



Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025

United Nations Development Programme

Uganda Country Office

Rethinking and rebalancing economic, political, social and environmental systems to become inclusive and sustainable.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPD	Country Programme Document
CO	Country Office
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GES	Gender Equality Strategy
GES-Ps	Gender Equality Seal for Private Sector
GES-Pi	Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions
MDAs	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development
NDP	National Development Plan
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
PWDs	Persons With Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VACiS	Violence Against Children in School
WROs	Women Rights Organisations

1.0 BACKGROUND

Attaining human development requires multifaceted approaches that encompass not only economic prosperity but also improve people's well-being by ensuring an equitable, sustainable and stable planet and which aims to greater wellbeing for all. Gender inequality remains one of the most pervasive forms of discrimination in Uganda. While gender inequalities can affect anyone, impeding global progress towards achieving sustainable development, it is women who face the most discrimination. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) recognizes that sustainable human development will not be fully achieved unless women and girls are able to contribute to their societies, on an equal basis with men and boys. As such, gender equality is integral to all of UNDP's efforts to support countries expand people's choices, realize a just and sustainable world, and achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In August 2022, UNDP launched its corporate Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025, focusing on transforming economic, social and political systems that generate and perpetuate gender inequalities and disempowerment of women and girls. Country Offices (COs) are required to develop or upgrade their CO gender equality strategies to enable operationalization of the corporate strategy. With the expiring of the last Gender Strategy 2018-2021, UNDP in Uganda has developed a Gender Equality Strategy (2022-2025), aligned to UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, the Country Programme Document (CPD) - 2021-2025 and the corporate Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. Additionally, the strategy is informed by the third National Development Plan (NDP 3), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The CPD 2021-2025 prioritizes six interlinked and mutually reinforcing programmes —*Governance and Peace Strengthening; Inclusive and Sustainable Growth; Nature, Climate, Energy and Resilience*; two “enablers” – *Digitalization, Innovations and Smart Cities* and *Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Integration and Acceleration*; and one flagship programme on *Youth4Development*. In this CPD, UNDP commits to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and exclusion and adopt approaches that integrate gender equality into its programming to ensure sustainable impact. Thus, this Strategy provides a road map to elevate and integrate gender equality into all aspects of UNDP's work and helping to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The Strategy delineates UNDP commitment to:

- a) Strengthen UNDP interventions tackling structural changes that accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment.
- b) Strengthen the integration of gender equality into UNDP's work on the environment, energy and crisis response and recovery.
- c) Enhance the participation of women in democratic and inclusive governance.
- d) Better align UNDP programming with the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- e) Build upon institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming such as the Gender Equality Seal and the Gender Marker, which provide measurable standards and incentives to drive development progress.

Also, the Strategy describes how UNDP together with our partners, will pursue gender equality by supporting the Government, Private Sector and Civil Society shift systems and power structures that generate gender inequalities and women's disempowerment. It reflects on the importance of partnerships across the United Nations system to address the root causes of persistent gender inequalities, including discriminatory practices and social norms, and investing in dedicated gender

expertise and capacities, particularly in such areas as climate change and crisis recovery that are critical to the achievement of sustainable development but are too often addressed without a gender lens.

1.1 Context Analysis

Uganda's estimated total population is 43 million people, 51% of it being female and 49% is male¹. Majority of the population (71 percent) reside in rural areas while 29 percent reside in urban areas. Overall, Uganda is one of the youngest nations in the world with about 74² percent of the country's population under the age of 30, 22 percent are people aged 31-59 years and only 4 percent are aged 60 years and above. Government of Uganda considers gender equality and women's empowerment as critical for the attainment of accelerated socio-economic transformation. It has made gains in its socio-economic development, maintained peace and stability for over 3-decades and is on course to become an upper middle-income country by 2040. Its economy more than doubled from UGX 64 trillion in FY2010/11 to UGX 162.12 trillion in FY2021/22³ in nominal terms. The country has made some advancements towards the attainment of gender parity and narrowed gender gaps in the economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment spheres. Uganda's female labour force participation rates historically have been higher than those in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, which tends to have higher rates than other developing regions. Women comprise 40 percent of all business owners – making Uganda one of seven countries in the world to achieve gender parity in the rate of entrepreneurial activity. Women also fare relatively well in financial inclusion: in 2019/2020, 49 percent of Ugandan women had access to some form of financial service, compared to 57 percent of Ugandan men.

The country has also ratified important international gender equality instruments and commitments and put in place legal frameworks to advance Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). The 1995 Uganda Constitution guarantees equality of women and men before the law⁴, promotes affirmative actions⁵ for women and other marginalised groups and provides for the rights of women⁶. The Vision 2040 prioritizes gender equality as a cross-cutting enabler for socio-economic transformation and notes the persistent gender inequalities in access to and control over productive resources such as land; limited share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sectors; sexual and gender-based violence and limited participation in household, community and national decision-making⁷. The Third National Development Plan (NDP) III which integrates the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), has a goal of *"Increasing Household Incomes and Improved Quality of Life of Ugandans"* with gender equality considered as one of the crosscutting issues. The Succession Amendment Bill was passed by the 11th Parliament and there are on-going efforts to lobby for passage of the Marriage Bill, Sexual Offences Bill and National Legal Aid Bill.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) developed the National Policy on Elimination of Gender Based Violence, to address the critical problem of GBV in Uganda, while the Equal Opportunities Commission [EOC] produces the annual State of Equal Opportunities in the country as well as Gender and Equity compacts for MDAs tracking the country's progress towards improving livelihood and wellbeing of the most vulnerable. Based on EOC's assessment, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) issues the Gender and Equity Compliance Certificate for MDAs. In 2020, Government produced the 8th and 9th UN CEDAW⁸ periodic reports. Progress has been made in representation and participation of women in national politics as is

¹ 11_2022NLF5_2021_main_report.pdf (ubos.org)

² 52% are children aged 0-17 years and 22% are youth of 18-30 years.

³ MFPED, Background to the Budget 2022/23

⁴ Article 21;

⁵ Article 32;

⁶ Article 33

⁷ GOU, 2014. Vision 2040, National Planning Authority, Kampala.

⁸ Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

guaranteed by the national Constitution of 1995, the Parliamentary Elections Act (2005) and the Local Government Act (1997). Women in Uganda hold 46% of local government positions, 33% of parliamentary seats and 43% of the cabinet positions. Global Gender Gap Index scored Uganda 0.724⁹ in 2022 up from 0.717 in 2020¹⁰. Different sectors of Government produce 3–5-year sector investment plans, while MDAs are obliged to establish sector-specific gender policies/strategies to guide gender mainstreaming in their work.

Notwithstanding this progress, gaps remain in the economic, political, and social inclusion of women in the development process which expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Uganda has a relatively high representation of women in political leadership, the women's level of influence is not commensurate with their numbers. The high level of political inclusion of women is however not reflected at the Women Economic Empowerment, Collectives, and Gender Integration in Uganda's sub-national level. Some of the critical structural barriers to gender equality in Uganda include:

1. **Entrenched social norms and practices** - Uganda, is still a patriarchal society with varied social and cultural norms, beliefs, practices and attitudes that continue to undermine the situation and position of women and girls in society. The NDP III outlines the different manifestations of these norms, including (i) *the unbalanced power relations between women and men, girls and boys in public and private spheres, at household, community and national levels*, reinforced by statistics from Uganda's Electoral Commission which indicate that only 5 out of the 146 district chairpersons are female, only one is female city mayor out of ten city mayors and only 1 out of 31 municipalities has a female mayor. (ii) *gender stereotyping and male bias*, (iii) *the widespread acceptance of violence as an appropriate method of resolving spousal conflict*; (iv) *men having a right, gained through payment of bride price, to exert power and control over women, including through violence*; (v) *the persistence of early (child) marriage for girls under 18, while men are expected to marry later*, despite the legal marriage age for males and females being 18; (vi) *that domestic "care" tasks are women's work*; (vii) *that land belongs to men and that women's access is mediated through men*; and (viii) *persistent discrimination against the girl child and preference for sons*, driving the worst forms of gender-based violence in in some parts of Uganda's communities and refugee settlements.

Women and girls living with disabilities and/or HIV/AIDS, sex workers, refugee women/widows and girls, are among the specific groups of women that experience multiple discrimination based on gender, age, class and whether located in rural or urban, resettlement or hosting areas. In other instances, while most laws, policies and programmes outlaw any forms of discrimination for people living with disabilities (PWDs), women and girls living with disabilities face a host of abuses at the hands of their families, communities and the state¹¹. Most PWDs and their households have lower standards of living, face higher rates of violence and discrimination¹² and are more likely to live in poverty¹³ in comparison to the temporary abled-bodied people. It is also common to find widows and their girl children being denied inheritance rights and control over land and property upon the demise of a husband and/or father.

2. **Policy implementation gaps** – the numerous gender-responsive legal, policy and institutional frameworks established are not consistently enforced, largely due to MDAs lacking adequate funding and human resources to implement gender policies, limited knowledge in gender and equity programming and insufficient gender-disaggregated data¹⁴. This means that women's legal

⁹ World Economic Forum, 2022, Global Gender Gap Report

¹⁰ World Economic Forum, 2020, Global Gender Gap Report

¹¹ National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda [NUWODU], 2020: Policy Brief on Inclusion of Women and Girls with Disabilities In Development Programmes In Their Communities.

¹² EU-United Nations, December 2018: Spotlight Initiative, Country Programme Document Uganda.

¹³ Republic of Uganda [2019]: The State of Uganda Population Report, 2019; "Promote Social Protection: Ensure Equity and Equality in harnessing the Demographic Dividend".

¹⁴ Source: Budget Framework FY 2020/21

status is precarious, their capacity as economic agents is limited, and their rights are not effectively guaranteed. Much of the gender equality achievements in Uganda is formal equality (adoption of laws and policies for treating women and men equally), and not substantive equality, which focuses on visibility of development results to transform women's and girls' disadvantaged position relative to men and boys. The NDP III has 20 programmes designed to deliver results and each one is expected to integrate the country's commitments to regional and international development frameworks, including cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and inclusion of marginalized groups and regions. A mid-term review of NDP III was concluded, although assessment of cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality, is on-going and its findings will assist in understanding the extent to which gender equality issues have been integrated and implemented.

Local Governments [LGs], with a third of women representatives on district, sub-county, municipal and town councils and a specific department for community development (responsible for women and children's affairs), gender-responsive planning and budgeting is limited due to low gender technical capacities and local-revenue sources to identify, prioritize, integrate and implement gender issues in development and humanitarian-contexts. *Women Rights Organisations* [WROs] who have been instrumental in promoting women's rights and gender equality, have been weakened by limited donor funding, staff turnover and the State rules and regulations regarding their registration status, choice of locations for their interventions, implementation models and the targeted beneficiaries.

3. **Rising gender inequality in economic empowerment** - while the country has made strides in closing the rising inequalities in employment at 48%, (females at 39 percent and males at 58 percent) and in increasing women's entrepreneurship, gender inequality in economic empowerment and economic outcomes remains a concern¹⁵. In 2020, UNDP Uganda's report (2020)¹⁶ on the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic revealed that women, youth, elderly and people with disabilities and chronic conditions, were most at risk of falling into extreme poverty arising and overburden of unpaid care work due to lockdown wave of work stoppages and business closures. Productivity remains low, especially in the agriculture sector which employs the bulk of the workforce. Uganda's Finance Ministry reported that 20.3% of Ugandans were poor, an increase from 18.9% before the COVID-19 pandemic. Other gender inequalities inhibiting women's economic empowerment relate to young women and girls lagging behind young men and boys in accessing available job opportunities. The National Labour Force Survey, 2022, shows a youth unemployment rate at 17 percent (20 percent for females and 14 percent for males), up from 13 percent in 2016/17. Gender (and regional) disparities in access to and utilization of infrastructure, technologies and digital literacy, particularly for innovation, business development and/or educational attainment remain a big challenge.
4. **Financing the institutional framework for gender mainstreaming is limited** – the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) plays a lead political and technical role in mainstreaming gender into government policy and programming, together with gender focal persons and units in different MDAs. While financing for gender equality has been institutionalised through gender provisions¹⁷ of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, government's performance on Gender and Equity specific interventions across financial years

¹⁵ Uganda Economic Update 18th Edition: Putting Women at the Centre of Uganda's Economic Revival December 2021.

¹⁶ UNDP, 2020: Leaving no one behind: From the Covid-19 response to recovery and resilience building. Analysis of the socioeconomic impact of Covid-19 in Uganda <https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/un-socioeconomic-impact-report-of-covid-19-in-uganda.html>

¹⁷ The Act states that a Gender and Equity Certificate (GEC), issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EoC), has to be obtained by a ministry, with technical guidance from Ministry of Finance, after including gender-allocations in annual policy statements and budget framework papers. This provided a basis for integrating gender and equity into National and Local Government planning guidelines to facilitate implementation, oversight and coordination by MDAs.

does not show significant progress on financial allocations. MGLSD has consistently been allocated less than 1% of the national budget to cover its entire portfolio¹⁸.

5. **Unequal capacities in adaptation to disasters** - in situations of natural and human-induced disasters, gender inequalities in access to decision-making spaces, services and economic opportunities are worsened. For instance, water scarcity in Karamoja sub-region has gendered variations; watering of crops is closely associated with women's role in household food provision whereas watering of animals is linked to men's role in securing health and safety of livestock for income and social security¹⁹. In times of drought, women as compared to men must cope with matching time and labour inputs to expectations of the season, asset sales for food purchases, micro-credit from informal sources and migratory employment to the urban informal sector. Floods in central and the eastern parts of Uganda have presented an increased risk of water-related diseases especially cholera, typhoid and malaria, which means a higher domestic care burden on women and girls, since they are traditionally expected to care for the sick at home and within health centres. Migration and displacement due to the risk of conflicts around natural resources, insurgencies and landslides, has triggered government and non-government responses that often lack a deeper gendered outlook to peacebuilding, resettlement and recovery processes, hence unequal access to energy, water, education and health services, particularly when families are living in overcrowded emergency or transitional homes.

6. **Gender-dimension of the Youth dividend** - with a median age of just under 16 years, and over 70 percent of population below the age of 30, Uganda is one of the youngest countries in the world. Young people aged between 18 – 30 years, majority of whom are female, constitute 19.1 percent of the country's populace and over 60 percent of the working age population. While Uganda's youth are a powerful and rich resource for the country's social economic transformation, they face considerable uncertainty concerning work, education, and their futures. 64 percent of the victims of climate change and disasters are young people. While the national unemployment rate is 11.9 percent, over 64 percent of the unemployed Ugandans are young people below 30 years. National statistics indicate youth unemployment at 17 percent with an estimated 600,000 – 700,000 young people entering the job market annually. However, only about 238,000 (34 percent) young people most of whom are male, are absorbed by the job market in largely lower-productivity activities such as subsistence agriculture, petty trade and the informal sector. As a result, there are more unemployed young women (20.4 percent) as compared to their male counterparts (13.5 percent).

¹⁸ DfID 2014. Institutional Capacity Assessment of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. DfID, Kampala, November

¹⁹ Buyana, K. (2015) Gender Dimensions in the Utilization and Management of Water for Production in Karamoja sub-region, FAO study (September 2015) Kampala Uganda

2.0 UNDP UGANDA GENDER STRATEGY 2022-2025

2.1 The Goal

To contribute to elimination of gender inequalities and inequities that perpetuate poverty, discrimination and gender-based violence which hinder realization of peace in communities and territories, to facilitate the acceleration of progress towards the 2030 Agenda.

2.2 Strategic Objectives

The strategy seeks to consolidate the Country Office's (CO) contribution to gender equality in Uganda, whilst guiding it to achieve more consistent, gender-transformative and integrated results across programme portfolios. In particular, the objectives of this strategy include:

Objective 1: To align the CO's strategic and programmatic goals with UNDP Global Gender agenda and the international/regional frameworks, (including the 2030 agenda and its associated SDGs and the Africa 2063 agenda).

The CO will support interventions of Government of Uganda, Private Sector and Civil Society to localize the international and regional frameworks on gender and women's empowerment, including the 2030 Agenda. The CO will support interventions aimed at shifting systems and power structures that generate gender inequalities and women's disempowerment so that there is equal opportunity to benefit from its three signature solutions.

Objective 2: To augment management, communication and accountability systems for the achievement of gender equality results.

The CO will identify and operationalize mechanisms to improve its coordination, communication, accountability, and oversight for gender mainstreaming and ensuring gender equality results are achieved. The CO will continuously make its working environment conducive for meaningful participation of female and male workers.

Objective 3: To strengthen institutional capacity within UNDP and its partners to deliver on gender equality.

The CO will invest in dedicated gender expertise and capacities, for self-sustained transformation (change in mindsets, attitudes and behaviours) in promoting gender equality. Additionally, the CO Staff and those of implementing partners will be equipped with skills and tools for self-awareness, gender analysis, gender-responsive programming, including use of sex-disaggregated data, gender statistics as well as assessment of gender transformative impact/potential of outcomes in programming. Further, the CO will further invest areas such as climate change and crisis recovery that are critical to the achievement of sustainable development but are too often addressed without a gender lens.

Objective 4: To achieve gender parity in staffing at the Country Office (CO).

The CO recognizes that no organization can reach its full potential when women are left behind or left out of decision-making spaces. Thus, it will endeavor to achieve gender parity at all levels through gender proactive recruitment, assessment, retention, recognition and evaluation of personnel and gender-transformational learning and professional development.

Objective 5: To mobilise financing for Gender Equality.

Improving funding for gender equality and women's rights will accelerate the pace of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Uganda and globally. The CO will intensify its partnership

engagement with Government, the private sector, bi-lateral and multi-lateral institutions to mobilise and prioritize financial allocation for gender-transformative interventions across the six programmes and operations of the UNDP Country Programme.

2.3 Gender equality priorities in UNDP Uganda Programmes and Operations

UNDP Uganda will leverage the inhouse expertise across board, including the Accelerator Lab methodologies to contribute to Government of Uganda's efforts of reducing the gender inequality index from 0.523 in 2019/2020 to 0.80 in 2024/25 (NDP III), through the priorities identified under the 6 programmes, as presented in the next section:

2.3.1 Governance and Peace Strengthening (GPS) Programme

UNDP Uganda, in alignment to the corporate Gender Equality Strategy, recognizes the multiple benefits of women's participation in governance – including restoration of trust in government, increased attention to social welfare, legal protection and transparency of government and business. Violence against women and children, sexual exploitation through trafficking of women and girls are common occurrences leading to absence of peace within households and communities in many parts of Uganda. Again, the continued influx of refugees creates not only an additional economic and social burden on the country, but it also leads to conflicts, including over natural resources, between refugees and host communities. The GPS programme priorities include:

- i) promotion of gender-responsive justice and realization of human rights, including but not limited to institutional capacity strengthening, gender equality and legal protection, male-engagement to eliminate harmful practices of masculinity, gender balance in conflict prevention and for social cohesion and policy reforms.
- ii) removal of structural barriers to women's social and economic empowerment, political participation and leadership, through research, targeted advocacy campaigns and civic engagement.
- iii) support development, resource mobilization and implementation of interventions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV).
- iv) improvement integration of gender equality into natural resource management and disaster preparedness to advance women's peace and security agenda.
- v) scale up the Gender Equality Seal Certification flagship initiative to eliminate discriminatory norms and practices in public administration and private sector entities (such as ministries, departments and agencies, public universities, schools, parliament, etc.).

2.3.2 Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (ISG) Programme

UNDP's corporate Gender Equality Strategy calls for continued support to women (particularly women in the informal economy and those facing multiple forms of discrimination) economic empowerment, employment, access to resources (such as digital skills and technologies) to enhance productivity and resilience to end multidimensional poverty. The ISG programme will prioritize:

- a) strengthening capacities to implement policies that advance equal access to productive assets such as affordable and appropriate financing, markets, and market information for both women and men.
- b) fostering multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate gender-responsive collaborative action across and within value chains.

- c) incentivizing innovation to facilitate the creation of productive, inclusive jobs for women and youth and provide a strong catalyst to advance the manufacturing agenda.
- d) supporting young entrepreneurs especially women, to grow and diversify their enterprises; as well as building the resilience of their businesses to shocks.

2.3.3 Nature, Climate, Energy and Resilience Programme

Building resilience of communities to a wide range of shocks and crises (such floods, droughts, lightning strikes, landslides, COVID-19, Ebola and related epidemics) requires empowerment of people (including women and girls, men and boys) to participate in decision-making and plan for disaster, take actions to save self and others during disaster, and take actions to recover from disaster. State and non-state institutions capacity must be built to support pre-disaster planning, emergency rescue systems and support community recovery and rebuilding after disaster. Under this programme, UNDP's work focuses on restoration of degraded forests and wetland ecosystems, restoration of ecosystems in refugee and hosting communities, promoting access to affordable and renewable energy options in underserved rural and urban areas. Thus, NCER programme priorities include:

- i. Capacity strengthening of actors/institutions for robust environmental governance and management of natural resources to enable equal participation of both women and men.
- ii. Boosting gender equitable citizen participation in environmental management and community resilience.
- iii. Support the Climate Promise to scale up sustainable energy solutions, innovative and inclusive financing mechanisms for low carbon technologies (for cooking and lighting to benefit small businesses, women and youth entrepreneurs) and implementation of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)
- iv. Enhancing gender-equitable access to and use of disaster and climate information, products and services for early warning and action.
- v. Establishing/strengthening/hosting a Gender and Energy Platform to promote innovative policy solutions for government and other stakeholders.

2.3.4 Digitalization, Innovations and Smart Cities (DISC) Programme

Despite the huge investments, Uganda still has one of the lowest internet penetration rates in Africa at 25% (NPA, 2020) and low mobile phone penetration rate of 49% of the population. The penetration rate of smartphone devices is at 16%. High costs of devices and internet access, digital illiteracy and limited IT skills, gaps in last mile ICT infrastructure and energy related issues (drivers) have created a huge urban-rural gap for internet use. There is gender-digital divide, demonstrated by the limited ownership of appropriate technology, low ICT literacy skills [NBFP, 2018/19-2022-23], low literacy levels and limited mobility outside the home among women and girls more than it is for men and boys. This is likely to slow down the digital transformation. The DISC programme seeks to accelerate digital transformation by promoting digital literacy and skills development; providing catalytic support in selected priority public services for leading production; ensuring social and governance sectors are gender-responsive and accelerating agri-business, tourism, trade, digital economy, creative industries, health and public sector effectiveness.

The DISC is an enabling programme for CO Country Programme Document (CPD). The programme uses the Accelerator Lab methodologies to deploy new and diverse ways to design gender responsive and gender-equality interventions, which include;

- i. Design a gender responsive National Digital Transformation Roadmap, with components for Big data utilization strategy and digital skilling programme targeting girls/women and boys/men.
- ii. Support and promote acquisition of subsidized internet access devices like phones for certain categories of citizens (e.g. women and the youths), or develop innovative digital; shared solutions to accelerate digital services.
- iii. support a gender responsive mass digital literacy and skilling for development of local content and STEM education, targeting women and men, female and male youth.
- iv. Develop an e-learning platform for self-paced literacy program by the MSMEs and a labour market information system.
- v. Support the development of e-registries for Cooperatives, and SACCOs, small foreign traders and MSMEs.

2.3.5 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Integration and Acceleration Programme

The programme is focusing on the integration of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national development planning and implementation through analysis of the NDP III and Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPS), supporting government capacity building and alignment of planning and budget frameworks at national and sub-national levels, developing and implementing an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) and improvement of SDG data monitoring and evaluation systems. The programme priorities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment include;

- i) Support the integration of SDGs (including SDG 5) in national development processes and increase participation and visibility of women in the national development processes.
- ii) Support capacity building and training interventions to ensure gender equality, leadership and women's empowerment issues are furthered in the PIAPS.
- iii) Support production of key knowledge products/annual reports (the annual SDG Progress report, Multidimensional Poverty Index Report, Poverty Report and the Voluntary National Review (VNR), with a thorough analysis of gender equality in the country.
- iv) Leverage on UNDP Gender Equality Seal to promote gender equality and women empowerment in selected key institutions, e.g. National Planning Authority (NPA).

2.3.6 Youth 4Development (Y4D) Programme

Leveraging the potential of the youth is crucial for the social economic transformation Uganda aspires to attain by 2040. Through its Youth4Development Programme, UNDP aims to systematically foster youth engagement and employment through i) ensuring that young people, both male and female, are involved in decision making and are empowered to be the solution to the development needs of the country; and ii) supporting efforts to expand employment and livelihood opportunities for young men and women in Uganda.

UNDP has partnered with Government of Uganda, private sector and development agencies to co-create the much-needed gender-responsive and innovative solutions that accelerate the pace of jobs and livelihood opportunities' creation. The priority interventions for Y4B programme include:

- i) strengthening national capacities to promote gender-responsive employment intensive growth and mainstream youth employment in programmes and budgets.
- ii) supporting youth-led enterprises especially those owned by young women, to pilot novel ideas; equipping young women and men with i) practical entrepreneurial competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) necessary to start, run and grow a thriving business; and ii) skills to enhance their competitiveness in the job market.
- iii) building capacities of youth particularly young women to access financial services, markets, market information and other productive assets; and
- iv) deploying systematic and coordinated action to support the role of young people as active agents of change and partners in SDG implementation, monitoring and accountability.

2.3.7 Institutional transformation priorities

In recognition of existing and emerging global development challenges, UNDP Uganda underscores the importance of innovative solutions, organizational flexibility and continuous learning in responding to these challenges. The CO will establish and/or strengthen partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies to amplify gender equality agenda in Uganda. This is aimed at contributing to the transformation of legal, policy and social norms, and creating a sustainable impact on women's economic, social and political empowerment (UNDP CPD 2022/25).

The CO will invest in internal mechanisms to improve the work environment, increase staff capacity in understanding and applying gender knowledge from a systems perspective (which requires integrated and coordinated interventions/approaches, rather than working in silos) and meeting United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The institutional priorities will include;

- developing (and where necessary, in liaison with global Gender Team) appropriate initiatives to operationalize the seven (7) interconnected building blocks on institutional transformation for gender equality, as outlined in the corporate Gender Equality Strategy. The seven blocks include: leadership²⁰, integration²¹, continuous learning and innovation²², an equal and inclusive culture²³, matching ambition with financial resources²⁴, accountability²⁵ and communication²⁶.
- Strengthen its integrated approach to incorporate gender equality into its programming to ensure sustainable impact.
- Implement interventions to enable the CO to meet the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.
- invest in mentorship interventions for its staff, (especially female and youth) as well as generating and reporting using gender disaggregated data.

²⁰ Push for leadership that fosters listening, learning and new ways of working.

²¹ Build a gender architecture to move away from mechanical approaches to gender equality and towards dismantling structural barriers. E.g. creating a new network of gender specialists, especially feminist economists and experts on environment.

²² UNDP will harvest new knowledge and harness innovation to transform how we develop solutions for gender equality, creating learning labs to generate knowledge on topics such as inclusive economies.

²³ UNDP will demonstrate its firm commitment to a more inclusive, diverse and harmonious working environment – create male peer groups for reflection, mutual support and collective action.

²⁴ UNDP will increase its investments to achieve its ambitions on gender equality and women's empowerment – COs will identify, at design stage, at least one stand-alone gender specific component with at least 15% of the total resources allocated to this component; UNDP track 2 and track 3 funding, will progressively achieve 15% of allocations to advancing gender equality and/or empowering women (GEM.3); COs exploring innovative options of establishing an internal pool of resources within portfolios to finance gender capacities and strengthen programming; .

²⁵ UNDP will reinforce accountability mechanisms for gender equality – create a platform for dialogue with civil society and external experts to guide and track implementation of the gender strategy, establish gender data platforms to provide reliable data on UNDP's performance.

²⁶ UNDP will step up its communications efforts to frame public debates, steer policy and transform discriminatory norms, improve gender communications capacities to power more persuasive advocacy, including through new technologies.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Strategy outlines an implementation framework to guide the CO in its implementation, coordination and reporting on the various gender interventions supported. The Strategy outlines an implementation framework to guide the CO in its implementation, coordination and reporting on the various gender interventions supported. The Gender Focal Team (GFT) led by the Deputy Resident Representative will coordinate and provide oversight for delivery of the strategy. The CO will draw support from the Regional and global Teams on Gender, Nature, Climate and Energy and Innovation Labs to support implementation, reviews and reporting on this strategy. The CO will designate a Gender Specialist and Gender Focal Persons derived from all departments/units of the CO, to provide day today leadership to enhance effective implementation, increase knowledge on gender equality and scale up best practices for improved results.

For effective implementation of this Gender Equality Strategy, the CO will use a two-pronged approach namely, *gender mainstreaming* and *targeted/specific interventions* for gender equality. The two-pronged approach seeks to expand opportunities and spaces for women and men to participate equally and benefit from development interventions that aim at poverty reduction and sustainable development. *Gender mainstreaming* will entail integration of gender perspectives in core policies, systems, practices, processes and programmes, while *targeted/specific interventions* will involve specific interventions that are necessary for addressing unique interests, needs and priorities of either women or men which are in most cases overlooked under the gender mainstreaming approach.

UNDP Uganda will implement the Gender Equality Strategy (GES) working in collaboration and/or partnership with diverse stakeholders such as government ministries, departments and agencies, local governments, beneficiary groups/networks/associations, civil society, private sector, UN agencies, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors and select Gender Advisory groups and academia.

- (i) **Implementing partners and/or Responsible Parties** – will include government ministries, departments and agencies, civil society and private sector entities that receive technical and financial support from UNDP Uganda. These will be required to design and implement interventions that are aligned to the GES. They will participate in the review, monitoring and evaluation of the intervention results to assess extent of execution of the GES.
- (ii) **Beneficiaries** – are the diverse population groups benefitting from UNDP’s development interventions that are being implemented under the three (3) programme portfolios of Governance and Peace Strengthening, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth and Nature, Climate, Energy and Resilience.
- (iii) **United Nations Agencies contributing to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment** – including among others, UN Women, FAO, UNEP, UNFCCC, United Nations Energy, UNHCR, UNCDF, ILO and UN-IOM.
- (iv) **Partners that provide technical assistance and advise** – UNDP will reach out to national, regional and international institutions (such as the Global Climate Fund, Sustainable Energy for All, and global feminists networks, women rights networks, academia, research and policy think tanks to utilize their specific expertise in designing and implementing interventions that are required to operationalize and effectively implement this GES.

- (v) **Bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors supporting gender equality and women's empowerment** – UNDP Uganda commits to establish partnerships with international financial institutions, multilateral and bilateral agencies to unlock domestic public and private capital that is critical in transforming legal, policy and social norms and create sustainable impact on women's economic, social and political empowerment. Some of the Development partners that contribute to these areas include: the European Union, Norway, Japan, South Korea, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and South Africa to mention but a few.

3.1 Guiding Principles for operationalizing the Strategy

Implementation of this Gender Equality Strategy and accompanying Action Plan will be based on the following guiding principles:

Gender equality - will be an integral part of development processes supported by international and national partners. Therefore, this strategy mirrors UNDP's commitment to the elimination of gender inequalities in Uganda.

Affirmative action - will be useful in designing and delivering programmes that will contribute to addressing inequalities/imbances in accessing productive resources (such as land, finances, information, etc), power (active involvement /representation in decision-making at all levels) and opportunities arising out of historical imbalances in women's situation relative to men.

Human Rights - the strategy recognizes the importance of respecting human rights as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

Male Involvement - the strategy recognizes the involvement of men as allies and partners in dealing with unbalanced power relations, negative social norms and overcoming gender inequities and promoting gender equality.

Knowledge-based gender mainstreaming - this principle will focus on establishing a planning culture where gender disaggregated information is used to design, implement and evaluate UNDP's programmes.

Stakeholder participation: stakeholder participation has been globally recognized as an effective strategy in policy design, action planning and implementation. Therefore, UNDP – right from the initial stages of implementing the strategy – will meaningfully engage government agencies, CSOs, private sector companies and development partners in design, operationalization and evaluation of all programmes related to this strategy.

Annex 1: Definition of key terms and phrases

Gender	“Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in terms of responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over productive resources [e.g., land], as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.” ²⁷
Gender Equality	“Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration—recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a ‘women’s issue’ but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.” ²⁸
Gender equity	Refers to the creation of conditions of fairness that take into consideration the diversity of all people across all genders and identities—not despite their gender, but in response to their gender. Gender equity is necessary to achieve gender equality. T
Gender Mainstreaming	“It is a strategy of conceptualizing and assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the planning, budgeting, financing, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.” ²⁹
Gender responsive	Is programming that attempts to address the differential needs of men or women but do not address root causes of inequalities in their lives.
Gender sensitive	Being able to consider and address existing gender inequalities
Gender transformative	Being able to transform/change/shift unequal gender norms and their attendant behaviours, attitudes, cultural values, power structures and the roots of gender inequalities and discriminations.
Male engagement/ Men’s engagement	It is both a strategic and programmatic approach. As a strategic approach, it aims to shift gender norms and promote gender equity contributing to changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours for men and women. As a programmatic approach, it seeks to involve men and boys - as clients/beneficiaries; as partners on a programme/project; as agents of change- in actively promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.
Women’s Rights	<p>“The human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community.”³⁰</p> <p>“As defined in Article 1, ‘discrimination against women’ shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political,</p>

²⁷ OSAGI, 2001, ‘Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document

²⁸ ibid

²⁹ ECOSOC, 1997, ‘Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997’, A/52/3, chapter IV, ‘Special Session on Gender Mainstreaming’

³⁰ World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, A/CONF.157/23

	economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.” ³¹
Women’s Empowerment	<p>“Women’s empowerment has five components: Women’s sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources (economic empowerment); their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.”³²</p> <p>“The concept of empowerment is related to gender equality but distinct from it. The core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to control her own destiny. This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as those provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions. And to exercise agency, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence.”³³</p>
Gender Parity	“Equal numbers of men and women at all levels of an organization/institution/association/group etc. It must include significant participation of both men and women, particularly at senior levels. Gender parity is one of several integrated mechanisms for improving organizational effectiveness.” ³⁴
Gender Based Violence	<p>“Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men...Gender based violence, which impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination within the meaning of Article 1 of (CEDAW).”³⁵</p> <p>“...any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially associated differences between males and females. As such violence is based on socially ascribed differences. Gender-based violence includes, but it is not limited to sexual violence. While women and girls of all ages make up most of the victims, men and boys are also both direct and indirect victims. The effects of such violence are both physical and psychological and have long term detrimental consequences for both the survivors and their communities.”³⁶</p>
Accelerator Labs (Acc Labs)	<p>This is a network of 91 Labs in 115 countries globally. The network deploys new ways and diverse methods to addressing the different development challenges. Some of the approaches/methods include;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Intelligence (CI): this is a way of allowing or facilitating diverse large groups of people to gather and share their knowledge, skills, or data to create new intelligence or develop new solutions. • Systems Thinking: Systems thinking is a way of making sense of the complexity of the world by looking at it in terms of wholes and relationships rather than by splitting it down into its parts. It has been used as a way of exploring and developing effective action in complex contexts, enabling systems change. <p>The above methods and many others help the Acc Labs to make sense of the prevailing challenge, explore the various data, information about the challenge, scan the horizon to understand the key stakeholders in that space, map the solutions available to address the challenge, then test the most viable solutions through a portfolio of experiments or even just one experiment. After learning from the experiments, a strategy to scale the tested solution is implemented.</p> <p>Because it is a global network serving in 115 Countries, the Acc Labs learn from each other, and deploy solutions in the countries with a similar challenge but in the respective country context.</p>

³¹ CEDAW

³² UN Secretariat, Inter-agency Task Force on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and development’s Programme of Action, ‘Guidelines on Women’s Empowerment’

³³ Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, 2005, Taking action: achieving gender equality and empowering women

³⁴ UNDP Gender Parity Report 2007

³⁵ Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1992, General Recommendation 19

³⁶ ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, 2006, ‘Addressing Gender-based violence in Humanitarian Emergencies, ‘Gender-based violence and the role of the UN and its Member States’

Partners	Persons, groups, ordinary citizens, as well as institutions from both the Public and the Private sector with a stake in UNDP's activities and services; who are involved with or are affected and could be changed by the institutions services; including those with the power to help/ or hinder them.
Strategy	The series of carefully planned actions, activities, events and the harmonized institutional processes and procedures that aim at achieving them against set and well-defined goals.

Annex 2: UNDP Uganda Gender Equality Strategy Action Plan 2022-2025

Results Area	Key Actions		Budget estimate (USD)	Timeline			
				2022	2023	2024	2025
Organisational Culture 1a: CO designs, mobilises resources and implements gender transformative development project and interventions	1	Deepen scope of CO gender diagnostic work to inform CO programming.	80,000				
	2	Establish/ strengthen platforms for UNDP to participate and engage policy makers/development partners to prioritize initiatives on gender and women's empowerment.	100,000				
	3	Provide technical support for review of ProDocs to integrate and implement priority gender equality interventions and outcome indicators to promote UNDP's gender equality agenda.	Staff time				
	4	Develop and mobilise resources for a Gender Programme with cross practice projects in areas of Gender and Climate Change; Gender and Trade (Including positioning ACFTA; Gender Equality Seal- Private Sector/Public Institutions.	15,000,000 ³⁷				
	5	Through a sensitization campaign and training enhance gender balance in UNDP procurement processes.	Staff time 15,000				
	6	Support SMT to lobby for at least 15% of Track 2/3 funding for stand-alone gender equality interventions.	Staff time				
	7	Develop and implement a CO Capacity Development Plan on gender.	50,000				
	8	Provide technical support to prepare and implement an M&E plan that facilitates gender mainstreaming provisions in accordance with UNDP policies and strategies.	Staff time				
Organisational Culture 1b: Management, Communication and Accountability systems for the achievement of gender equality in place.	1	Strengthen Gender Focal team capacity to coordinate and oversee the mainstreaming of GEWE interventions in programs and operations.	100,000				
	2	Advocate and track integration of gender related results into PMDs of Senior Management, Programme Managers /Team Leaders	Staff time				
	3	Support update and implementation of the Communications Plan that integrates gender equality concerns.	Staff time				
	4	Develop at least one gender-related knowledge on annual basis	30,000				
	5	Update the GEWE link of CO website on a quarterly basis.	20,000				

³⁷ USD 5,000,000 for each programme

	6	Communicate ³⁸ UNDP's Corporate Gender Equality Strategy and progress on implementation among Staff, Implementing and Strategic partners	Staff time/ 40,000				
Gender Capacities at UNDP Uganda Country Office: Strengthened institutional capacity at CO and partners to deliver on gender equality and contribute to achievement of national, regional and international gender goals (e.g., SDGs, CEDAW, BFA, Africa Agenda 2063, etc).	1	Establish a mentorship intervention under each programme portfolio.	240,000 ³⁹				
	2	Conduct training sessions to build technical capacity of CO Implementing Partner Staff on gender transformative programming and use of gender mainstreaming tools to all staff and implementing partners.	100,000				
	3	Update and disseminate guidelines for gender-sensitive language to all CO and project staff,	Staff time				
	4	Develop and disseminate quarterly updates on Gender Situation and developments.	50,000				
Gender Parity in Staffing – ensure balanced personnel established in CO	1	Support Human Resource to undertake gender-balanced personnel recruitment, assessment, retention, recognition and evaluation.	Staff time				
	2	Support Human Resource to integrate and implement a gender balanced learning and professional development in the CO's talent development plan.	Staff time				
	3	Support Human Resource in preparation and integration of a gender induction tool into the CO induction booklet	Staff time				
	4	Lobby for at least 50% representation of women in CO's committees and decision-making positions.	Staff time				
Gender Financing increased for implementation of the Action Plan and Gender equality interventions	1	Engage RSC and Global Gender Team for technical & financial support in implementation of the Strategy Action Plan	1,000,000				
	2	UNDP engages Government, Private Sector, Bi/Multi-Lateral agencies and non-state actors to fund gender equality interventions.	40,000				
Total budget estimate			16,865,000				

³⁸ (e.g. via press articles, social media platforms, policy dialogues, feminist debates, knowledge products, etc).

³⁹ [10,000*6 progs*4 years]