary-Ugandas-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf>

¹⁷⁴ Uganda National NGO Forum (2021.) Progress on the Implementation of the 2020 Uganda Voluntary National Review Report Commitments. Available at <https://action4sd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Progress-Implementation-of-2020-VNR-Commitments.pdf>

An aerial photograph of a forest landscape. A dirt road winds through the trees, leading to a large, cleared area in the lower right. The forest is dense with green and yellowish trees. The cleared area is a mix of brown earth and some sparse vegetation.

CHAPTER 9:

**Risks to progress
on SDGs**

Uganda's journey to reach sustainable development faces potential risks that, if not mitigated, could hinder achievement of the SDGs. They include:

| Nature of Risk | Description / Analysis of Risk | Assessment | Impact |
|--|--|------------|--------|
| Natural disasters, environmental degradation, climate change and other socio-economic disasters and risks | Uganda faces risks of climate shocks such as floods, landslides, drought, famine, severe storms, wildfires, zoonotic diseases and pests with a negative impact on economic production and productivity, thus affecting household livelihoods. They will also have serious consequences on food security. The country is also vulnerable to the increased frequency of outbreaks and spread of diseases such as Ebola and COVID-19. Such disasters and shocks have destructive impacts on investment and economic transformation in many parts of the country and could jeopardize the achievement of SDGs. | High | High |
| Poor economic growth and increased inequalities | These pose social, economic and environmental threats. COVID-19 will worsen unemployment and loss of income and livelihoods in the short, medium and long-term across the country and in all sectors. Uganda is at risk of slow and unequal economic growth and shared prosperity, reduced FDI, limited creation of decent jobs for youth and women, and food insecurity. As noted above, many vulnerable groups could be left behind. | High | High |
| Land disputes and ethnic conflicts | They remain a conflict driver across Uganda, especially in the Albertine Graben, central Uganda, Karamoja and Northern Uganda where the prospect of business interventions related to extractive and economic industries, timber, commercial farming and mining exist. In other areas such as the Mount Elgon region, Teso and southwestern Uganda, protracted conflicts pit local communities against government-led conservation efforts. In western Uganda, specifically in the Rwenzori subregion, three ethnic groups have been engaged in a long-standing ethno-political conflict over resources, including land. | Medium | Medium |
| Unresolved political tensions | These continue to prevail due to unsettled issues involving governance, electoral processes, human rights and rule of law and could negatively impact the country's development trajectory and erode its gains. | Medium | High |
| Dwindling resource allocation to basic social and protection sectors | These reductions could have further negative impacts on human development. Public expenditures on health, education and social protection are below the required investment threshold for a developing country like Uganda. The potential negative impacts on human development have been exacerbated by the two years of schooling lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic. | High | High |
| Expanding public debt | Unless the government strikes a balance between the need for public investment and efficient management of public finances, Uganda's economic growth could be negatively impacted. With the debt-to-GDP ratio expected to rise to 52.8 percent in FY2021/22, exceeding the EAC convergence threshold of 50 percent, this poses risks to sustainability of the financing landscape. Challenges related to accountability and inefficiency in the use of public resources also exist. ¹⁷⁵ | Medium | Low |

175 BoU. State of the Economy Report, June 2021.

CHAPTER 10:

Conclusion

The CCA concludes that Uganda's progress towards achievement of SDGs will involve both challenges and opportunities related to the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, risks also exist. If not mitigated, they could have adverse impacts on how the country achieves its development targets for the NDP III, the 2030 Agenda and Vision 2040. Uganda's development trajectory requires inclusive participation, comprehensive planning, INFFs, and effective monitoring and reporting. Meeting these requirements will depend on how Uganda addresses the data gaps for NDP III, SDGs, and other regional and global frameworks.

Comprehensive annual reviews of the CCA will provide an opportunity to update the national development context to inform United Nations policy and programming in the country. These updates will require data and statistics, which calls for continued support to strengthen the capacity of the National Statistical System so that it is better positioned to collect, analyse, manage and report on Uganda's progress in different aspects of sustainable development.

10. Annexes

Annex I: Abbreviation and Acronyms

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| AARR | Average Annual Rate of Reduction |
| ACHPR | African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights |
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| AfCFTA | African Continental Free Trade Area |
| BRICS | Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa |
| CCA | Common Country Analysis |
| CESCR | Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| COMESA | Common Market for East and Southern Africa |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women |
| CRPD | Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| DFA | Development Finance Assessment |
| EAC | East African Community |
| EPA | Economic Partnership Agreement |
| EOC | Equal Opportunities Commission |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FOCAC | Forum on China-Africa Cooperation |
| FY | Financial Year |
| GBV | Gender- Based Violence |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoU | Government of Uganda |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| IGAD | Inter-Government Authority on Development |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INFF | Integrated National Financing Framework |
| ISDG | Integrated Sustainable Development Goals |
| LDC | Least Developed Country |
| MGLSD | Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development |
| NAPs | National Action Plan |
| NDPI | First National Development Plan |
| NDPII | Second National Development Plan |
| NDPIII | Third National Development Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NRM | National Resistance Movement |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| PWDs | People with Disabilities |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender-Based Violence |
| SSA | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| SSC | South-South Cooperation |
| TICAD | Tokyo International Conference on African Development |
| TrC | Triangular Cooperation |
| UBOS | Uganda Bureau of Statistics |
| UGX | Uganda Shilling |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UDHS | Uganda Demographic and Health Survey |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNSDCF | United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework |
| UPF | Uganda Police Force |
| VAWG | Violence Against women and Girls |
| VNR | Voluntary National Review |
| WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |



**UNITED
NATIONS
UGANDA**



UN Resident Coordinator's Office
World Food Programme Offices
Plot 17-19 Clement Hill Road
Kampala, Uganda