



UNITED
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UGANDA

Common Country Analysis

UGANDA

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United Nations in Uganda



UNITED NATIONS MISSIONS AND REGIONAL ENTITIES BASED IN UGANDA



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Preparation of the Common Country Analysis

The initial United Nations (UN) Common Country Analysis (CCA) in 2020 was the result of a collaborative effort by resident and non-resident United Nations agencies working in Uganda. The CCA was based on an 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, young people and special groups, including persons with disabilities. The Team of Experts, set up by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), conducted background analytical work and prepared the first draft of the report, which was reviewed and informed by inputs and comments from heads and technical experts from various United Nations agencies. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office organized a two-day retreat for the Team of Experts to review and refine the draft CCA. The UNCT reviewed and approved the final report in June 2020.

The 2020 CCA described and analysed Uganda's political, socioeconomic and environmental situation and the factors that explain the status of the country's efforts to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (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 pursuit of sustainable development. Additionally, the CCA articulated challenges and opportunities to accelerate the achievement of Uganda's Third National Development Plan (NDP III) and the SDG targets.

The UNCT reviewed the initial CCA between September and December 2021, and again between September and December 2022. The objective of the annual updates is to take stock of the progress, emerging challenges, opportunities and risks that have an impact on Uganda's achievement of the SDGs. The updates are also intended to provide information on which to base changes to the joint work plans of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, support preparation of relevant joint UN programmes and ensure consistency in the policy advocacy messages. During the updates, the UN SDG Technical Working Group provided technical leadership on behalf of the UN Deputies Team and UNCT and useful inputs were received from technical experts in various UN agencies.

Public consultation and voices for SDGs

The UN system in Uganda developed platforms to engage the public and obtain feedback on SDG achievement and other sustainable development issues. These platforms were 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 achievement and issues affecting their lives. The content gathered by U-Report provided information for the second Voluntary National Review Report in 2020 and for preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit held in September 2021. The UN system in Uganda and the Government of Uganda used U-Report to gather and showcase a large number of young people's opinions on food systems in Uganda. About 941,720 responses were received and were combined with outcomes from other dialogues to inform Uganda's position at the summit and the country's food systems transformation plan for the next decade.¹ U-Report also provided an opportunity to familiarize young Ugandans across the country about the SDGs.

Uganda is scheduled to report its progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the 2024 High-level Political Forum, and there are plans to use U-Report to seek and incorporate a wide range of citizen voices into Uganda's 2024 Voluntary National Review Report. The challenge, therefore, is to make U-Report more accessible to all members of the public, especially people in marginalized and fragile regions and those in vulnerable groups.

¹ 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>.

Foreword

Uganda's impetus for sustainable development is enshrined in the 1995 Constitution and the Government of Uganda's Vision 2040. Launched in 2013, Vision 2040 aims to transform Uganda from a "peasant country" to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years.

The Government implements this vision through the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework, delivered by three 10-year development plans and six five-year National Development Plans. The overarching goal of the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII), for the period 2020/21–2024/25, is to increase household incomes and improve the quality of life of Ugandans. This is to be realized through resource-led sustainable industrialization, focusing on key growth opportunities in agriculture, tourism, oil and gas, and minerals.

The Government's pledge to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been evidenced by its active participation and reporting in the High-Level Political Forum 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 the NDPIII is used to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The integrated SDG simulation model identified governance, environment and industry as key SDG accelerators for Uganda. To fully realize this acceleration potential, investments in health, education and infrastructure



would be necessary in addition to investment in the three SDG accelerators. Besides the Global Goals, the country is fully committed to regional frameworks, such as the African Union Agenda 2063, East African Community Vision 2050, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa, and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Despite the Government's commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda, there are major challenges and risks to Uganda's development trajectory, many of which have been exacerbated by factors related to political conflicts with global impacts, disease outbreaks, climate change and environmental disasters. Positive economic growth rates have been registered over the years but there has been a 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 COVID-19 induced measures led to loss of jobs, especially for youth and women involved in informal micro and small enterprises, which pushed many into poverty.

The COVID-19 crisis also had great impacts on the human capital development sectors of health and education that were already facing significant inadequacies. The prolonged closure of schools, which were only reopened in January 2022 after nearly two years of being closed, had severe implications as the majority of the children were unable to engage in learning activities outside the school environment. As a result of school closures, cases of teenage pregnancy increased drastically which has consequences for current and future human development and poverty reduction efforts. The limited investments in 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 the 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) is our independent, impartial and collective assessment of Uganda's situation. It underlines and informs the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and its priorities. The CCA examines the progress, gaps, bottlenecks and opportunities against the country's commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda and upholding UN norms and standards, and the principles of the UN Charter.

In order to understand the context in which we operate, to serve the country better, the CCA is an ongoing analytical function of the United Nations Country Team in Uganda. 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 the private sector. The analysis has been updated in 2022 to reflect the changes in Uganda's development context and ensure the CCA's usefulness throughout the 2021-2025 programming cycle of the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, including in the annual review of the Joint Work Plans.



Susan Ngongi-Namondo
UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda

“ 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.

Executive Summary

The initial United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) 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 CCA was to inform the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) on the preparation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021–2025.

Since 2020, several changes have occurred that impact the development landscape in Uganda and UNCT programming. Thus, the CCA has been updated annually to reflect those changes and incorporate new data. The present report was updated between September and December 2022 and analyses the progress, gaps and challenges that impact Uganda's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also identifies opportunities that could accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Uganda.

The Government's Uganda Vision 2040, launched in 2013, aims to transform Uganda from a "peasant society" to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. The transformation is to be implemented through the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework that is articulated in three 10-year development plans and six five-year National Development Plans. The country is implementing its Third National Development Plan (NDPIII), which covers the period 2020/21 to 2024/25,² and whose overarching goal is to increase Ugandans' household incomes and improve their quality of life. This goal 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 the NDPIII as the vehicle to help accelerate achievement of the SDGs. The NDPIII also addresses regional aspirations and commitments, such as those in the African Union Agenda 2063, East African Community Vision 2050, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa, and the African Continental Free Trade Area. The Government used the integrated Sustainable Development Goals simulation model to analyse and identify the SDG accelerators that should guide prioritization of the Goals in national development planning frameworks. The simulation identified governance, environment and industry as key SDG accelerators for Uganda.

According to the Sustainable Development Report 2022³, Uganda's ranking has been progressing marginally. In 2022, it improved to 136 out of 163 countries (with an average score of 54.9) from 140 out of 165 countries (with an average score of 53.5) in 2021. The country is on track to achieve Goal 13 on climate action and Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production. There is moderate improvement on Goals 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9, but stagnation on Goals 1, 5, 6, 11, 15, 16 and 17.

² Uganda, National Planning Authority (NPA), *Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25 (2020)*. Available at www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NDPIII-Finale_Compressed.pdf.

³ Jeffrey D. Sachs and others, *Sustainable Development Report 2022: From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond (2022)*. Available at: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>.

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There is not sufficient information to adequately measure progress on Goals 4, 10 and 14. Uganda was able to report on only 92 (46 percent) out of the 201 applicable indicators in its 2020 Voluntary National Review.⁴ In 2022, the number of indicators for which data is available had increased to 119 (59 percent).⁵

However, this status is still inadequate and some of the available data are based on proxy indicators, which do not adequately satisfy the SDG data needs. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, a series of economic and social developments have affected the SDGs in Uganda. Findings of a joint UN socioeconomic impact report on COVID-19, prepared in June 2020, revealed that the pandemic had had multiple short, medium and long-term impacts and had worsened social and economic vulnerabilities. These impacts were seen in the economy, poverty reduction efforts, employment, livelihoods and the sustainable use of natural resources.⁶

Some of the impacts revealed include an increased incidence of poverty, an increased incidence of domestic violence, a surge in crime rates, increased online child sexual exploitation and abuse, and reduced access to emergency sexual and reproductive health services. The preventive measures that the Government took in 2020 and 2021, including lockdowns and the closure of educational institutions and business units, slowed progress towards achieving national, regional and global sustainable development targets.

⁴ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister, Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development, (2020). Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26352VNR_2020_Uganda_Report.pdf.

⁵ Uganda, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Status of Sustainable Development Goals Data and Statistics in Uganda (2022). Available at <https://uganda.un.org/en/219513-status-sustainable-development-goals-data-and-statistics-uganda>.

⁶ 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.

⁷ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 2021–22: Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World (2022).

In 2022, the conflict in Ukraine posed a significant threat to Uganda's development trajectory and recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The conflict led to a rise in the cost for food, gasoline and fertilizers as well as greater scarcity of other goods and services which had implications on poverty and inequality.

In 2022, the conflict in Ukraine posed a significant threat to Uganda's development trajectory and recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The conflict led to a rise in the cost for food, gasoline and fertilizers as well as greater scarcity of other goods and services which had implications on poverty and inequality. The 2022 Ebola Virus Disease outbreak was another major macroeconomic shock for the country.

The Ebola-related restrictions and negative outcome expectations had negative effects on human development,⁷ including a loss in gross domestic product, a risk to food security, a decline in employment and livelihoods, and a drop in foreign exchange resulting from a downturn in foreign investment and tourism related activities.

These negative impacts have had significant effects on vulnerable groups, such as women, young people, the elderly, refugees and marginalized groups, who were still recovering from the social and economic effects of COVID-19.

Climate shocks and their impacts increased in 2022 as households experienced harsh weather conditions such as drought, flooding or crop pests. Droughts and delayed rainfall were more frequent during the year and resulted in the loss of crops leading to food insecurity. Food insecurity was higher in the Eastern and Northern regions, attributable partly to weather effects.

Uganda's reliance on a rudimentary agricultural practice, most of which is for subsistence purposes, has continued to deepen the vulnerability to weather and climate-related shocks, leading to decreased productivity and affecting food security, nutrition, and incomes.

For the short and medium term, attention will have to focus on:

- ✿ Building resilience for all segments of the population to withstand all kinds of shocks, including global and climate-related ones;
- ✿ Promoting environmental sustainability, investment in climate-smart agriculture, agroforestry, water for production and regenerative agriculture to protect the environment and increase productivity;
- ✿ Investing in building a stronger public health and health administration system that can meet the current and future health-care needs as well as endure any health-related shocks;
- ✿ Building capacity for disaster preparedness and response;
- ✿ Ensuring that population groups that are likely to be left behind are strategically targeted.

Success in these efforts needs a stronger and more effective, inclusive and just governance system as well as effective partnerships with all development actors.



Cattle herd. Northern Uganda
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Lake Bunyonyi, Western Uganda
© Rod Waddington

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 the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda in the west. It is a member of the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), and has ratified the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Uganda is home to 56 tribes and around nine Indigenous communities.



241,037 km²
Uganda's total
land area



53 percent of Ugandans
below the age of 18 and
76 percent below the
age of 30



About 75 percent of
the population live in
rural areas.

01

The country is located on the Equator and has 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. Lake Victoria is the second biggest freshwater lake in the world, covering 68,100 km². The country also contains and benefits from rivers – including the Nile River – and their products. A range of medicinal plants and crops with high nutritional value grow throughout the country and multiple species of animals are present. Uganda has a favourable climate and is characterized by high biodiversity.

Uganda has a great opportunity to accelerate its socioeconomic transformation through strategic investments in health, education, skills development, decent employment and the promotion of information and communication technologies (ICT) and innovation.

Uganda's land area totals 241,037 km² and its population is projected to reach 45.5 million people in 2023.⁸ This population is the second youngest in the world, with 53 percent of Ugandans below the age of 18 and 76 percent below the age of 30. These demographics imply a growing and youthful labour force.⁹ About 75 percent of the population live in rural areas. The population growth rate is high – 3 percent – and the total fertility rate is five 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 2040.¹⁰ Almost one third of households are headed by women and these experience higher rates of poverty.

Uganda is undergoing a high rate of urbanization – 5.3 percent – resulting in informal settlements making up 48 percent of the country's urban population.¹¹ The large and growing youthful population creates both an opportunity and a challenge. Uganda has a great opportunity to accelerate its socioeconomic transformation through strategic investments in health, education, skills development, decent employment and the promotion of information and communication technologies (ICT) and innovation. However, if the youth bulge is not well planned for through strategic and targeted policy interventions, it is likely to create socioeconomic challenges and the country may not reap the demographic dividend.

Uganda gained its independence from Great Britain in 1962. The country's current political landscape is largely defined by the key event in 1986 when the National Resistance Movement (NRM), led by President Yoweri Tibuhaburwa Museveni, rose to power. Even though the 2005 constitutional referendum introduced a multiparty system, the NRM has remained the dominant political party since 1986. Other key political parties include the National Unity Platform, Forum for Democratic Change and the Democratic Party. The country has a presidential system of government with a parliament made up of 556 members.

⁸ See www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/20/

⁹ Uganda, UBOS, 2020 Statistical Abstract (2020).

¹⁰ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2019". Available at <https://population.un.org/wpp/>.

¹¹ World Bank Data, "United Nations Human Settlements Program". Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>.

These members include 353 constituency representatives, 146 district woman representatives, 10 Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces representatives (three of whom are women); five representatives of the youth (two of whom are female), five representatives of persons with disabilities (PWDs) (three of whom are women), five representatives of workers (two of whom are women), five representatives of the elderly (two of whom are women) and 27 ex-officio members. The total female representation for women in Parliament is 188 (34 percent) and women comprise 43 percent of the Cabinet. As in previous parliaments under the multiparty system, NRM representatives are the majority, making it easy for the party to push through its agenda in Parliament.



Chapter 2: National Commitment to the 2030 Agenda

02

2.1 Uganda Vision 2040 for sustainable development

Launched in 2013, the Ugandan Government's Vision 2040¹² aims to transform Uganda from a "peasant society" to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. The vision is implemented through the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework, articulated in three 10-year development plans and six five-year National Development Plans. The country is currently implementing its Third National Development Plan (NDP III) which covers the period 2020/21 to 2024/25,¹³ and has the goal to increase Ugandans' household incomes and improve their quality of life. This goal 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 for 2020, the country is focusing on increasing productivity and accelerating growth to propel the economy into lower middle-income status, with per capita gross domestic product (GDP) equivalent to US\$1,198, by 2025.

The NDP III is 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 the brain drain stifling innovation, research and entrepreneurship capacity.

The NDP III objectives include:

1. Enhanced value addition in key growth opportunities;
2. Strengthened private sector to create jobs;
3. Consolidated and increased stock and quality of productive infrastructure;
4. Enhanced productivity and social well-being of the population;
5. Strengthened role of the state in guiding and facilitating development.

The NDP III presents a shift from the previous two national development plans. The key changes include: (i) introducing a programmatic approach to service delivery and eliminating the previous silo approach, in an effort to enhance synergies across sectors and actors; (ii) increasing the state's role – through strategic investments, 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 (iv) strengthening the focus on digitalization in service delivery to increase efficiency and reduce corruption.

The NDP III identifies 20 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
- Energy development
- Digital transformation
- Sustainable urbanization and housing
- Human capital development

¹² Uganda, Office of the President, *Uganda Vision 2040 (2021)*. Available at www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/VISION-2040.pdf

¹³ Uganda, NPA, *Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25 (2020)*. Available at www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NDP-III-Finale_Compressed.pdf.

- Innovation, technology development and transfer
- Community mobilization and mindset
- Governance and security
- Public sector transformation
- Regional development
- Development plan implementation
- Administration of justice
- Legislation, oversight and representation

2.2 The Third National Development Plan: a platform for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals

Uganda held the Presidency of the United Nations General Assembly when Member States adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015. The country was one of the first to participate in the first High-Level Political Forum in 2016, developing the SDG implementation readiness report at that time.¹⁴ The report indicated significant alignment between the SDGs and the Second National Development Plan.

The NDP III focuses on improving household incomes and welfare, achieving balanced development across the country's regions using the Parish Development Model as a vehicle and addressing the previous silo approach by taking programmatic approaches to planning and budgeting.

The NDP III focuses on improving household incomes and welfare, achieving balanced development across the country's regions using the Parish Development Model as a vehicle and addressing the previous silo approach by taking programmatic

approaches to planning and budgeting.

The results framework of the NDP III is fully aligned to the 2030 Agenda, including the SDG indicators. The National Planning Authority will work with stakeholders to align national and local government level development plans to the NDP III.¹⁵ To harmonize efforts and 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. The framework sets out and allocates responsibility for coordination, monitoring and reporting; planning and mainstreaming; resource mobilization and financing; data systems; and communication and popularization. For 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 higher political level, Parliament has set up the Parliamentary Forum on SDGs, which advocates for implementation of and reporting on the 2030 Agenda. The Prime Minister also appointed the Minister for General Duties as the Cabinet's focal point on issues related to the achievement of the SDGs.

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 SDG coordination architecture. This coordination structure has been the entry point for harmonized UN support to the Government on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

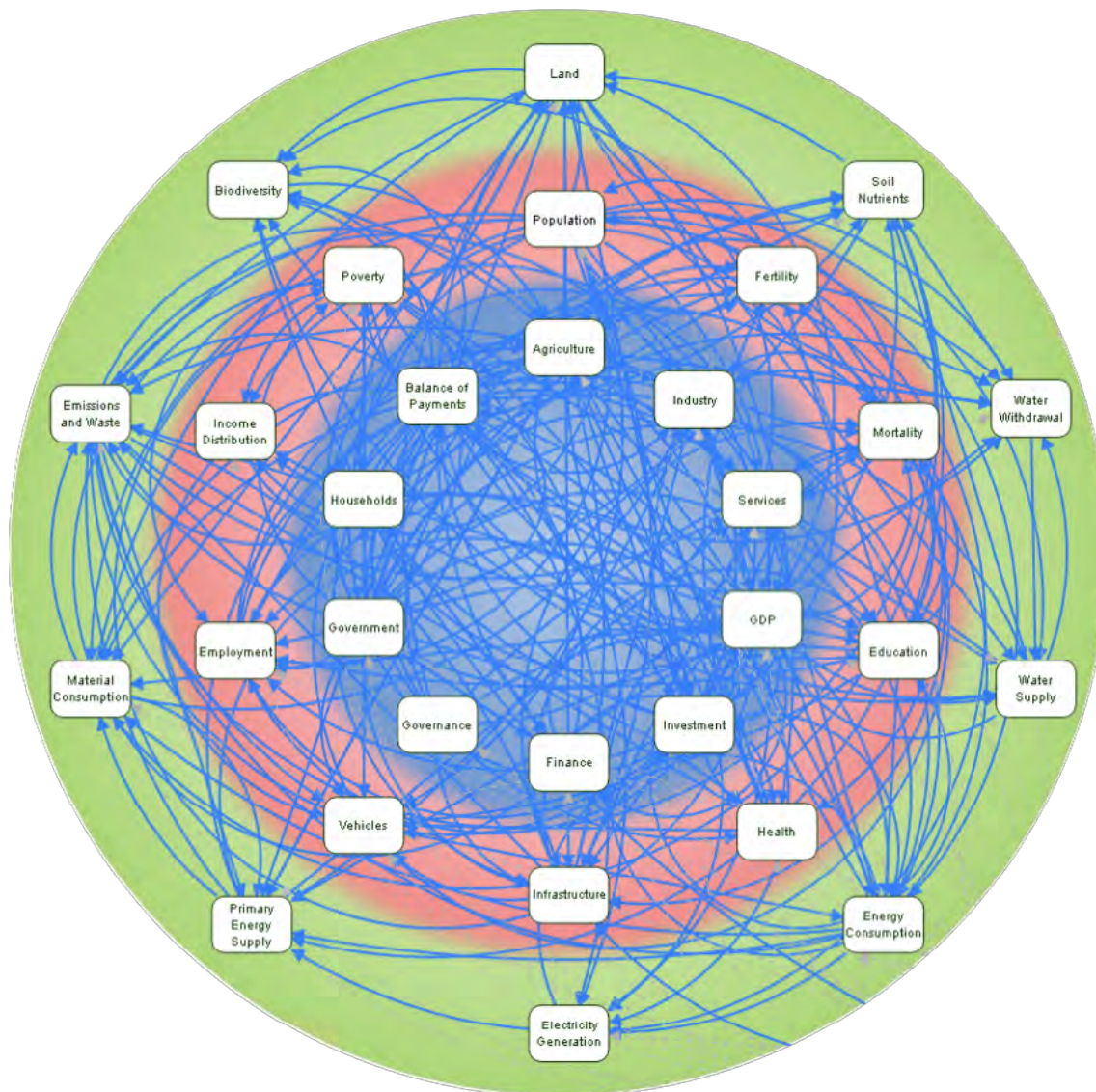
¹⁴ Uganda, NPA and UNDP, *Review Report on Uganda's Readiness for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda (2016)*. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10689Uganda%20Review%20Report_CDs1.pdf.

¹⁵ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UN System in Uganda, *Roadmap for Creating an Enabling Environment for Delivering on SDGs in Uganda (2018)*. Available at www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/human_development/Roadmap_for_creating_an_enabling_environment_for_delivering_on_SDGs_in_Uganda.html.

To guide SDG priority-setting in national development planning, the Government used the integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) simulation model to analyse and identify SDG accelerators (see figure 1). The simulation identified governance, environment and industry as SDG

accelerators for Uganda as they are linked to 12 of the 18 NDPIII programmes. The analysis also noted that the human capital development sectors of health, education, and water and sanitation are vital to attaining the SDGs.

Figure 1: A conceptual overview of the iSDG model for Uganda¹⁶



Source: National Planning Authority (2020)

¹⁶ 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, NPA, Dynamic Analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals: Achieving the SDGs with Uganda's Third National Development Plan (2020). Available at <http://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/library/-isdg-report.html>.

The 30 “modules” shown in figure 1, are divided into economic (in the blue inner circle), social (in the orange) and environmental (in the green).

Economic modules include production areas, such as agriculture, industry and services. These production areas are characterized by an expanded Cobb-Douglas production function¹⁷ with inputs of resources, labour and capital, and the constant total factor productivity (the ratio of output to total input).

Social modules include 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. These modules consider, for example, the interaction among income, health care, 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. The environmental modules cover changes in land use (for example from forest to agricultural or settlement land), resource stocks (such as fish stocks and forest cover) and the quality of soil based on its nutrient level, and assess the impact of these changes on other modules, such as agricultural productivity, nutrition and biodiversity.

¹⁷ A Cobb-Douglas production function models the relationship between production output and production factors. The function is used to calculate ratios of inputs for efficient production.



Chapter 3: Uganda's Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals

03



River Nile at Sunset, Uganda
© Rod Waddington

3.0 Summary of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals

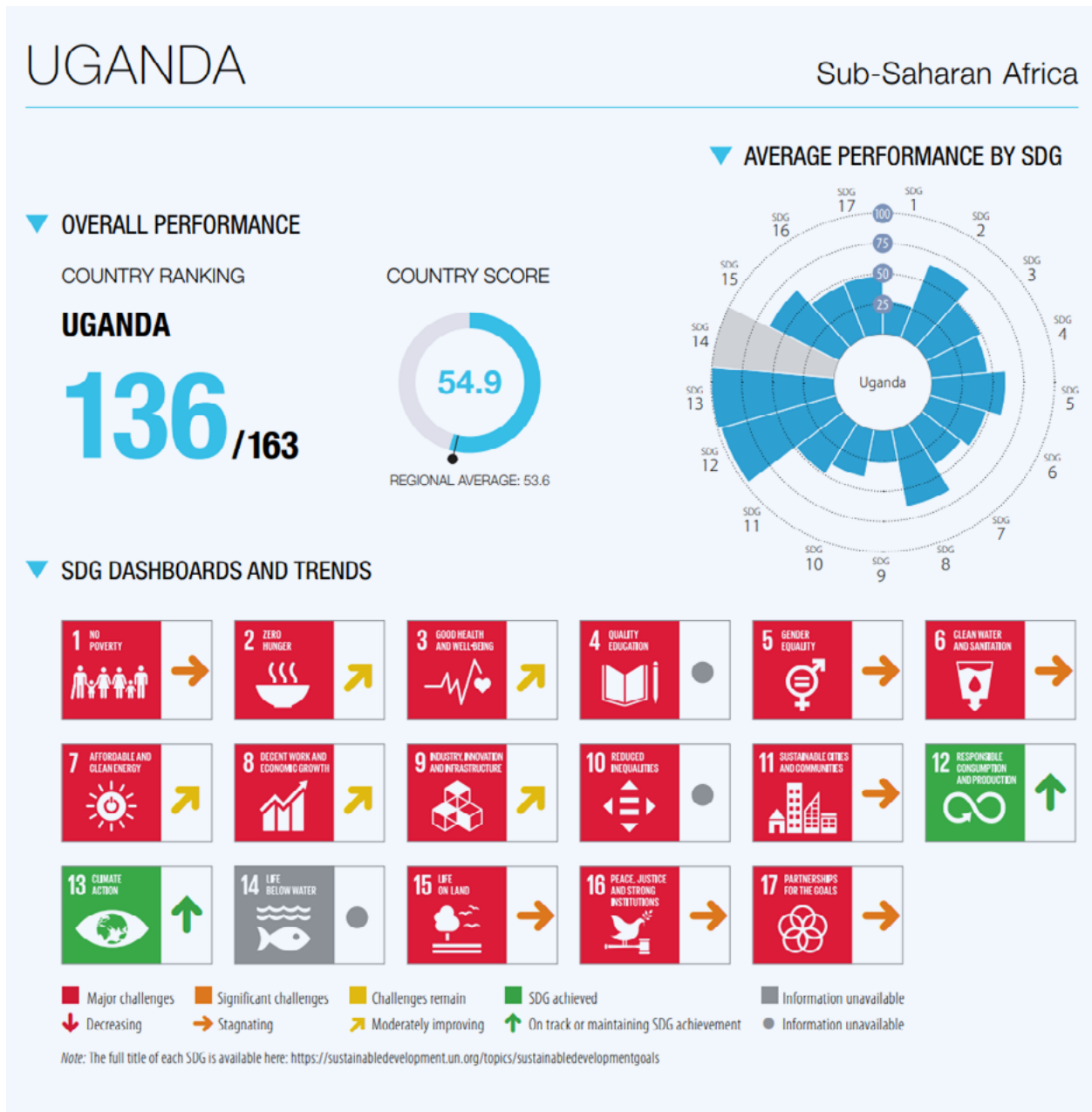
Uganda has embraced the principles of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda to address the constraints that prevented the Millennium Development Goal targets from being fully attained and to ensure a development path that is not detrimental to the well-being of future generations. According to the Sustainable Development Report 2022,¹⁸ Uganda's ranking has been progressing marginally, having improved to 136 out of 163 countries (with an average score of 54.9) in 2022 from 140 out of 165 countries (with an average score of 53.5) in 2021.

Uganda fully recognizes all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – in its national development policies and strategies.

The status of the 17 SDGs presents a mixed picture (see figure 2). The country is on track to achieve Goal 13 on climate action and Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production. There is moderate improvement on Goals 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9, but stagnation on Goals 1, 5, 6, 11, 15, 16 and 17. The report indicates that there is not sufficient information to adequately measure progress on Goals 4, 10 and 14.

¹⁸ Jeffrey D. Sachs and others, Sustainable Development Report: From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond (2022). Available at: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>.

Figure 2: Uganda's SDG Dashboard, 2022



Source: Sustainable Development Report (2022)

3.1 No poverty

The 2019/20 Uganda National Household Survey estimated that 20.3 percent of Ugandan households (8.3 million people) live in poverty.¹⁹ This is a decrease from the 2016/17 rate of 21.4 percent, but an increase from the 19.7 percent rate in 2012/13. The survey's results also indicated an alarming rate of poverty in the Acholi subregion, where it had 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 country (88 percent and 78 percent, respectively).

Even though overall poverty in the country in 2019/20 was slightly lower than that registered in 2016/17, the household survey shows that COVID-19 pandemic had serious negative impacts on poverty trends. Poverty increased from 18.7 percent to 21.9 percent during the first COVID-19 wave in Uganda (before March 2020), which can be explained by the change in employment structure. Following the first lockdown in 2020, many people shifted to the agricultural sector, increasing the proportion working in subsistence agriculture from 41 percent before March 2020 to 52 percent after March 2020. Those in employment fell from 57 percent to 47 percent in the same period. These two trends were still visible in April 2021, a year after the pandemic had begun.²⁰

About 23.4 million of the non-poor people (62.4 percent of the population) were reported to be at risk of falling below the national poverty line. In the last four years, this group has grown by 9.3 percent, at 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 are ineffective, and given climate-related, social and economic disasters and shocks, the number of individuals at risk of falling below the national poverty line could reach approximately 27.6 million in 2025 and 30.6 million in 2030.

The poverty rates mentioned above are based on a national poverty line of \$1 per person/day that was constructed three decades ago. This national poverty line is far below the new international poverty line of \$2.15 per person/day adopted in September 2022 and so does not give a true picture of poverty in the country. This discrepancy has led to a call for a revised national poverty threshold to reflect the current context more accurately and meet global standards.

¹⁹ Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey Report 2019/2020 (2021)*. Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/O9_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf.

²⁰ Ibid.

23.4 million

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.



The poverty rates mentioned above are based on a national poverty line of \$1 per person/day that was constructed three decades ago. This national poverty line is far below the new international poverty line of \$2.15 per person/day adopted in September 2022 and so does not give a true picture of poverty in the country.



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In the 2019/20 household survey, the proposed new national poverty line is \$1.77 per person/day. Based on this threshold, 12.3 million (30.1 percent) of Ugandans are estimated to live in poverty. The number of poor Ugandans increases to 16.9 million (41.4 percent) when using the previous international poverty line of \$1.90.

Multidimensional poverty

Using the new international poverty line of \$2.15, the World Bank estimates that 42.2 percent of the Ugandan population is living in extreme income poverty.²¹ This is in line with the findings of the latest Multidimensional Poverty Index report²² by the Government of Uganda, which shows that 42.1 percent of the population was estimated to be multidimensionally poor in 2019/20.

Even though this represents a reduction from the 44.3 percent recorded for 2016/17, it is still high and reflects major challenges in the effectiveness of poverty reduction policies, strategies and programmes. In addition, the report suggests there is gender inequality in poverty status, with female-headed households having higher (48.9 percent) rates of multidimensional poverty compared to male-headed households (39.4 percent). Similarly, a higher educational attainment by the household head is associated with a reduced multidimensional poverty level, implying that improving education outcomes would have a significant impact on poverty reduction.

The report shows that multidimensional poverty is significantly higher among households of seven or more people (46.6 percent), teenage-headed households (52.7 percent) and households headed by widows/widowers (51.1 percent). There are also notable regional and subregional disparities in multidimensional poverty in Uganda, with rates being highest in the Northern region (63 percent), followed by the Eastern region (45.7 percent). At the subregional level, Karamoja has the highest level of multidimensional poverty at 85 percent. The other subregions with high incidences are Acholi (64 percent), West Nile (59 percent), Lango (57 percent) and Teso (56 percent). The least incidence was reported in Kampala (0.4 percent), Buganda South (18 percent) and Buganda North (30 percent). See table 1.

21 World Bank, *Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022: Correcting Course* (2020). Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37739/9781464818936.pdf>

22 Uganda, UBOS, *Multidimensional Poverty Index Report* (2022). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/08_2022Multi_Poverty_Dimensional_Index_Report_2022.pdf.

42.2%

Using the new international poverty line of \$2.15, the World Bank estimates that 42.2 percent of the Ugandan population is living in extreme income poverty.

85%

There are also notable regional and subregional disparities in multidimensional poverty in Uganda, with rates being highest in the Northern region (63 percent), followed by the Eastern region (45.7 percent). At the subregional level, Karamoja has the highest level of multidimensional poverty at 85 percent.

Table 1: Monetary and multidimensional poverty in Uganda, by subregion (percentage)

Sub-region	Monetary poor 2016/17	Monetary poor 2019/20	Multidimensional poor 2016/17	Multidimensional poor 2019/20
National	21.4	20.3	44.3	42.1
Kampala	2.6	1.6	2.7	0.4
Buganda South	9.0	6.9	18.3	17.9
Buganda North	11.0	13.6	29.0	31.5
Busoga	37.5	29.4	49.9	45.1
Bukedi	43.7	34.6	65.4	42.2
Elgon	34.5	13.2	55.6	40.5
Teso	25.1	22.0	52.7	55.6
Karamoja	60.2	65.6	86.7	84.9
Lango	25.6	23.5	56.3	57.0
Acholi	33.4	67.7	70.3	63.6
West Nile	34.9	16.9	62.8	59.1
Bunyoro	17.3	9.8	42.0	45.7
Tooro	11.1	12.8	49.0	45.5
Ankole	6.8	13.3	37.3	42.6
Kigezi	12.2	27.6	38.8	48.4

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2022)

Need for targeted investments in children

Using the consensual approach to multidimensional poverty measurement and based on the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/20, the national estimate of the proportion of children living in multidimensional poverty is 44 percent which is almost double the proportion of children living in monetary poverty (23 percent). In rural areas these proportions are 50 percent and 26 percent and in urban areas they are 27 and 14 percent, respectively. These estimates indicate that children in Uganda are deprived of socially perceived necessities like health and education services, food, clothing, shelter and social necessities.²³

While Ugandan children are deprived of access to basic necessities, the country will find it harder to make progress towards the realization of the other SDGs. The same children, unless intentionally targeted with focused development interventions, will not be able to realize their rights of access to health services, proper nutrition and education. Consequently, they are at risk of being left behind and if they survive childhood, of producing children who are similarly deprived and unable to break the vicious circle of poverty. Hence, eradicating poverty by 2030 will require targeted investments in children.

²³ UNICEF, UBOS and University of Bristol preliminary report Child Poverty in Uganda, to be published in 2023.

Impact of shocks

In 2022, the conflict in Ukraine posed a significant threat to Uganda's development trajectory and recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic suffered in 2020 and 2021. The conflict led to a rise in the cost for food, gasoline and fertilizer as well as greater scarcity of other goods and services, which had implications on poverty and inequality. The Ebola outbreak in late 2022 was also a major macroeconomic shock for the nation. The restrictions and negative expectations had negative effects on human development,²⁴ including a loss in GDP, a risk to food security and a decline in employment and livelihoods. There was also a drop in foreign exchange resulting from a downturn in foreign investment and tourism related activities. These combined shocks have had significant effects on vulnerable groups, such as women, young people, the elderly, refugees and marginalized groups, who were still recovering from the effects of COVID-19.

Role of the subsistence economy

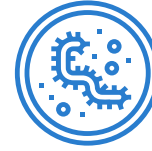
Uganda's persistent high poverty levels and vulnerabilities are mainly attributed to the rural-based subsistence nature of the economy. In total 3.5 million households (39 percent) remain trapped in the subsistence economy. Of these households, 43.5 percent are female-headed and 37.1 percent are male-headed. 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/GDP, demonstrating the low productivity of the sector and a lack of shared prosperity.²⁵

Reducing the level of engagement in subsistence agriculture and raising productivity in the sector are vital to ending poverty and inequalities. The sector's low productivity is directly related to a lack of affordable and accessible agricultural financing, the existence of pests and diseases, the ineffectiveness of extension services and inadequate market information. These factors are exacerbated by climate change and environmental challenges.

Additionally, unstable tenure and gender disparities in land ownership, inheritance and decision-making have a negative influence on agricultural output, expansion and adoption of sustainable land management methods.

²⁴ UNDP, Human Development Report 2021–22: *Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World* (2022). Available at <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2021-22>.

²⁵ Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report* (2021). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/O9_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf.



The Ebola outbreak in late 2022 was also a major macroeconomic shock for the nation. The restrictions and negative expectations had negative effects on human development, including a loss in GDP, a risk to food security and a decline in employment and livelihoods.



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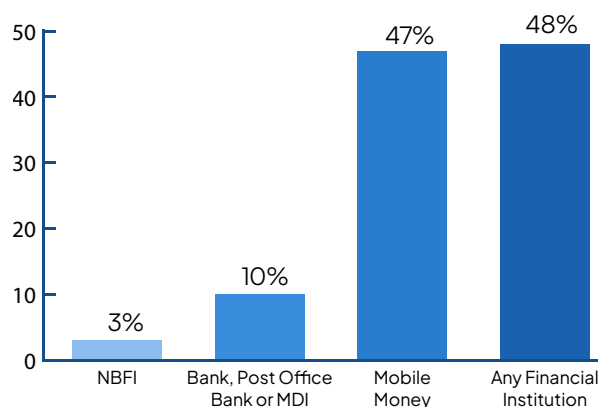
The sector's low productivity is directly related to a lack of affordable and accessible agricultural financing, the existence of pests and diseases, the ineffectiveness of extension services and inadequate market information.

Despite the gender inequalities, women manage more land and provide more agricultural labour than men, accounting for around 75 percent of all agricultural labour. It should also be noted that the productivity of the Ugandan agricultural sector's workforce is substantially lower than in other countries. In Uganda, agricultural value added per worker – a significant benchmark of productivity – totalled \$753, while the average for workers in low and middle-income nations in 2019 was \$3,333.

Impact of limited access to finance

In Uganda, access to finance remains a key constraint hindering rural development efforts and graduation out of poverty. In 2019/20, only 10 percent of adults were using formal banking services. It should be acknowledged, however, that the introduction of mobile money services in 2009 has been a critical driver of financial inclusion, with 47 percent of adults using mobile money service (see figure 3).²⁶

Figure 3: Access to financial services, by type (percentage of adult population)



Note: NBFI=non-banking financial institution

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2021)

The use of mobile money has, so far, been more strongly linked with payments than with savings and borrowing. Nevertheless, the success of mobile money could be leveraged to improve access to financial services for rural Ugandans and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to enable poverty reduction and reduce vulnerabilities.

²⁶ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report (2021).

3.2 Zero hunger

There is limited availability of data for monitoring progress in line with a number of the relevant SDG 2 indicators, and beneficiary registries are incomplete.

A joint UN review of the status of SDG data in Uganda in 2022 found that only 57 percent of data is available for tracking indicators under SDG 2. For example, there are key data gaps for 2.1.1 on the “prevalence of undernourishment”, 2.1.2 on the “prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale” and 2.4.1 on the “proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture”. The latest information for the country for nutrition, food security and key proxy indicators are from 2016 and projections for 2021.

While there are efforts to produce annually updated data on food security and nutrition to support evidence-based decision-making, there is a need to increase the coverage, frequency and timeliness and to ensure accessibility to the data. In addition, the strengthening and expansion of beneficiary registries to ensure adequate levels of investment, and multidimensional assistance for sustainability purposes should be considered by all relevant stakeholders. The 50x2030 initiative is a new investment to enhance the availability and use of agricultural statistics.

According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report for 2022²⁷, the world is still enduring the consequences of the pandemic, and these consequences are exacerbating existing inequalities.

2022 was particularly characterized by a consistent increase in food prices, harming the purchasing power of populations and affecting the global food security and nutrition situation.

Despite some progress in reducing hunger and children’s stunting, food and nutrition insecurity prevail in most parts of Uganda. According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) 2016,²⁸ the prevalence of undernourishment affects 41 percent of the population (17.6 million people) and is the highest recorded in the past 17 years. The latest United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) statistics indicate that about 23 percent of the country’s population is severely food insecure.²⁹

Twenty-nine percent of children under the age of 5 are stunted and nearly 4 percent of children under 5 are affected by wasting. While some progress has been made in reducing the national prevalence of stunting among children under 5 (from 33 percent in 2011 to 29 percent in 2016),³⁰ because of rapid population growth the relative progress has not significantly reduced the absolute number of stunted children, which has remained at about 2.15 million. Despite the improved average annual rate of stunting reduction from 1.47 percent in 2012 to 1.79 percent in 2016, Uganda is not on track to achieve the World Health Assembly’s 2025 target on stunting. To meet this target, Uganda’s average annual rate of reduction must rise to at least 2.5 percent. Regional inequalities exist within the country, with Bugisu, Karamoja, West Nile, Bunyoro and Tooro showing higher rates of stunting than the national average.

27 FAO and others, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable* (2022). Available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc0639en>.

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

29 FAO and others, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable* (2022). Available at www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc0639en.

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



A relatively low prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in children under 5 (4 percent in 2016) masks a high national prevalence of severe wasting (1.3 percent), which is nine times higher than what would be expected in a well-nourished population (0.14 percent). The rate also hides significant regional inequalities, with Karamoja and West Nile recording particularly high wasting levels of 10 percent and above.

Evidence suggests that the number of people unable to afford a healthy diet in Uganda rose by 34.9 million to almost 38 million between 2017 and 2020³¹, partly reflecting the impacts of income losses and rising consumer food prices during the pandemic. The number of people unable to afford a healthy diet could be even greater in 2023, owing to the impact of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine which is disrupting supply chains and affecting prices of grain, fertilizer and energy.

Anaemia

Anaemia remains a severe public health issue for children. After a large reduction in the prevalence of anaemia in children under 5 years (24 percent) between 2006 and 2011, it increased by 4 percentage points between 2011 and 2016. The prevalence of anaemia is attributed to the highly inadequate complementary feeding practices used by many parents. In 2016, nationally, only 15 percent of children between 6 and 23 months of age received the minimum acceptable diet, with wide regional variations (from 2.8 percent in Acholi to 26.6 percent in Ankole). This low dietary diversity and low minimum meal frequency for children leads to poor quality complementary feeding. Only four out of 10 children aged 6–23 months consumed iron-rich foods.²⁹ Persistent inadequate complementary feeding practices appear to be related to poverty, inadequate knowledge, cultural practices, high disease burden and the chronic food insecurity in some regions of Uganda.

The country is not on track to meet the World Health Assembly target of halving the number of women of reproductive age with anaemia. The prevalence of anaemia among women aged 15 to 49 years in Uganda was estimated to be 32.8 percent in 2019.³² This means that 3.4 million women aged 15 to 49 years were affected by anaemia. There has been reversed progress on reducing the rate of anaemia since 2015 – the absolute number of women with anaemia has risen steadily from 2.8 million in 2015 to 3.4 million in 2019.

Anaemia has implications for female morbidity and mortality and can lead to adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes, and its severity is more pronounced in women during pregnancy and lactation. In Uganda, anaemia is associated with poor dietary diversity, micronutrient deficiencies, genetic disorders such as sickle cell anaemia, and malaria. It is more prevalent in women in rural settings and poorer households and in women who have received no formal education.

Food security and nutrition in Karamoja subregion

In the fragile subregion of Karamoja, poverty, diseases, climate shocks and low productivity affect the availability, accessibility and use of food. Karamoja continues to have the highest food insecurity and malnutrition levels in Uganda due to factors related to inadequate food availability, poor dietary diversity, structural poverty, low value livelihood options, poor hygiene and sanitation, and disease. Despite a recent overall improvement in safe water sources, there is low water use in the region. Recurrent climate-related shocks, pests, vectors and diseases are strong drivers of low crop and livestock production, with unprecedented price increases and engagement in low-value livelihood activities increasing the vulnerability of the population.

³¹ FAO and others, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable (2022)*. Available at <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc0639en>.

³² FAO, "FAOSTAT". Available at www.fao.org/faostat/en/

Across Karamoja, the average GAM prevalence stood at 13.1 percent in 2022, an increase from the 10.7 percent recorded in 2021 and the 9.7 percent recorded in 2020. In the most recent analysis of food security, conducted in 2022,³³ nine districts in Karamoja were classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). Forty-one percent of the population are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above): 7 percent in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and 34 percent in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). In terms of severity, the districts with the highest percentage of people in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above are Kaabong, Kotido and Moroto, with each having 50 percent of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above, followed by Nabilatuk, which has 40 percent.

According to the IPC Acute Malnutrition (AMN) scale, Kaabong and Moroto districts are classified as in a critical situation (IPC AMN Phase 4) with a GAM prevalence of 19.8 percent and 22 percent, respectively.

Worryingly, the GAM prevalence in Moroto is a 7.8 percent increase from the 14.2 percent recorded in 2021. Amudat, Kotido, Nabilatuk and Napak districts are classified as in a serious situation (IPC AMN Phase 3), with a GAM prevalence of 14.3 percent, 14.0 percent, 11.7 percent and 13.8 percent, respectively.

Underweight in the subregion, mostly because of inadequacy in food quantity and quality, is at 32.1 percent, an increase from 29.1 percent recorded in 2021. Kaabong (41.6 percent in 2022 and 37.8 percent in 2021), Kotido (41.5 percent and 34 percent) and Moroto (42.7 percent and 32.4 percent) have the highest proportion of children under the age of 5 that are underweight.³⁴

Evidence from the 2022 Food Security and Nutritional Assessment³⁵ shows high levels of anaemia across the subregion, which is a major public health concern that calls for urgent attention in all districts. The assessment found 37 percent of the children under 5 are estimated to be anaemic (a reduction from the 59 percent recorded in 2021). The highest numbers of children suffering from anaemia are found in Napak (52.5 percent), Amudat (51.5 percent) and Nakapiripirit (45.7 percent) districts, whilst the lowest numbers are found in Abim (22.3 percent) and Karenga (26.8 percent). Across the subregion, anaemia among pregnant women stands at 22.5 percent and among non-pregnant women it stands at 29 percent.

³³ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Uganda (Karamoja): Acute Food Insecurity Situation March – July 2022 and Projection for August 2022–February 2023. Available at www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1155648/?iso3=UGA.

³⁴ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. Available at www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1155648/?iso3=UGA.

³⁵ World Food Programme (WFP) and UBOS (2022). Situation of Food Security and Nutrition in Karamoja 2022.

13.1%

Across Karamoja, the average GAM prevalence stood at 13.1 percent in 2022, an increase from the 10.7 percent recorded in 2021 and the 9.7 percent recorded in 2020.



In the most recent analysis of food security, conducted in 2022, nine districts in Karamoja were classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). Forty-one percent of the population are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above): 7 percent in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and 34 percent in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis).

Food security and nutrition in refugee settlements

Recent statistics reveal that the food security and nutritional condition for refugees has not improved.³⁶ The Food Security and Nutrition Assessment in 2022 indicates that 55 percent of refugee households are food insecure (marginally and severely), compared to the 36 percent recorded in 2020. This alarming situation is triggered by 45 percent of households facing inadequate food consumption, an increase of 12 percentage points when compared to the results in December 2020. Another contributor is the poor diet diversity (frequently consuming fewer than five food groups in a day) of 49 percent of households.

In 2022, 36 percent of households of refugees and asylum seekers were using crisis and emergency coping strategies, a similar percentage (37 percent) as in December 2020. Six percent of refugee households have a high prevalence of GAM in children from 6 to 59 months. Two settlements were identified as having high GAM prevalence: Adjumani (11 percent) and Kiryandongo (11 percent). On average, 25 percent of children are facing stunting, a significant increase from 13 percent in 2020.

Anaemia in children has been recorded at high levels, with at least 45 percent of children suffering from anaemia in nine out of the 13 settlements. The prevalence of anaemia in children is highest in Palabek (70 percent), Kyangwali (57 percent), Lobule (54 percent) and Imvepi (52 percent). In addition, 34 percent of women in reproductive age are facing anaemia, with highest rates in Kyangwali (46 percent), Lobule (43 percent), Palabek (41 percent) and Bidibidi (73.8 percent). The poor food security and nutrition indicators are consistent with 69 percent of refugee households reporting poor diet diversity, not consuming iron-rich food in a week, and use of negative coping strategies, such as begging and selling essential assets.

³⁶ Uganda, Ministry of Health and others, *Food Security and Nutrition Assessment in Refugee Settlements and Host Communities (2020)*. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/food-security-and-nutrition-assessment-refugee-settlements-and-kampala-december-2020>.

³⁷ In Uganda, agriculture, forestry and fishing are categorised as one sector which is sometimes simply referred to as “agriculture”, mainly for statistics purposes.

³⁸ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister, *Annual State of Disaster Report 2020 (2020)*.

Responding to hazards and shocks

The increased frequency and intensity of hazards, such as drought, floods, storms, hailstorms, desert locusts and landslides, has had a significant impact on agriculture and food security. The agriculture sector³⁷ reported a loss of an estimated 77.4 billion Ugandan shillings (UGX) in 2020.³⁸ Natural hazards intersect and compound other drivers of hunger, including conflict (such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine), the global economic downturn following the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2022 Ebola outbreak in Uganda. As a result of the current global economic crisis, and more frequent and intense climate shocks in Uganda, the resources to address the food security situation for Ugandans and refugees are limited.

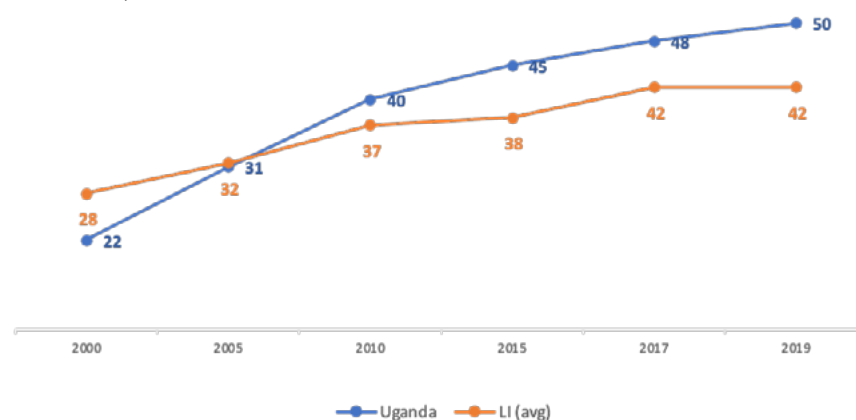
These limited resources call for solutions that prioritize the right assistance to the most vulnerable and optimize the use of resources. The structural and chronic vulnerabilities and needs found in Uganda mean there is need to reinforce the disaster and risk management approaches used. Mechanisms and systems should be developed to monitor disasters, promote preparedness and harmonize interventions. Anticipatory action is a new approach in Uganda and one that systematically links early warnings to actions designed to protect at-risk communities and their assets ahead of a hazard.

Enabling the Government and its partners to scale up anticipatory action in Uganda is crucial for safeguarding lives and livelihoods, building resilience to future shocks, and easing pressure on strained humanitarian resources. This scale-up will require investment in tools, systems and policies that support early warning and response through anticipatory action.

3.3 Good health and well-being

The health service coverage index for Uganda indicates that the average coverage of essential services, based on tracer interventions,³⁹ more than doubled from 22 in 2000 to 50 in 2019.⁴⁰ While this is slightly above the Africa region average of 46 and the low income countries average of 42 (see figure 4), it is still low and shows the urgent need to accelerate coverage of routine services alongside efforts to effectively respond to the myriad of health emergencies found in the country.

Figure 4: Health service coverage index in Uganda and low income (LI) countries, 2000–2019



Source: Global Health Observatory (2021)

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. For some of the service coverage components of the index, there are marked inequalities (see figure 5). For fourth antenatal care visits, the national average in 2016 was 60 percent with the coverage being 67 percent among the richest quintile and 53 percent among the poorest quintile. For the third vaccination against Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT3) coverage, the national average is 79 percent with the coverage varying from 79 percent in the poorest quintile to 82 percent among the richer fourth quintile, before, surprisingly, dropping to the lowest for the richest quintile.⁴¹



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60%

For fourth antenatal care visits, the national average in 2016 was 60 percent with the coverage being 67 percent among the richest quintile and 53 percent among the poorest quintile.

³⁹ Includes reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, noncommunicable diseases and service capacity and access.

⁴⁰ World Health Organization (WHO), "UHC Service Coverage Index". Available at www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/service-coverage.

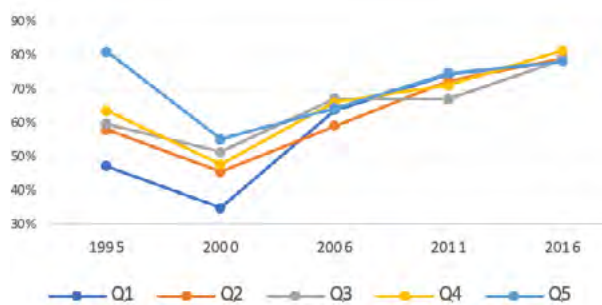
⁴¹ See <https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.imr>.

Figure 5: Fourth antenatal care visits and DPT3 coverage by quintile in 2016

Antenatal care +4 visits				
National average (2016): 60.2 percent				
Value by quintile – 2016				
Q1 (poorest)	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5 (richest)
53.1%	58.4%	60.9%	62.9%	66.9%



DTP3 coverage 1 year olds				
National average (2016): 79.3 percent				
Value by quintile – 2016				
Q1 (poorest)	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5 (richest)
78.6%	79.2%	79.0%	81.6%	78.4%



Source: Global Health Observatory, World Health Organization

⁴² See www.health.go.ug/programs/ministry-departments/office-of-the-director-of-public-health/department-of-environmental-health/malaria-control-division/.

⁴³ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda National Survey Report 2019/2020 (2020). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf.

⁴⁴ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016 (2018). Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR333/FR333.pdf>.

Malaria remains a leading cause of ill health and death in Uganda, accounting for 30–50 percent of outpatient consultations and costs a family on average \$9 (3 percent of annual household income) per episode.⁴² Life expectancy at birth has increased from 52 and 48.8 years in 2002 to 64.5 and 62.8 in 2014 for females and males, respectively.⁴³

Although immunization rates have improved, full coverage is relatively low, leading to a high risk of vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks. Uganda is one of 14 countries that achieved the HIV treatment 90–90–90 targets by 2020 and has since adopted the 95–95–95 targets for epidemic control.

Family health

There is a positive trend in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, as well as in cancer diagnostics and treatment. Although the maternal mortality ratio in Uganda declined from 438 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2011 to 336 in 2016,⁴⁴ it is still high despite improvement in service coverage. The high maternal mortality ratio 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.

The 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 and rural and urban disparities. The adolescent pregnancy rate has remained constant at 25 percent among girls aged 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 sociocultural factors inhibit access to high quality maternal care, particularly in rural areas and within marginalized and vulnerable regions.⁴⁵

The 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 the health facility and community levels. This limited capacity 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. Despite a population of over 40 million, Uganda has only 20 oncologists, and the demand for these experts has grown owing to the steady growth of cancer-related illnesses, with more than 60,000 new cases annually.⁴⁶

Public health emergencies

Epidemics are among the common biological hazards across the country. Uganda's rich biodiverse environment and presence in the yellow fever belt and Filovirus Disease triangle makes it increasingly vulnerable to several outbreaks affecting humans and animals. In the last two decades, the country has experienced several public health emergencies (see figure 6), including 20 confirmed viral haemorrhagic fever outbreaks (Ebola Virus Disease, Marburg Virus Disease, yellow fever, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and Rift Valley fever). Annually, the country reports an average of 13 to 15 public health emergencies. In 2022, the country reported 15 public health emergencies, including zoonoses, across the country.

The effects of climate change and poor land use practices have resulted in public health emergencies due to natural hazards, such as floods and landslides. Data show that districts along international borders appear to be affected by public health emergencies more than others. In 2022, the country responded to three emergencies at the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Grade 3 level: drought and food insecurity in the Greater Horn of Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ebola outbreak. These three emergencies are in addition to several other lower scale public health emergencies, including outbreaks of yellow fever, measles, cholera, Rift Valley fever, anthrax and Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever. 2022 also saw an increase in zoonotic diseases.

As of 28 November 2022, Uganda had registered 169,738 cases of COVID-19 and 3,630 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 2.1 percent. Between 3 October and 28 November 2022 there was an average of 65 cases weekly and no new confirmed deaths. Since the start of the pandemic, a total of 3,474 cases of health worker infections have been registered, with 49 deaths. Progress has been made in vaccination, with a total of 26,244,519 doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered by November 2022.

On 20 September 2022, the country was notified of an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (Sudan strain) in Mubende district in the Central region. The outbreak went on to affect nine districts (Mubende, Kassanda, Kyegegwa, Kampala, Wakiso, Kagadi, Bunyangabu, Masaka and Jinja). The outbreak was the country's first Sudan strain outbreak in a decade and its fifth overall for this strain of Ebola. In total, there were 164 cases (142 confirmed and 22 probable), 55 confirmed deaths and 87 recovered patients. More than 4,000 people who met with confirmed cases were followed up and their health monitored for 21 days.

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

46 See Uganda Cancer Institute, www.uci.or.ug/.

Overall, the case-fatality ratio was 47 percent. The last patient was released from care on 30 November 2022, starting the 42-day countdown to the end of the outbreak. Despite the official end of the outbreak, health authorities are maintaining surveillance and are ready to respond quickly to any flare-ups, and a follow-up programme has been put in place to support survivors.

Soon after Uganda declared the Ebola outbreak, WHO worked with a large range of partners, including vaccine developers, researchers, donors and the Ugandan health authorities to identify candidate therapeutics and vaccines for inclusion in trials. Three candidate vaccines were identified and over 5,000 doses of these arrived in the country between 8 and 17 December 2022.

Figure 6: Key outbreaks registered in Uganda, 2000–2022

<p>2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebola 	<p>2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Acute Hepatitis E • Cholera • Ebola Virus Disease • Marburg Virus Disease • Meningococcal disease • Plague, bubonic • Plague, unspecified 	<p>2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohols other, toxic effect • Cholera • Ebola Virus Disease • Poliomyelitis, acute paralytic, wild virus, imported • Yellow Fever 	<p>2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Anthrax, unspecified • Bacterial meningitis, unspecified • Cholera • Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever • Effects of hunger • Landslide and other earth movements • Malaria • Marburg Virus Disease • Measles • Meningitis, bacterial other • Meningococcal Disease • Rift Valley Fever • Rubella (German measles) • Viral haemorrhagic fever, other specified • Yellow Fever • Conjunctivitis • Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) • Leptospirosis • Mumps • Schistosomiasis 	<p>2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever • Ebola Virus Disease • Measles • Plague, pneumonic • Rift Valley Fever • Yellow Fever • Malaria • O'nyong Nyong Fever • Rubella • Tuberculosis
<p>2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever syndrome • Acute Watery Diarrhoeal syndrome • Ebola virus disease • Plague, pneumonic 	<p>2008</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Gastrointestinal Syndrome, unspecified • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Cholera • Ebola Virus Disease • Malaria • Plague, bubonic 	<p>2013 (#6 Outbreaks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Acute Neurological Syndrome, unspecified • Ebola Virus Disease • Malaria • Marburg Virus Disease • Yellow Fever 	<p>2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Anthrax, cutaneous • Anthrax, unspecified • Rift Valley Fever • Cholera • COVID-19 • Malaria • Measles • Rubella • Typhoid • West Nile Virus Fever • Yellow fever 	
<p>2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Meningococcal disease 	<p>2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Meningococcal Disease • Poliomyelitis, acute • unspecified 	<p>2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Febrile Syndrome • Acute Hepatitis E • Cholera • Marburg 	<p>2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Hemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Cholera • Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever • Malaria • Meningitis, bacterial other • Unknown and unspecified causes of morbidity or mortality • Anthrax • Denge Fever • Measles • Rift Valley Fever • Rubella 	
<p>2003</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Haemorrhagic Fever Syndrome • Acute Jaundice Syndrome • Acute Respiratory Syndrome • Acute Watery Diarrhoeal Syndrome 	<p>2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Gastrointestinal Syndrome, unspecified • Acute Hemorrhagic Fever • Syndrome, unspecified • Acute Neurological Syndrome, unspecified • Cholera • Influenza due to identified • Meningococcal disease • Varicella (chickenpox) • Yellow Fever 	<p>2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCHF • Cholera • Measles • Podocniosis • Rubella • Typhoid 	<p>2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic fever • Ebola Virus Disease • Marburg Virus Disease • Rift Valley Fever • Typhoid Fever • Yellow Fever 	
<p>Cholera</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) • Staphylococcal intoxication 	<p>2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Measles • Metam Sodium Poisoning • Rift Valley Fever • Rubella • Yellow fever 	<p>2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Measles • Metam Sodium Poisoning • Rift Valley Fever • Rubella • Yellow fever 	<p>2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthrax, cutaneous • Cholera • Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever • Drought • Rift Valley Fever • Sudan Virus Disease • Yellow Fever • Malaria • Yellow Fever • Measles 	
<p>2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthrax, gastrointestinal • Cholera • Malaria 	<p>2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Water Diarrhoeal Syndrome • Cholera 	<p>2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cholera • Malaria • Measles • Meningococcal disease 		

Source: Public Health Emergency Operations Center (2022)

Uganda has made progress in strengthening national capacity to prevent, detect early and respond to public health emergencies. Nonetheless, it continues to require capacity-building to adequately deliver routine health services and prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. The constant responsive mode occurs against a background of a weak health system that continues to be challenged by other communicable diseases as well as a rising incidence of non-communicable diseases. The weak health system affects not only the clinical course of disease but also the livelihoods of those affected by the public health emergencies, and therefore, has a lasting effect on the quality of life of many Ugandans.

Mental health

Mental health concerns increased due to stress resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation measures. Mental health wards in general hospitals were transformed into COVID-19 isolation units, leaving people with mental disorders or mental ill-health without treatment. On average, Butabika Mental National Referral Hospital receives 800 to 900 patients annually, however, by September 2020, the facility had treated 1,050 patients, with the increase attributed to factors including the pandemic.⁴⁷ Experts report that the pandemic caused anxiety among the public in general and worsened the situation for people with existing mental health issues. The closure of schools and other recreational activities had a particular impact on the psychosocial well-being and mental health of children and adolescents.

Traffic safety

Traffic safety is a significant concern in the country as road traffic accidents constitute a major cause of death. According to the Global Road Safety Facility,⁴⁸ more than 3,500 people lose their lives in traffic accidents in Uganda annually, while WHO estimates the number of deaths, including those not reported, to be 12,036. See table 1 for national figures.

National statistics⁴⁹ indicate that in 2022 there were 20,394 crashes reported, out of which 3,901 were fatal, 10,776 serious and 5,717 minor. The number of fatal crashes increased by 16.9 percent, from 3,757 in 2021 to 3,901 in 2022. Serious crashes increased from 9,070 in 2021 to 10,776 in 2022 and minor ones increased from 4,616 to 5,717. Together these represent a 17 percent increase in the aggregate number of crashes reported in 2022 from 17,443 in 2021 to 20,394 in 2022. The high number of crashes is mainly attributed to motorcycle taxi and delivery riders (commonly known as boda-boda drivers) who often do not comply with the basic traffic rules and regulations. The high number of pedestrian fatalities (see table 2) is due to poor road designs that are high risk and not inclusive for pedestrians, for example with very limited street lighting and no sidewalks.

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

48 World Bank, Global Road Safety Facility, Road Safety Country Profile Uganda. Available at www.roadsafetyfacility.org/country/uganda.

49 Uganda Police Force, The 2022 Annual Crime Report (2023). Available at www.upf.go.ug/download/the-2022-annual-crime-report/.



20,394

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Table 2: Fatalities by road user category, 2021 and 2022

Road user category	2021	2022	% change
Driver	200	198	-1.0
Motor cyclist	1,390	1,404	1.0
Passenger on motorcycle	528	552	4.5
Pedal cyclist	180	164	-8.9
Passenger in light omnibus	64	114	78.1
Passenger in medium omnibus	13	24	84.6
Passenger in heavy omnibus	16	38	137.5
Passenger in other vehicles	384	461	20.1
Pedestrians	1,384	1,579	14.1
Total	4,159	4,534	9.0

Source: Uganda Police (2023)

It is estimated that road traffic accidents cost the country about 10 percent of GDP, suggesting that the Government and its partners need to pay more attention to addressing the causes of traffic related fatalities and injury.

HIV and AIDS

Although there has been a sustained decline in new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths over the years in Uganda, statistics indicate that there were an estimated 1.4 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) in 2021/22, 54,000 new infections and 17,000 AIDS-related deaths. HIV prevalence among adults stands at 5.2 percent, a decrease from 6.2 percent in 2016/17.⁵⁰ About 65 percent of new HIV infections among adults were among women, with 35 percent in men. Young people (10–24 years) are more vulnerable to HIV infection, with 43 percent of the cases occurring in this age group. Within this age group, adolescent girls and young women are even more vulnerable to HIV infection, with 79 percent of new HIV infections in young people occurring in adolescent girls and young women. Regional variations in HIV prevalence show improvements in all regions except for the Mid North and South Central.

The progress made in the HIV response in Uganda is owed to the various programmatic interventions that have been implemented and scaled up over the years. For example, HIV testing and treatment services have increased remarkably – in 2021/22, 89 percent of all PLHIV knew their HIV status while 82 percent were on antiretroviral therapy and 78 percent were virally suppressed. These achievements have partly resulted in a decline in new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths, by 39 percent and 67 percent respectively, between 2010 and 2021. Other interventions, such as medical male circumcision and treatment and prevention for key populations, have also increased significantly. The increase in interventions is attributable to the multisectoral response that is guided by strategic plans developed by the Uganda AIDS Commission in collaboration with key stakeholders. The National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2020/21–2024/25 provides the overall strategic direction for the response based on four broad thematic areas: (i) HIV prevention, care and treatment; (ii) social support; (iii) protection and (iv) systems strengthening. The plan is aligned to the NDP III and aims to address SDG 3 by addressing the key drivers of the HIV epidemic.

It should be noted that there are structural barriers that hamper progress towards elimination of HIV/AIDS. Among these barriers are the criminalization of sex work among consenting adults, criminalization of same-sex sexual acts, gender-based domestic violence, sociocultural issues such as widow inheritance, and economic factors such as unemployment.

⁵⁰ Uganda AIDS Commission, Annual Joint AIDS Review Report FY2021/22 (2022). Available at https://uac.go.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55:hiv-prevention-29&catid=8&Itemid=101.

54,000

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With only 45 percent of young people having comprehensive knowledge of HIV⁵¹ and a 25 percent teenage pregnancy rate, more efforts are needed to change the behaviour of priority populations. Human rights violations have also fuelled the spread and exacerbated the impact of HIV and AIDS, especially for groups that are more vulnerable to contracting HIV or do not enjoy equitable access to HIV prevention and treatment, due to discrimination and their inability to enjoy their human rights. There is a need to ensure non-discrimination and respect for the human rights of PLHIV, as well as equitable access to HIV services for all those in need of support.

Health care for refugees

The health and nutrition sector strategy for refugees is governed by the Health Sector Integrated Refugee Response Plan 2019–2024.⁵² The response plan aims to ensure full integration of comprehensive and quality primary health-care services for refugees into the national and local government systems. The plan emphasises health promotion and disease prevention through Village Health Teams and Refugee Welfare Councils as well as curative and palliative health services. Health promotion and disease prevention is through strengthening the provision of equitable, safe, quality and sustainable health services in refugee-hosting districts for new arrivals, long-term refugees and host communities.

Impacts from COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted other health services, exposed the vulnerabilities of Uganda's health-care system and the wider socioeconomic context of the country, and threatened Uganda's achievement of the health-related targets in the NDP III and SDGs. The pandemic created demands on the overall health system and highlighted the need for a multisectoral response and integration of services to avoid backtracking on some health-related interventions.

Most preventive and promotive health-care services, such as sexual and reproductive health services, were negatively affected during the pandemic. The number of teenage pregnancies increased in 67 districts between 2019 and 2020 due to a lack of sexual reproductive health information and services for this age group. These services are commonly provided through school outreach and could not take place during the COVID-19-related school closures.⁵³ Clinic attendance was reduced due to challenges to facility access (lockdowns and high transport costs), fear of COVID-19 infection, health-care worker absenteeism and lack of personal protective equipment for both clinic staff and clients. In the period April to June 2020, tuberculosis 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 enrolment fell by 31 percent. During the same period, the number of PLHIV 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.⁵⁴

51 Ibid.

52 Government of Uganda, Health Sector Integrated Refugee Response Plan 2019–2024 (2022). Available from <https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/health-sector-integrated-refugee-response-plan-2019-2024>.

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

54 See https://covid19.gou.go.ug/pillar3_resource.html.

Opportunities and recommendations

Universal health coverage is central to achieving better health and well-being for all people throughout their life course. Reaching universal health coverage in Uganda will require transforming the health systems away from vertical and top-down approaches and towards integrated, people-centred, supportive systems for health. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, within universal health coverage, are crucial to supporting progress towards advancing health and well-being for all.⁵⁵

As malaria is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in Uganda, effective malaria intervention would greatly contribute to SDG 3 achievement. Availability of a new WHO-approved malaria vaccine (R21) and Ministry of Health leadership in its roll-out could potentially be a game changer.

Supportive laws and policies, and access to justice are essential to eliminate stigma, discrimination, violence, coercion and exclusion in health care. Such laws and policies create a safe and supportive enabling environment that meets the sexual and reproductive health rights and needs of all people, especially key and vulnerable populations. Harmful laws need to be amended, and damaging practices need to be countered at all levels.⁵⁶

Women have the right to decide whether, when and how many children they want to have, and to do so safely, without fear of acquiring sexually transmitted infections including HIV, or of maternal morbidity and mortality. Women require access to a choice of modern contraceptive methods and high quality antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care, safe abortion care (to the full extent of the law), post abortion care and infertility services.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ UNFPA and others, *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Infographic Snapshot Uganda 2021 (2022)*. Available at <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/349902/WHO-SRH-21.201-eng.pdf>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

3.4 Quality education

The right to 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 2013/14 to 14.7 percent in 2018/19. Official statistics⁵⁸ indicate that the proportion of the population aged 15 years and above that lacked any formal education increased from 12 percent in 2016/17 to 14 percent in 2019/20.

About 63 percent of children under 5 years of age are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being. 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 and only 74 percent of children with disabilities attend some level of school compared with 83 percent of those without.⁵⁹ Data on learning outcomes in basic education (primary and secondary levels) indicate dismal learning outcomes and attainment. Many children, especially those from poor households, have not attained the appropriate level of learning competency.

Gender

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 and vocational education, and in 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).⁶⁰ Very small numbers of girls study the sciences, and their performance levels are low compared to those of boys.

58 Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report* (2021). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf; Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2016/17 Report* (2018). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/03_20182016_UNHS_FINAL_REPORT.pdf.

59 Uganda, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), *Situational Analysis of Persons with Disabilities in Uganda* (2020). Available at www.developmentpathways.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Webready-DP1294-ESP-Disability-Uganda-Sept-2020.pdf.

60 Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report* (2021).

14.7%

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Children with disabilities are less likely to attend school than their peers without disabilities and only 74 percent of children with disabilities attend some level of school compared with 83 percent of those without.

For example, the level 2 (equivalent to the second year of secondary schooling) proficiency in biology for girls is 5.9 percent, compared to boys at 18.3 percent. Yet 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 131 out of 156 countries.⁶¹

Investment in future productivity, including in early childhood development

Analysis indicates that only 38 percent of children aged 3 to 5 years of age are enrolled in formal pre-primary education.⁶² Pre-schools are predominantly private, with similar proportions of rural and urban children aged three to five 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. Public investment in early childhood development and education is limited, as is investment in skills development, such as technical and vocational education and training and apprenticeships.

Growing concerns in the education sector include limited systemic capacity building, poor infrastructure, limited access and participation of marginalized and vulnerable groups, poor quality education and low transition from primary to secondary schooling. In addition, there is insufficient investment in technology-based education and limited access to and use of information and communications technologies (ICT) 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.⁶³ 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 is in the lowest quartile of the Human Capital Index⁶⁴ distribution, with an index below what its income level would predict. Uganda's low Human Capital Index ranking is primarily due 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 years. Additionally, because of the low levels of learning achievement in Uganda, the seven years are equivalent to only 4.5 years of learning, with 2.5 years considered as "lost" due to the poor quality of education. Uganda's score on the education component is the lowest among the comparator countries and below the sub-Saharan Africa average.

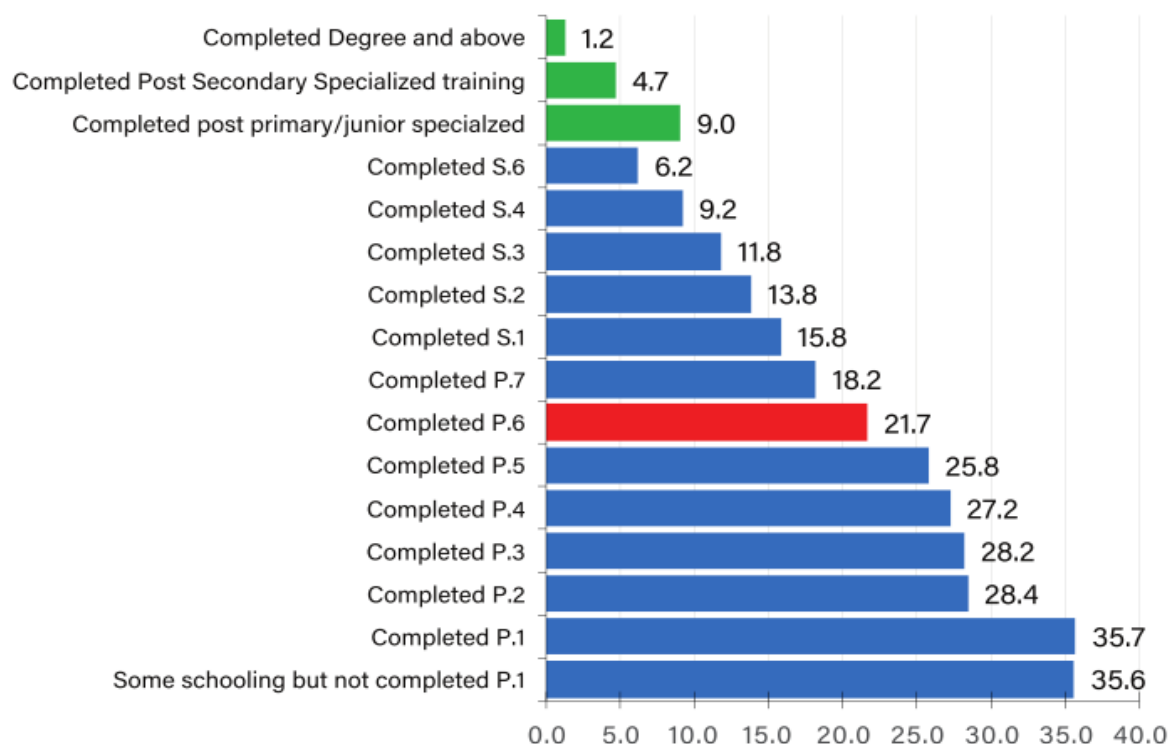
Human capital development, which involves both education and health outcomes, requires urgent attention because any lost opportunities in early childhood learning will have ramifications on the attainment of SDGs in the next 10 years. Lack of formal education limits people's participation in the formal labour market and forces them into the informal or low-productive sectors which negatively impacts on poverty reduction efforts. For example, the Poverty Status Report 2021 shows that poverty reduces significantly with additional levels of education of the household head (see figure 7).

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

62 Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report* (2021).

63 World Bank, *Uganda Economic Update 13th Edition: Economic Development and Human Capital in Uganda: A Case for Investing More in Education* (2019). 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>.

64 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.

Figure 7: Poverty rate by the education level of household head (percentage)

Source: Poverty Status Report (2021)

Impacts from the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted the education sector and worsened the pre-existing challenges. The impacts of the pandemic are likely to have medium to long-term negative implications on human capital development and socioeconomic transformation. Children were forced to be in and out of school and those in early childhood development and lower primary and secondary classes lost two years of schooling. Efforts to ensure continuity of studies through online platforms were hampered by low internet access, high taxes on internet data (which were increased in July 2021) and the lack of access to electricity (many communities are not connected to the national electricity grid) and the required computer equipment. Internet-based learning was unaffordable and unattainable for most children from low-income households.

The pandemic has widened the gap towards meeting the SDG 4 targets and magnified the long-standing inequalities in Uganda's education sector. However, it was also a catalyst for the education sector to come up with innovative solutions to try to ensure continuity of learning. To recover from the impacts of the pandemic and learning loss, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) developed abridged curriculum sets for primary and secondary schools. Teachers were trained to implement the abridged curriculum, learning materials to support home learning were developed and online learning mechanisms were established to support digital learning.

Initiatives from the Ministry of Education and Sports

MoES states that it is committed to providing the connectivity, devices and software needed to support digital learning. The draft policy on ICT being developed by MoES provides for continued support to equip schools with ICT infrastructure and (re)train teachers and other educators on ICT skills to promote digital learning. In addition, partners such as the UN, World Bank, United States Agency for International Development and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, have supported building competencies aligned with education needs of the population and the world of work. This support has been through implementing the thematic curriculum and retraining teachers so they can teach foundational literacy and numeracy skills so that all children gain these skills by the age of 10.

MoES has integrated life skills into the primary, lower secondary, technical and vocational education curricula and will build the capacity of teachers to use innovative learning approaches and be creative. To help ensure equitable access to quality education for 567,500 children and young people in refugee hosting areas, MoES developed the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities.⁶⁵ In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, the plan aims to improve learning outcomes for refugee and host community children and adolescents.

⁶⁵ Uganda, Ministry of Education and Sports, *Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities* (2018). Available at https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/uganda_education-response-plan-for-refugees-and-host-communities-in-uganda.pdf.



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3.5 Gender equality

However, data indicates that women's political participation is on track, with women's political participation at the local government level at 45 percent, which is well above the national target of 30 percent. Uganda has also made progress in eradicating female genital mutilation. Currently, 1 percent of girls and women aged 15–49 years have undergone the procedure.⁶⁶

Sexual and gender-based violence

Gender inequality is a significant identity-based disadvantage and a key driver of women and girls' heightened vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Data indicate that women in Uganda are more likely than men to experience physical and sexual violence. Official statistics show that 45 percent of women experience physical violence and 36 percent sexual violence, with women in Acholi experiencing the highest of both forms. In addition, 86 percent of women have experienced violence at work and 23 percent are forced to give their earnings to partners.⁶⁷

Estimates for violence against children show that around 50 percent of young women experience violence prior to age 19.⁶⁸ An estimated 25 percent of teenage girls are pregnant or have a child, and 34 percent of girls are married by the age of 18. The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted progress on elimination of early marriage and reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy. Data indicates that in the first six months of 2022 there were 2,543 reported gender-based violence (GBV) incidents across 13 refugee hosting districts.⁶⁹ Incidents of forced early marriages perpetrated by family members, especially among the South Sudanese refugees, remain of concern.

Inequalities around income and work

While women constitute over 70 percent of the agricultural workforce, they own only 7 percent of the 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.⁷⁰

66 UN-Women, "Global Database on Violence against Women". Available at <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/uganda>.

67 Uganda, UBOS, National Survey on Violence in Uganda: Module 1: Violence Against Women and Girls (2021). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/02_2022UBOS_VAWG_Report_-_Quantitative_report.pdf.

68 Ibid.

69 UNHCR, Gender-Based Violence Dashboard, Quarter 2 (2022). Available from <https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/uganda-refugee-response-plan-rrp-2022-2023-protection-dashboard-quarter-2-january-june-2022>.

70 Uganda, UBOS, Agricultural Sector Gender Statistics Profile (2012) Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/04_2018Agriculture_Sector_Gender_Statistics_Profile.pdf.

45%

data indicates that women's political participation is on track, with women's political participation at the local government level at 45 percent, which is well above the national target of 30 percent.



Data indicates that in the first six months of 2022 there were 2,543 reported gender-based violence (GBV) incidents across 13 refugee hosting districts.



The monthly median monthly cash earnings from paid, main employment is also significantly higher (UGX 250,000) for male workers than for female workers who earn just over half (UGX 140,000).

These gender differences are also apparent in employment status, as evidenced by the National Labour Force Survey 2021.⁷¹ The employment-to-population ratio was higher for males (52 percent) than for females (34 percent). The unemployment rate was reported to be at 14 percent for females, compared to 10 percent among males. These differences are also comparable among young people (18–30 years), where the unemployment rate of 20 percent among the female youth is significantly higher than the male youth unemployment rate of 14 percent.

Ugandan women remain clustered in lower-paying, more vulnerable jobs and sectors, including in subsistence agriculture. The monthly median monthly cash earnings from paid, main employment is also significantly higher (UGX 250,000) for male workers than for female workers who earn just over half (UGX 140,000). There are also glaring gender gaps in unpaid care work as 83 percent of females, compared to 53 percent of males, participated in this care work in 2019/20. Women spend 10 hours more on unpaid care work per week than men.⁷²

Women and youth should be mobilized and equipped to access and utilize agricultural financing products and technologies, supported by the fast-tracking the finalization of the Agriculture Finance and Insurance Policy to guide mainstreaming of monetary establishments in offering credit facilities to farmers, including women and youth farmers.

Gender inequality is a significant contributor to persistent food insecurity, malnutrition and morbidity among adolescents, women and children in Uganda. Women, who are often the primary caregivers for young children, have limited time, resources and energy to provide adequate care and nutrition due

to their high workload (such as in farming, household chores and income-generating activities) and limited decision-making power.

The increased recruitment of Ugandan workers abroad, mainly domestic female workers, has exposed more women to violence. The current regulations and guidelines on labour migration need to be revised to be more protective, especially for women migrants who are the most exposed to violence and exploitation.

Harmful social norms and attitudes

Persistent social norms and attitudes that keep women in a subordinate position limit the empowerment of women and the attainment of gender equality. There is a need for increased investment in childcare services to release more women from unpaid home and care work and into paid employment.

The Government of Uganda's commitment to addressing GBV as a serious human rights, public health and socioeconomic concern in Uganda is reflected in its policy on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence in Uganda and the Domestic Violence Act (2010) and its regulations, which focus on the protection of rights holders and offers strategic guidance to duty bearers.⁷³ The prevalence, complexity and the social acceptance of GBV have generated the recognition that the prevention and response to GBV requires broad community participation and particularly the participation of men and boys.⁷⁴ Harmful social norms and practices that perpetuate GBV also need to be addressed by supporting activities that involve men in care and domestic work and investing in infrastructure for the care economy to give women more time to engage in productive and remunerable work.

71 Uganda, UBOS, National Labour Force Survey 2021 (2021). Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/11_2022NLFS_2021_main_report.pdf.

72 Uganda, UBOS, Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report (2021). Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf.

73 Uganda, MGLSD, The National Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence in Uganda (2017). Available at https://uganda.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/15_03_18_%20MALE%20INVOLVEMENT%20STRATEGY%2024%20JULY%202017.pdf.

74 Ibid.



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Drilling boreholes for clean water

3.6 Clean water and sanitation

Uganda is endowed with significant surface and ground water resources, including the large Lake Victoria, and is part of the Great Lakes region. However, water resources are under increasing threat of degradation as exhibited by the reduced quality and quantities in major freshwater bodies, a situation which subsequently constrains water supply and sanitation systems in the country. With the rising threats of climate change, Uganda's water resources are set to continually be strained.

A substantial number of Ugandan households use groundwater as their source of domestic water. However, estimates suggest that the cost of unmet water demand by 2050 could reach \$5.5 billion, with the largest groundwater losses expected in the Lake Victoria, Albert Nile and Lake Kyoga watersheds.⁷⁵

The country has experienced two decades of economic growth, leading to large population movements from rural areas to informal settlements around urban centres. High population growth has stressed the existing water and sanitation services. Hence, the bottlenecks in Uganda's water resource provision are mainly attributed to human populations rising at a pace that exceeds the provisioning of social services and infrastructure facilities. Other drivers causing pressure on water in the country are soil erosion, siltation of dams and rivers, agricultural pesticide use and industrial pollution, and these have all reduced surface water quality. In addition, watershed degradation and climate change have reduced surface and ground water quantities.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ World Bank, *Climate Risk Country Profile: Uganda* (2021). Available at: https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15464-WB_Uganda%20Country%20Profile-WEB%20%281%29.pdf.

⁷⁶ Uganda, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), *National State of the Environment Report for Uganda 2016/17* (2018). Available at https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/NSOER%202016_2017.pdf.

Water quality and pollution challenges in Uganda represent low hanging opportunities for transformation. Relevant interventions include putting in place mechanisms to foster efficient use of water resources by households, industry and agriculture. This is in addition to promoting water-saving and reuse, and water-efficient technologies in all sectors, while also supporting ecosystem-based measures. At the same time, there are opportunities for the country to boost measures for confronting water quantity issues. These include supporting hazard prevention and climate-change adaptation measures based on an ecosystem restoration approach, while also considering related climate-resilience and cross-border issues. Measures include eco-friendly water storage infrastructure and smart technologies to increase resource efficiency in the water sector.

There is an essential need to support multi-stakeholder actions towards improving cooperation and mutual understanding among the riparian countries of the Nile Basin. This could be achieved through strengthening their capacities for developing regulations for the sustainable management of the transboundary water resources while addressing issues of pollution and integrated water management.

Cooperation among the riparian countries of the Nile Basin is imperative to advance vulnerability studies and adaptation actions related to climate change and water-related projects.

Water, sanitation and hygiene services

Access to quality water across Uganda is not just a basic right but also a health necessity whose importance was underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic that made water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) a priority across Uganda. Good quality drinking water will also accelerate the realization of some of the economic, health and education-related SDG indicators.

The Government has made considerable progress in increasing access to WASH services. For example, 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) than in urban areas (92 percent).⁷⁷ More than half (55 percent) of rural households spend at least 30 minutes each day fetching drinking water, compared with about a quarter (23 percent) of urban households. Water fetching particularly affects women and children. However, 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. However, the operation and maintenance of water points is an important challenge to ensuring access to safe water, as 15 percent of improved safe water sources are non-functional.⁷⁸ Operations and maintenance challenges are particularly acute in rural areas.

⁷⁷ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report (2021). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2021Uganda-National-Survey-Report-2019-2020.pdf.

⁷⁸ Uganda, Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Water and Environment Sector Performance Report 2020 (2020). Available at <https://mwe.go.ug/library/sector-performance-report-2020>.

Sanitation and hygiene

Access to improved sanitation improved only marginally in Uganda, from 15 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2016.⁷⁹ 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. Data from the UDHS show that urban households are more likely 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 outbreaks.

Approximately 94.5 percent of the population living in urban informal settlements do not have access to basic sanitation services.

Approximately 94.5 percent of the population living in urban informal settlements do not have access to basic sanitation services.⁸⁰ Refugee settlements provide access to latrines to 65 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 national population has access to soap and water. Soap and water availability is significantly lower in the poorest quintile (24 percent) than in the richest (54 percent).

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

80 Centre for Affordable Housing Finance Africa, Africa Housing Finance Yearbook 2021: Uganda profile (2021). Available at <https://housingfinanceafrica.org/app/uploads/2021/11/Uganda.pdf>.

81 Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, Inter-Agency Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan 2022–2025 (2022). Available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/92447>.

82 Uganda, MWE, Water and Environment Sector Performance Report 2020 (2020). Available at <https://mwe.go.ug/library/sector-performance-report-2020>.

WASH in refugee settlements and host communities

In refugee settlements, access to improved water varies from 18 litres per person per day (lppd) to 21 lppd, against the service level benchmark of 20 lppd. It should be noted that host communities' 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.

Ongoing efforts need to be expanded to address the access inequities between the settlements and host communities. Two of the main challenges facing water systems in districts that host refugees are the integration of refugees into district development plans and the transition of ownership of water systems from development partners to communities to ensure sustainability. With the Water and Environment Refugee Response Plan in full implementation, the WASH sector is focussing on inclusion of WASH service delivery in Government mandated institutions.⁸¹

WASH in institutions

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 target of 40 children per stance) has remained unchanged over the last five years.⁸² In many schools, latrines are not separated by sex or responsive to those with disabilities. The poor WASH situation in schools 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.⁸³

UNICEF estimates that one in 10 menstruating girls misses school four to five times a month or completely drops out of school. 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. MoES 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, 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, water at those distances may not be adequate. On the sanitation front, basic coverage was significantly lower than for water (12 percent) and a higher proportion of health facilities had limited service (79 percent).⁸⁴

Poor WASH in health facilities contributes to high maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, health care associated infections, and poor quality of care, and poses privacy issues.

Data availability

With the last UDHS conducted in 2016, some of the statistics above may not give a true picture of the current situation in terms of WASH indicators. This data shortfall is expected to be addressed by the UDHS 2022. In UDHS 2022, for the first time, Uganda is collecting water quality information, both biological and chemical parameters, in a nationwide survey. The objective of the water quality testing is to obtain a nationally representative view of the quality of water in households (the water people drink in their homes) and in water sources. For the biological parameters, the presence of *E. coli* bacteria is being tested as an indicator for biological contamination – the World Health Organization recommends that there should be no *E. coli* present in a 100 ml sample of water. For chemical parameters, water samples are being analysed for arsenic and fluoride contamination. Arsenic and fluoride are chemical contaminants that can occur naturally in groundwater and can have widespread negative health impacts. The collected information will provide data for SDG indicator 6.1.1 “Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services” and will provide information the Government and development partners need to put in place interventions that will accelerate the realization of SDG 6.1.

83 UNICEF, *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>.

84 UNICEF, *WASH in Health Care Facilities: Scoping Study in Eastern and Southern Africa (2019)*. Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/wash-health-care-facilities>.

Policy environment

Uganda has adopted various policy-related interventions aimed at improving access to clean and safe water, while also safeguarding the ecosystems upon which water provisioning rests. The country's Ministry of Water and Environment has facilitated the establishment of the Integrated Water Resources Management Approach which aims to deconcentrate water resource management in the Upper Nile water management zones and all catchment levels. The National Water Policy (1999) provides for the management and development of water resources in an integrated and sustainable manner. The Water Act (1997) provides for the use, protection and management of water resources and supply and facilitates the devolution of water supply and sewerage undertakings.

As one of the Nile Basin countries, Uganda has put in place various initiatives and plans for transboundary water sustainability interventions under the current Nile Basin Initiative 10-year Strategy (2010–2027). The strategy seeks to facilitate cooperation, sharing and utilization of transboundary resources and also support the Lake Victoria Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Programme. At the national level, there are several committees steering integrated water resource management. There are policy committees on the environment and water, an Integrated Water Resources Management working group and a Water and Environment Sector working group.

The Directorate of Water Development has established a development facility mechanism for supporting water supply and sanitation. It also developed the National Irrigation Master Plan for Uganda (2010–2035), which considers the SDGs, Vision 2040, NDP III and the Water Sector Strategic Investment Plan for 2010–2035.

3.7 Affordable and clean energy

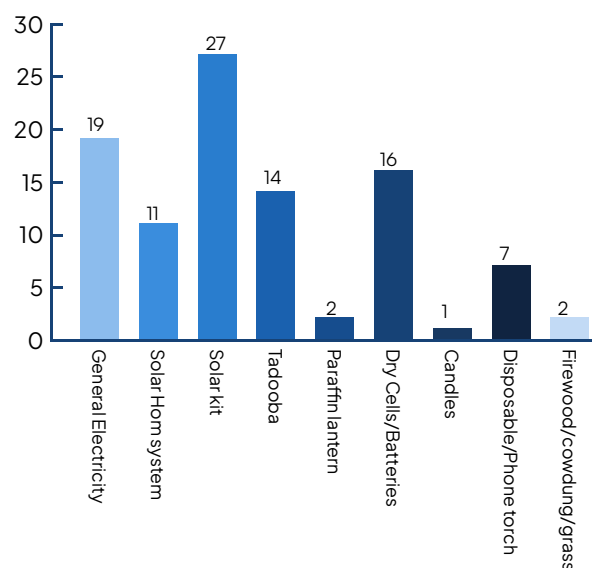
Uganda still has one of the lowest electrification rates in the world despite significant government and development partner efforts over the last years to boost access to electricity. This means additional efforts to achieve SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy are needed.

The potential to improve living conditions and the productivity of the agricultural and business sectors are all impacted by the lack of contemporary and affordable energy sources. Low agricultural and economic output, along with fewer opportunities for employment, contribute to low incomes. Hence, the issue of poverty and the scarcity of cleaner and more reasonably priced energy services continue to be interwoven.

Lighting

National statistics⁸⁵ indicate that 56.7 percent of households in Uganda use electricity for lighting (27 percent use a simple, low-capacity solar kit, 19 percent use grid electricity and 11 percent use a home solar system). The remaining households mainly depend on canister wick lamps (known as tadooba), paraffin lanterns, battery-powered lights, mobile phones and torches (see figure 8).

85 Uganda, UBOS. Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report (2021).

Figure 8: Main source of lighting (percentage)

Source: Uganda National Household Survey 2019/20

There is a wide rural-urban divide in the use of grid electricity for lighting. Half (51 percent) of the households in urban areas use grid electricity for lighting, compared to only 5 percent in rural areas. The main reasons cited by households for not using grid electricity include the grid being too far from their households or being unavailable in their localities (61 percent of households), high cost of initial connection (23 percent) and the monthly fee being too expensive (4 percent).



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Cooking

The country's limited supply of clean and affordable renewable energy sources has unintentionally created high dependency on traditional biomass sources of energy, including wood fuel and charcoal. Biomass constitutes the main fuel for cooking for 94 percent of households – 73 percent firewood and 21 percent charcoal – while other sources of cooking energy (such as electricity, kerosene and gas) account for only 6 percent.⁸⁶ Rural-urban comparison (rural: 97 percent, urban: 86 percent) shows that the challenge of using biomass for cooking is almost equally widespread and deserves urgent attention. The use of biomass for cooking takes a toll on the forest cover and biodiversity, with eventual land degradation, and negatively affects the household living environment due to its impact on air quality. Biomass emits smoke which exposes household members, especially girls and women who are traditionally more involved in cooking in households, to respiratory infections.

Uganda intends to reduce the share of biomass energy in cooking to 50 percent and, correspondingly, increase the proportion of households using clean energy for cooking to 50 percent. This target is likely to be accelerated by policy and institutional interventions that have been put in place by the Government in line with NDP III. Among these are strategic policies to incentivize the country's private sector to effectively participate in the Government's low emissions development pathway, an aggressive rural electrification agenda and the gradual reduction in the cost of grid electricity to promote clean cooking energy. Reducing the use of biomass as a source of cooking energy to 50 percent will have a positive impact on the environment and the lives and health of women and girls.

⁸⁶ Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report* (2021).

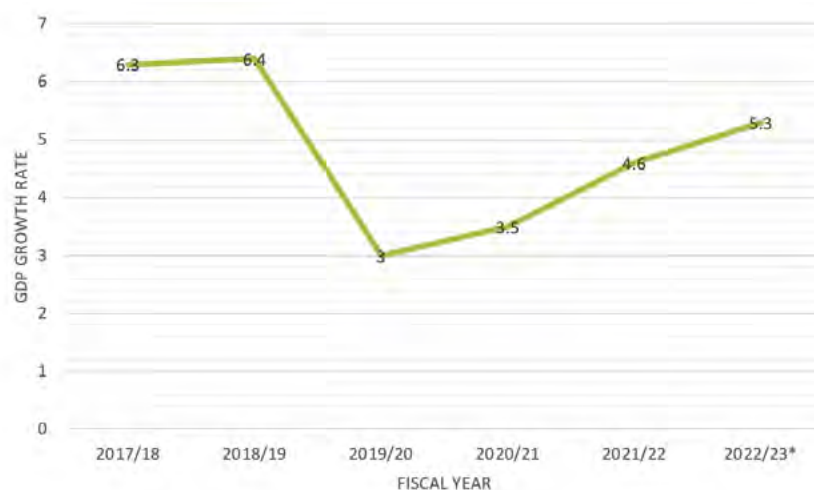
3.8 Decent work and economic growth

Economic growth

Uganda is making slow but steady progress to realize the national aspirations in Vision 2040. Its economy more than doubled in nominal terms, from UGX 64 trillion in 2010/11 to UGX 162.12 trillion in 2021/22.⁸⁷ At the beginning of 2020, the economy was recovering well, having experienced a significant slowdown during most of the Second National Development Plan period (2015/16–2019/20) and the GDP growth rate was projected to grow from 6.2 percent in 2018/2019 to 6.3 percent in 2019/2020 and reach at least 7 percent by 2024/25.⁸⁸ This growth was to be predicated to be driven by expansion in the manufacturing and construction sector.⁸⁹

However, the earlier projected growth rate of 6 to 7 percent was cut by more than a half, to 3.5 percent in 2020/21 and 4.6 percent in 2021/22⁹⁰ (see figure 9). The cut was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures adopted to contain it, which impeded economic activity and pushed millions of vulnerable people into poverty. The conflict in Ukraine also caused disruption of global supply chains, inflationary pressures and rising food insecurity, further constraining job creation and increasing the incidence of poverty and inequality.

Figure 9: GDP growth rate (at market prices), 2017/18 to 2021/22



*Projection

Source: Authors' calculations based on statistics from Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (2022) and Bank of Uganda (2022)

87 Uganda, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED). *Background to the Budget Fiscal Year 2022/23* (2022). Available at <https://www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/Background%20to%20the%20Budget%20FY%202022-23.pdf>.

88 Uganda, NPA, *Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25* (2020).

89 Ibid.

90 Uganda, MFPED, *Background to the Budget Fiscal Year 2022/23* (2022).

Whilst all sectors of the economy registered growth in 2021/22, the strongest recovery was in the services and industrial sectors which contributed 41.5 percent and 26.8 percent to GDP, respectively. The agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector contributed 24.1 percent to GDP.⁹¹ The economic acceleration in 2021/22 was spurred by the Government lifting all COVID-19 related mobility restrictions, and this acceleration more than offset the negative spillover effects from the conflict in Ukraine and the increase in global commodity prices.

Uganda is slowly returning to its pre-pandemic growth path, and the economy is now projected to expand in the range of 5–5.3 percent in 2022/23, up from 4.6 in 2021/22. The World Bank projects real GDP to grow by 5.5 percent in 2022/23 and by about 6 percent in 2023/24.⁹² This growth will be mainly driven by investments in the oil sector which has greatly influenced foreign direct investments, a rebound in agricultural production and productivity due to government interventions, and a rebound in industrial sector activity. Despite this positive trajectory, the economic growth rate is likely to remain below its long-run trend until 2025/26.⁹³

Decent work

The rising cost of living is expected to weaken post-pandemic recovery in employment and household income. Statistics indicate that national unemployment and youth unemployment increased from 8.8 percent and 13 percent in 2019/20 to 11.9 percent (males: 10.4 percent, females: 14.1 percent) and 16.5 percent (males: 13.5 percent, females: 20.4 percent) in 2021.⁹⁴ Inequalities in human capital wealth between men and women in Uganda remain substantial (females: 39 percent, males: 61 percent). Projected economic growth will be negatively impacted by gender inequalities and harmful gender norms and attitudes that persist throughout Uganda. The World Bank estimates that achieving gender equality in Uganda could raise per capita wealth to \$1,619, an increase of 11.8 percent.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Bank of Uganda, *State of the Economy Report (2022)*. Available at <https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/bouwebsite/bouwebsitecontent/publications/QuarterlyStateofEconomy/publications/Quarterly-Economic-Reports/2022/Dec/State-of-the-Economy-December-2022.pdf>.

⁹⁴ Uganda, UBOS, *National Labour Force Survey 2021 (2021)*. Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/11_2022NLFS_2021_main_report.pdf.

⁹⁵ Quentin Wodon and Adenike Onagoruwa, *The Cost of Gender Inequality: Gender Inequality, Human Capital Wealth, and Development Outcomes in Uganda (2019)*. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32787/Gender-Inequality-Human-Capital-Wealth-and-Development-Outcomes-in-Uganda.pdf?sequence=1>.

41.5%

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It is important to note that prior to the pandemic, Uganda's economic growth was non-inclusive and jobless, because strategies incorrectly assumed that everyone could participate in and benefit from development equitably.⁹⁶ However, it is now clear that the growth has failed to create enough jobs and employment opportunities for Ugandans. The test for the Decade of Action is to ensure that unemployed or underemployed youth can contribute effectively to national development and have expanded 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.⁹⁷ This far exceeds the 238,000 jobs⁹⁸ that are currently being created annually. Given the high levels of unemployment, underemployment, working poverty and informality, job creation has been prioritized as a national objective in the NDP III, which proposes to create 2.5 million jobs over the course of its implementation. It is worth noting that unemployment statistics as defined by the International Labour Organization are inadequate to characterize Uganda's labour market challenges. 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.

While Uganda has provided refugees the right to work (through the Refugees Act of 2006) and access to land for housing and farming, among other resources, the country faces a general lack of decent employment opportunities to support sustainable livelihoods for refugees. Yet, evidence shows that refugees are an untapped potential source of labour.^{99,100} As of 2018, three out of four refugees were unemployed, and this presents both a challenge and an opportunity that calls for integration of refugees into local labour markets. This integration would enable refugees to contribute to their local economy and benefit the country at large.

Potential for a demographic dividend

Uganda has one of the highest population growth rates in the world, expanding by 3 percent annually. Around 53 percent of the population are below 18 years of age, creating a rising youth bulge, and 55 percent of the population is of working age (15–64).¹⁰¹ Overall, the labour market can be described as struggling with the following key issues:¹⁰²

- A rapidly expanding working-age population that is not effectively integrated into the formal labour market;
- An employment–unemployment dichotomy that hides 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;

96 Uganda, MGLSD, *Employment Governance Framework for the National Employment Strategy (2021)*. Available at <https://mglsd.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/EMPLOYMENT-GOVERNANCE-FRAMEWORK-MGLSD.pdf>.

97 World Bank, *The World Bank in Uganda (2022)*. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/overview#1>.

98 Uganda, NPA, *Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25 (2020)*.

99 World Bank, *Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey (2019)*. 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>.

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

101 Uganda, UBOS, *Statistical Abstract 2021 (2021)*. Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/O1_20222021_Statistical_Abstract.pdf.

102 International Labour Organization (ILO), *ILO in Uganda: Employment Diagnostic Analysis (2017)*. Available at www.ilo.org/africa/countries-covered/uganda/WCMS_551093/lang--en/index.htm.

- A considerable number of refugees, who suffer from labour market challenges similar to those faced by their national counterparts.

These five issues require targeted interventions to combat the skills gap in the labour market and boost economic growth to effectively address youth unemployment and underemployment.

Uganda has not adequately taken advantage of the demographic dividend of a largely youthful population, which presents many prospects to help the country meet the goals of SDG 8. However, this youth bulge can be both an opportunity and a socioeconomic challenge depending on the country's development response. While demographic change is expected to occur in every nation, the speed at which it happens, and the extent of its benefits, will mainly depend on the approaches chosen to guide the process. Hence, adopting strategic policies and practising good governance are necessary to turn a demographic challenge into a dividend. Countries, like Uganda, with a very youthful population need to invest more in schools and skills training to prepare young people for the future so that they can contribute positively to national development.

3.9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

The National Industrial Policy 2020, the overarching policy framework for industrial development in Uganda, aims to:

1. Increase the industrial sector contribution to GDP from 27 percent in 2018/19 to 31.7 percent in 2029/30.
2. Increase the contribution of manufacturing to GDP from 15.4 percent in 2018/19 to 26 percent in 2029/30.
3. Increase the ratio of manufactured products exported to total exports from 22.5 percent in 2018/19 to 46.8 percent by 2029/30.
4. Reduce the ratio of manufactured products imported to total imports from 63.2 percent in 2018/19 to 45 percent in 2029/30.
5. Increase the share of jobs in the manufacturing subsector in relation to total formal jobs from 9.8 percent in 2018/19 to 15 percent in 2029/30.

The Competitive Industrial Performance Index 2022 from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization ranked Uganda at 122 among 154 countries. In terms of the country's capacity to produce and export manufactured goods, Uganda is ranked 134 out of 154 countries (135 in 2021) by manufacturing value added per capita and 140 out of 154 (141 in 2021) by manufacturing exported per capita. In terms of the country's technological deepening and upgrading, Uganda has a mixed performance for both manufacturing value added and manufacturing export indices.¹⁰³ The 2022 Global Innovation Index ranked Uganda fourth among the 12 low-income economies, 16 out of the 27 economies in Sub-Saharan Africa and 119 overall among the 132 economies that were featured. Uganda's 2022 overall position is lower than the 102 rank that the country attained in 2019.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ United Nations Industrial Development Organization, *Competitive Industrial Performance Index (2022)*. Available at <https://stat.unido.org/country/UGA.pdf>.

¹⁰⁴ World Intellectual Property Organization, *Global Innovation Index (2022)*. Available at https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_2000_2022/ug.pdf.

As of 2021, Uganda had 4,900 factories located in the gazetted industrial parks that were built following the President of Uganda's June 2019 directive.¹⁰⁵ Statistics indicate that the contribution of industry to GDP grew from 26.5 percent in 2019/20 to 27.1 percent in 2020/21 while manufacturing value added (as a percentage of GDP) increased from 15.4 percent in 2019/20 to 16.5 percent in 2020/21.¹⁰⁶ This growth was mainly attributed to expansion in the manufacturing categories of "Bricks and Cement", "Textiles, Clothing and Footwear" and "Chemicals, Paint, Soap and Foam Products".

The growth in Uganda's industrial sector occurred mainly through the construction sector, rather than growth in essential raw materials or investment in the machinery and equipment essential for agro-processing, overall industrial expansion and future economic growth. A critical bottleneck for growth of the industrial sector 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. Additionally, Uganda's young population still has only a limited skill set, which hinders industry productivity. Most of the country's growing industries have complained of inadequate skilled personnel to run operations competently.¹⁰⁷ For human capital and research, the 2022 Global Innovation Index ranked Uganda at 129 among the 132 economies that were featured, underscoring the importance of more investments in education to bridge the industrial skills gap.¹⁰⁸

Women comprise 40 percent of all business owners,¹⁰⁹ yet generally operate smaller, more informal enterprises due to difficulties in accessing finance for business growth, lack of access to ICT and lack of opportunities for skills development.

¹⁰⁵ Ramathan Ggoobi, *Skills for Industry: Making Uganda's Industrial Parks More Productive by Addressing Their Specific Skills Gaps and Their Requirements*, (2021). Available at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/uganda/18544.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ Uganda, UBOS, *Statistical Abstract 2021* (2021). Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/01_20222021_Statistical_Abstract.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ Uganda, MGLSD and others, *Violence against Children in Uganda: Findings from a National Survey* (2018). Available at <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/2156/file/Violence%20Against%20Children%20Survey%202018.pdf>.

¹⁰⁸ World Intellectual Property Organization, *Global Innovation Index: Uganda* (2022). Available at https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_2000_2022/ug.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ World Bank, *Climate Risk Country Profile: Uganda* (2021). Available at: https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15464-WB_Uganda%20Country%20Profile-WEB%20%281%29.pdf.

26.5%

Statistics indicate that the contribution of industry to GDP grew from 26.5 percent in 2019/20 to 27.1 percent in 2020/21 while manufacturing value added (as a percentage of GDP) increased from 15.4 percent in 2019/20 to 16.5 percent in 2020/21.



For human capital and research, the 2022 Global Innovation Index ranked Uganda at 129 among the 132 economies that were featured, underscoring the importance of more investments in education to bridge the industrial skills gap.

3.10 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 has only decreased by a small margin – from 0.428 in 2016/17 to 0.41 in 2019/20. The richest 10 percent of Uganda's population currently enjoy more than one third (35.7 percent) of the national income, a share that has grown by nearly 20 percent over the past two decades.

Gender inequalities remain a persistent challenge as women represent 62 percent of all persons engaged in vulnerable employment and female-headed households experience higher rates of multidimensional poverty than male-headed ones. Women and female youth experience higher rates of unemployment and, when employed, earn a median monthly cash wage of only UGX140,000, around half the wage of their male counterparts, who earn UGX 250,000.¹¹⁰

Statistics reveal a significant income disparity between the affluent and the poor. According to the 2021/22 Human Development Report, Uganda ranks 131 out of 170 nations, with a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.530.¹¹¹ The country lost roughly 24.6 percent of its Human Development Index value due to disparity in human development outcomes, a loss that is greater than the global average but less than that of the Sub-Saharan Africa region. Uganda's Human Development Index decline is mostly due to high levels of inequality in education and income. Uganda was ranked 61 out of 146 nations and 11 in the Sub-Saharan region by the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum,¹¹² a methodology for assessing progress towards gender parity and

comparison of countries' gender gaps across four dimensions: economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership. Uganda's overall Global Gender Gap Index ranking is generally impressive, with high scores on progress towards parity in health and survival (1st globally) and political empowerment (46th globally), but the country ranks poorly in terms of educational attainment (122nd globally) and economic participation and opportunity (73rd globally).

Vulnerability to poverty remains high in Uganda, and 62 percent (25.3 million Ugandans) of the total population were predicted to be very susceptible to falling back into poverty in 2019/20, mostly owing to the impacts of COVID-19, an increase of 2 million individuals from the 23.3 million reported in 2016/17.¹¹³ Higher food, gasoline and fertilizer costs, as well as increased scarcity due to the conflict in Ukraine, raised the cost of living and reduced household buying power, increasing poverty and inequality and worsening fragility, conflict, and violence in the medium term. This worsening is expected to have a greater impact on vulnerable populations such as women, young people, the elderly, refugees and disadvantaged groups that have already been struggling to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. Workers in the informal sector have also been particularly vulnerable to poverty-causing shocks, especially domestic workers, bar workers, welders and those involved in street food vending and motorbike deliveries.

110 Uganda, UBOS, *Statistical Abstract 2021* (2021).

111 UNDP, "Human Development Index". Available at <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/UGA>.

112 World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2022* (2022). Available at <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022/in-full>.

113 Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/20 Report* (2021).

For most women employed in the informal sector, COVID-19 left them unemployed, and 58 percent of the women surveyed also reported an increase in their unpaid care work.

If present trends continue, the vulnerable population is predicted to rise to 30.3 million by 2030. Social protection expenditure as a percentage of GDP is still low at 0.04 percent. In 2019/20, only 0.6 percent of public spending was allocated to the entire social development sector.¹¹⁴ 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. Targeting 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.

Inequality poses a major obstacle to achieving most of the SDGs as it affects critical development dimensions, presenting a significant challenge that requires concerted effort in terms of Uganda's response. Over the Second National Development Plan period, the Government focused its empowerment efforts on women, youth, children, PWDs and other marginalized and vulnerable persons. This involved flagship initiatives and programmes such as the Youth Livelihood Programme, the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme and Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment.

Uganda experiences frequent risks and shocks, such as landslides, floods, high temperatures, droughts, locust invasions, rising water levels in Lake Victoria and disease outbreaks. Because of this, the number of marginalized and vulnerable people across Uganda who need economic and social protection

has been increasing. The challenge is to protect and cushion marginalized and vulnerable people from loss of productivity and livelihoods, enhance their access to basic social services, and thus help them avoid drifting into poverty.

Migration

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 with 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 socioeconomic opportunities; human-made conflict; induced displacement; seasonal needs; and disasters and environmental factors, such as climate change and environmental degradation.

According to the UDHS 2016, 5 percent of Uganda's population had lived somewhere else prior to their current residence. Of the 5 percent, 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 in the sectors where they typically find work, such as entertainment, domestic work and caregiving.

The lack of guaranteed access to protection during migration further enhances women's vulnerability and puts them at increased risk of exploitation and abuse, social exclusion and inequalities, including in integration efforts.

¹¹⁴ Economic Policy Research Centre, *The National Budget Framework FY 2019/20: Investing in Social Development* (n.d.). Available at www.unicef.org/esa/media/3931/file/UNICEF-Uganda-2019-2020-Social-Development-Budget-Brief.pdf.

To unlock the potential of migration in Uganda, several issues must be addressed. These include the 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, a weak coordination system for involving local actors and private sector in migration, weak information management systems, and lack of systematic referral systems.

Despite Uganda's progressive and inclusive refugee policy, the poverty rate (46 percent) for refugee populations residing in Uganda is more than twice as high as for host communities (17 percent).¹¹⁵ Evidence also shows that just 29 percent of refugees in Uganda are actively working, compared to 64 percent of host communities.¹¹⁶ Even after considering differences in age, gender and education, refugees are 35 percentage points less likely than Ugandan nationals to be employed. This creates protection risks for both host communities and refugee households, particularly for women, girls and persons with specific needs. While farming remains the main income-generating opportunity in Uganda, the high up-front costs for productive assets and access to land limit refugees' engagement in production.¹¹⁷ Access to financial services from financial service providers for refugees is still very low, at less than 1 percent compared to 11 percent for Ugandans, as refugees are perceived to be too risky and expensive to serve.

In 2018, Uganda pioneered the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees and its own Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

(CRRF), which embraces a whole-of-society approach, under the leadership of the Government, with coordination support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Accordingly, refugees were included in the NDPIII, sectoral response plans and the district development plans for refugee-hosting districts. Livelihoods and economic inclusion projects are implemented in refugee hosting districts targeting both refugee and host community households. This joint targeting aims to ensure that refugees and host community households live peacefully with each other and that refugees progressively attain self-reliance in a conducive environment for livelihood opportunities. Agricultural interventions were prioritized in the CRRF to promote surplus agricultural production, together with micro and small enterprise development as pathways for income generation.¹¹⁸ The CRRF also focuses on strengthening coordination with partners and advocacy for increased refugee access to formal employment, productive assets such as land and financial services, so that refugees can become more economically active and self-reliant.

¹¹⁵ World Bank, *Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey (2019)*. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/44837760-0f78-5d8e-88f5-2b29d6391f02>.

¹¹⁶ UNHCR, *Knowledge Brief: Using Socioeconomic Data to Promote Employment Solutions for Refugees in Uganda (2021)*. Available at www.unhcr.org/5fe31b2b4.pdf.

¹¹⁷ UNHCR, *Market System Development for Refugees and Host Communities in Arua and Yumbe Districts (2018)*. Available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/64507>.

¹¹⁸ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, *Inter-Agency Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan 2022–2025 (2022)*. Available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/92447>.

Persons with disabilities

SDG 10 also includes inequality from the perspective of persons with disabilities (PWDs). Statistics indicate that PWDs make up 12.4 percent of the population of Uganda.¹¹⁹ PWDs are known to be some of the most vulnerable in Uganda, as they often experience lack of access to education, health services and justice. PWDs often also face challenges in finding employment due to lack of accessible workplaces, limited education, and stigma and discrimination related to disability. The challenge of employment pushes many PWDs into poverty and reliance on family members. Many PWDs lack the appropriate physical aids, such as wheelchairs and eyeglasses. Eyeglasses are especially needed by persons with albinism.

Over the past few years, Uganda has made some significant efforts towards addressing discrimination against persons with albinism, the most notable one being recognizing albinism as a form of disability in the Persons with Disabilities Act (2020).¹²⁰ In June 2022, the Government launched a National Action Plan on Albinism, which identifies national priorities for promoting and protecting the human rights of persons with albinism, to help bridge the inequality gap. The action plan includes inclusion and participation, accessibility, albinism mainstreaming, equal opportunities and equal treatment, financial security, self-determination and independence, self-advocacy and awareness-raising.

During the Second Global Disability Summit in 2022, Uganda committed to capacity enhancement for PWDs and organizations of persons with disabilities, inclusive education, inclusive health, inclusive employment and livelihoods, and inclusion in situations of crises and conflict, including a focus on climate change.

¹¹⁹ Uganda, UBOS, *National Housing and Population Census 2014* (2014). Available at https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/03_20182014_National_Census_Main_Report.pdf.

¹²⁰ See *Persons with Disability Act, 2020 (Act 3 of 2020)*.



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3.11 Sustainable cities and communities

Uganda is experiencing a meteoric rise in its urban population. With 26 percent¹²¹ of the population living in urban areas as of 2021, these 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. By 2030, the urban population is projected to have grown 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 rural-urban reclassification are all contributing to Uganda's fast-paced urbanization.

The country's urban areas are already the engine for the country's development and will continue as such in future. With more than 70 percent of net new job opportunities likely to be generated in urban areas, Uganda's urban population is expected to increase to 40 million people in 2040. Therefore, leveraging the benefits of urbanization in Uganda will require strong institutions, adequate infrastructure and a clear spatial layout. Currently, only an estimated 46 percent of industrial employment and 47 percent of service employment are urban, partly due to the predominantly rural nature of Uganda's population. An estimated 80 percent of manufacturing output is generated by micro, small, and medium enterprises and the largest share of manufacturing activities (39 percent) is in agro-processing, which is tied to rural areas. The Government of Uganda 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 Vision 2040

and NDP III, 15 municipalities have already 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. The housing shortage is estimated at 2.4 million units and more than 60 percent of the households in the country cannot access the formal housing economy.¹²² Housing provision is limited due to land tenure challenges, high construction costs and lack of access to housing finance.

Uganda's current formal housing market is only accessible to an estimated 12 percent of the households.¹²³ Nearly half (48 percent) of the urban population live in informal settlements lacking access to adequate housing and associated basic services – including water, storm drainage, sewage treatment and solid waste collection – and are afflicted by social conflicts and crime. Forty percent of the population of Kampala is estimated to live in informal settlements and slums.¹²⁴ Populations in informal settlements and slums in secondary cities vary from 61 percent in Mbarara to 16 percent in Jinja and Kabale, with a median value of about 45 percent (as seen in Mbale and Arua). In general, the percentage of slum and informal settlement dwellers decreases with the size of the urban centre.

121 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision* (2019). Available at <https://population.un.org/wup/publications/Files/WUP2018-Report.pdf>.

122 Centre for Affordable Housing Finance Africa, *Africa Housing Finance Yearbook 2021: Uganda profile* (2021). Available at <https://housingfinanceafrica.org/app/uploads/2021/11/Uganda.pdf>.

123 International Finance Corporation, *2022 Annual Report – Stepping Up in a Time of Uncertainty* (2022). Available at <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/0666b9a3-93e4-4c9d-8de8-b1ac34455c02/IFC-AR22.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=ogfmv2P>.

124 Purshottama Sivanarain Reddy and Henry Wissink (eds), *Reflections on African cities in transition: selected continental experiences* (2020).



Downtown Street Scene - Kampala, Uganda
© Adam Jones, Ph.D.

Across urban areas, access to basic infrastructure for services, such as waste, water, transport and energy, remains low by continental standards but is higher than in the rural areas. More than 86 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.

Uganda's weak and struggling private sector is incapable of creating sustainable new jobs to absorb the growing population in urban areas. Income inequality in urban areas slightly increased from 0.42 in 2016/17 to 0.43 in 2019/20.¹²⁵ Women and girls, as well as other marginalized groups, have been affected disproportionately, both socially and economically. This inequality is reflected in the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a 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 women reporting that they feel unsafe using public transport between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. 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 use public transport regularly to travel to work due to limited and unaffordable alternatives.¹²⁶ Urbanization in Uganda is characterized by encroachment on green space and wetlands and the conversion of agricultural land into built-up areas. The 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. In the period between 2012 and 2022, Uganda reported unusual changes in the weather conditions and patterns.¹²⁷

These changes have manifested in flooding in cities and rural areas, an increase in landslides that have resulted in significant loss of lives and livelihoods, and increased displacement and climate migration. Conflicts in the Great Lakes region have triggered a growing movement of displaced people from South Sudan and the DRC into Uganda, often to urban areas, increasing pressure to provide additional urban basic infrastructure and livelihoods for distressed displaced populations.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Household Survey 2019/20* (2021).

¹²⁶ UN-Women, *Statistical Evidence of Women's Use and Experience of Public Transport in Kampala* (2021). Available at <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/statistical-evidence-womens-use-and-experience-public-transport-kampala-and-nairobi>.

¹²⁷ World Bank, *Climate Risk Country Profile: Uganda* (2021). Available at https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15464-WB_Uganda%20Country%20Profile-WEB%20%281%29.pdf.

¹²⁸ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, "Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal". Available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga>.



In line with Vision 2040 and NDP III, 15 municipalities have already 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).

2.4 million

The housing shortage is estimated at 2.4 million units and more than 60 percent of the households in the country cannot access the formal housing economy

Cities and urban areas in Uganda have not yet realized their full potential as engines of structural transformation and sustainable and inclusive growth. Secondary cities and towns may become game changers in the future but have not yet demonstrated their investment readiness to incentivize business activities in higher productivity sectors. Investment readiness is 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 business mentality includes adopting basic concepts of comparative advantage and risk-return trade-off.

To achieve the SDG 11 targets, 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 the coming decades and the achievement of structural transformation, the SDGs and the national development objectives. Public investments in urban areas (including smaller cities and towns) are therefore critical. This investment should be guided by a commitment to the New Urban Agenda.¹²⁹ It is crucial for the country that there is improved management of urban expansion to sustainably accommodate rapid urban population growth. There also needs to be transformation of urban mobility systems with regard to air pollution and atmospheric emissions.

3.12 Responsible consumption and production

Sustainable consumption and production, including resource efficiency and circularity constitute an important element of Uganda's progress on the 2030 Agenda as well as Vision 2040. However, multiple challenges stand in the way of the country's progress on this Goal. Among the leading challenges is the growing problem of pollution and waste that continues to threaten ecological stability as well as human health and well-being, while also contributing to loss of materials for production processes. The country's major economic centres are also its most polluted areas and grapple with poor solid waste management. These economic centres are mainly within cities and include Kampala, Jinja and Wakiso. In rural areas and urban informal settlements, air pollution is driven by persistent use of wood fuel, with disproportionate impacts on women and children.

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics¹³⁰ indicates that 43 percent of the country's population is not connected with electricity and must rely on wood fuel and other unclean fuels like kerosene, for cooking and lighting. Pollution, specifically of the air, threatens lives and livelihoods through its impacts on health. For instance, indoor air pollution – a common phenomenon in Uganda – causes a high number of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. This indoor pollution is attributed to the large dependence on biomass and unclean fuels for cooking and lighting.¹³¹

Uganda's pollution and waste problems are linked to various human activities and actions that intersect with the country's infrastructural capacity and policies. These actions include agricultural, industrial and municipal waste discharges, dumping and poor e-waste disposal.

¹²⁹ 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/>.

¹³⁰ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 Report (2021).

¹³¹ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Review of Woodfuel Biomass Production and Utilization in Africa: A Desk Study (2019). Available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/28515>.

Key among the societal facets threatened by pollution and waste problems are the country's fragile ecological and human health systems. For instance, pollution from the use of pesticides associated with cotton production and malaria prevention and herbicides associated with tea and tobacco production, and the pollution associated with urban areas all pose potential threats to biodiversity, if not regulated.

Major contributors to poor ambient air quality in Uganda include manufacturing, vehicle emissions and waste burning. Available data indicates that Kampala and Jinja have consistently high levels of air pollution. The increased number of old vehicles, including those that are poorly maintained, has undermined air quality, especially in cities. In addition, over 95 percent of households use charcoal for cooking, which contributes to harmful emissions.¹³²

The country's shifting demographic patterns, at rates that outpace public service delivery, has also been a major factor in poor waste management and destruction of the natural ecosystems. The inadequate public services in urban areas are blamed for surging levels of municipal solid waste and wastewater that find their way into natural ecosystems in urban settlements. Moreover, there is discharge of industrial effluents into water systems, including rivers and lakes, that contains chemicals that negatively affect aquatic biodiversity. In addition, the high nutrient contents associated with unsustainable agricultural practices continue to affect ecosystems through runoff and other processes – water systems are reeling from eutrophication and proliferation of invasive species of plants and fish. Those systems affected most include Lake Victoria, which also extends to the country's neighbouring countries of Kenya and Tanzania.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Government of Uganda, *The National Environment Act, 2019*. Available at [https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/National%20Environment%20Act,%202019%20\(I\).pdf](https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/National%20Environment%20Act,%202019%20(I).pdf).

¹³⁴ See <https://www.kcca.go.ug/environment-what-ptf-does>.

Policy environment and government responses

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995) mandates the State to guarantee a safe and healthy environment to its people. This law guides the country's response measures for pollution at technical, policy and institutional levels and has paved the way for the various policies and legislations that currently play pivotal roles in actions against pollution, such as the air quality standards and regulations under Uganda's National Environmental Act (2019).¹³³

In 2015, a Kampala Pollution Control Task Force was established. The task force comprises governmental and private sector actors, with the aim of strengthening cooperation between the member regulatory agencies and between the public and the private sector on integrated pollution and waste management actions.¹³⁴

Under Uganda's Vision 2040, environmental and waste management are intertwined with the integrated physical planning models. This management entails measures for strict control of pollution, wetland management, waste management and promotion and protection of green areas, open spaces and corridors. At the same time, Vision 2040 provides for efforts towards attaining a green and clean environment with no water and air pollution while conserving the flora and fauna and restoring and adding value to the ecosystems.

In June 2021, Uganda joined the Clean Seas Campaign from the United Nations Environment Programme, demonstrating the country's commitment to curbing the flow of marine litter and plastic waste entering lakes, rivers and oceans. The Clean Seas Campaign, launched in 2017, has been a catalyst for change, transforming habits, practices, standards and policies around the globe. Uganda is one of 30 countries represented in the "Tide Turners

Plastic Challenge”, a Clean Seas Campaign initiative that educates young people around the world about marine litter and plastic pollution. The challenge gives young people tools to change their behaviour, inspire their communities and create a better future for the planet. In 2021, Uganda also joined the Climate and Clean Air Coalition that is aiming to improve air pollution monitoring while heightening the ambition of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

As a major initiative, the Government has put in place measures to sensitise the public on the dangers of indoor pollution and scale down the importation of older used vehicles and motorcycles, as these vehicles are major drivers of increased fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) pollution. The country is also trying to implement the use of energy efficient means of transportation.

Uganda is party to various multilateral environmental agreements on waste management and pollution action and implements various interventions linked with these agreements. These agreements include the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The country is also party to the Bamako Convention, a treaty of African nations prohibiting the import into Africa of any hazardous (including radioactive) waste.

Vision 2040 provides for efforts towards attaining a green and clean environment with no water and air pollution while conserving the flora and fauna and restoring and adding value to the ecosystems.

3.13 Climate action

Uganda continues to experience significant impacts of climate change and the frequency and severity of extreme weather events have increased over the years. In the highland areas of the Eastern and Western regions (Bugisu and Rwenzori), rainfall patterns have become more erratic, leading to frequent bursting of riverbanks, mudslides and landslides. Low land areas continue to experience seasonal floods and water discharges, leading to loss of lives, crops, livestock, and household property, and disruption of livelihood options.

The first rainfall season of 2022 was characterized by a series of highly disastrous heavy rains across eastern and western Uganda. For instance, the unprecedented heavy rainfall experienced in April greatly affected the districts of Amuria, Kapelebyong, Katakwi, Mbale, Pallisa, Bukedea and Bulambuli and an estimated 3,200 people were displaced and 650 homes destroyed. Similarly, after flooding in Mbale, in May 2022, up to 30 lives were reported to have been lost, an estimated 5,600 people displaced, over 400,000 left without clean water and more than 2,000 hectares of crops destroyed. In September 2022, heavy rainfall triggered landslides in Kisoro, in the Western region, and 15 people were reported to have been killed, eight homes buried and over 1,000 community members left homeless.¹³⁵

In the Karamoja subregion of northern Uganda, incidences of drought and prolonged dry spells have been prevalent. In 2022, and in previous years, crop vegetative growth and yields deteriorated immensely due to hot weather while livestock productivity was limited by poor growth and drying of natural pastures.

¹³⁵ World Bank, “Climate Change Knowledge Portal”. Available at <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/uganda/vulnerability>.

The dry weather also led to increased spread of crop pests and livestock parasites, mostly because of the prolonged drought. The health and livelihoods of the people in the subregion have been greatly affected. The food security situation in Karamoja has drastically deteriorated and about 41 percent of the population has faced high levels of acute food insecurity in the period of March to July 2022. During this period, close to 900 people died of hunger and eight in 10 households were food-insecure, putting about 23,000 children at high risk of malnutrition.¹³⁶

Drought impacts on natural resources were notable and led to loss and reduction of vegetation cover and increased wildfires.

Uganda's economy is heavily reliant on rain-fed agriculture. More than 85 percent of the population are employed in the agriculture sector, making the country highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.¹³⁷ As in other African countries, women in Uganda are disproportionately affected by climate change and variabilities due to the differences in access to the knowledge, skills and financial resources that are critical in enabling adaptation to climate impacts. Women's risks and vulnerabilities are visible in restricted land rights; lack of access to financial resources, training and technology; and limited access to political decision-making spheres.

These risks and vulnerabilities often prevent women from upholding their role in tackling climate change, environmental risks and disasters.¹³⁸ The methodological approaches used for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions in Uganda have been improved through development of contextualized tools specific to the progress indicators for the country. The implementation of the updated NDC mitigation policies and measures will cut across energy, agriculture, forestry and other land use; peatland; waste; and industrial processes and product use. Unlike the first NDC of 2016, the updated NDC defines sectoral mitigation and adaptation measures and interventions with clearly defined corresponding indicators and targets for 2025 and 2030.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Yacob Aklilu, Edward Okori and Raphael Lotira Arasio, *Drought Risk Management in Karamoja: A Review of Functionality and Capacity: A Technical Report for the Karamoja Development Partners Group* (2021). Available at https://karamojaresilience.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TUFTS_2143_KRSU_Drought_Capacity_V2_online.pdf.

¹³⁷ Uganda, MWE, *Economic Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change in Uganda Final Study Report* (2015). Available at https://cdkn.org/sites/default/files/files/Uganda_CC-economics_Final-Report2.pdf.

¹³⁸ UNDP, *Uganda Gender Analysis* (2020). Available at <https://www.ndcs.undp.org/content/dam/LECB/docs/pubs-reports/undp-ndcsp-uganda-gender-analysis.pdf?download>.

¹³⁹ Uganda, MWE, *Updated Nationally Determined Contribution* (2022). Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-09/Updated%20NDC%20Uganda_2022%20Final.pdf.

23,000 children

The food security situation in Karamoja has drastically deteriorated and about 41 percent of the population has faced high levels of acute food insecurity in the period of March to July 2022. During this period, close to 900 people died of hunger and eight in 10 households were food-insecure, putting about 23,000 children at high risk of malnutrition.



As in other African countries, women in Uganda are disproportionately affected by climate change and variabilities due to the differences in access to the knowledge, skills and financial resources that are critical in enabling adaptation to climate impacts.

Government response

The Government of Uganda has committed itself to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol and has integrated climate change interventions into its Vision 2040 and the NDP III. In fulfilment of its commitments under the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, the Government has prioritized sustainable energy, gender and inclusive development, waste management, green finance, climate finance, greenhouse gas intensity, renewable energy, gender policy dialogue, water and sanitation. Uganda recognizes the need for collective action and responsibility in building resilience to climate change through adaptation and mitigation options. Top priority areas in the Government's climate response strategy are geared towards reducing vulnerability of affected communities and managing the eventual risk impacts as well as unlocking the related potential benefits of mitigation and adaptation.

Other government initiatives include improved management of transboundary natural resources around the Lake Victoria basin through reduction of pollution and enhanced climate resilience in selected hotspot areas. In the energy sector, efforts have been made to expand access to and use of clean energy by communities to reduce the negative impacts of solid biomass fuels and their related environmental and economic burdens. The country's national agricultural research and extension systems have been strengthened and farmers are being supported to improve productivity and incomes, and to strengthen their capacity to better adapt to climate change, through the promotion of improved technologies and sustainable land management practices.

3.14 Life below water

Goal 14 seeks to foster the conservation and sustainable use of the world's oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development through a specific set of actions, owing to their centrality in accelerating progress across multiple fronts. These critical environmental assets play a considerable role in supporting livelihoods and income streams, supplying food and nutritional needs, stabilizing climate, promoting cross-border trade and preserving biodiversity, among others.

SDG 14 proposes several actions to curb marine pollution, protect marine and coastal ecosystems, address the growing problem of ocean acidification, and strengthen fishing and science-based management plans, among other issues. Out of the 10 indicators under SDG 14, five are relevant to Uganda as a landlocked country with no direct interaction with marine and coastal ecosystems, but that connects to the seas through the Nile River basin.

Fisheries

Uganda has several freshwater lakes and rivers and a vibrant fisheries sector. Natural water bodies cover 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. The lake occupies a central role in Uganda's local and subregional commitments under SDG target 14.4. As well as Lake Victoria, the country is endowed with other large lakes, including George, Edward, Albert and Kyoga, that along with the Nile River, support fisheries resources. These resources are critical for livelihoods and food security, as well as being an important source of exports. A variety of minor lakes around each of the large lakes, swamps and streams also contribute 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 sub-sector employs around 1.7 million people directly and over 3.5 million people indirectly. FAO data¹⁴⁰ shows that, in 2019, Uganda's fish and fishery product exports were valued at \$160 million, with the bulk destined to European countries and with Nile perch, mainly fillets, being the main species exported. During the same year, the country's fish and fishery product imports stood at \$10 million, making Uganda a net exporter of fishery products. The data further show that fish accounts for over 50 percent of consumed animal protein, with an annual per capita domestic consumption estimated at 11.2 kg in 2016. Therefore, Uganda must manage its water bodies to promote sustainable and economically profitable use of their resources. This management is specifically vital for Uganda as a country that is currently experiencing huge socioeconomic and demographic shifts that continue to shape its patterns of consumption and production.

Plastic and other waste

Despite the absence of official, concrete and up-to-date data on Uganda's annual plastic debris density in line with SDG indicator 14.1.1, the country recognizes the threat and dangers posed by land-based activities that generate solid waste, including plastics, and the subsequent adversities on inland and outbound water bodies. For example, recent studies¹⁴¹ have shown that about one in five of some of the key fish types in Lake Victoria were found to have ingested plastic. Other research findings¹⁴² have recorded microplastics in surface waters in several sites on the lake.

The plastic situation is attributed to Uganda's growing urbanization and limited infrastructural facilities for handling and integrating plastic into a circular economy approach. The country has continued to sharpen its institutional, policy and legal frameworks for responding to the shifting dynamics of land-based solid waste. The importance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations in waste management service delivery is acknowledged in the country's legislation, including the constitution and the Local Governments Act.

In 2009 and 2010, Uganda enacted its Finance Act (2009) and Finance (Permitted Plastic Bags and Other Plastics for Exceptional Use) Regulations (2010), though their implementation was riddled with legal hurdles, including those initiated or supported by business lobby groups. In 2019, the country reviewed the National Environment Act No. 5 and banned all plastic carrier bags under 30 microns. This ban is in addition to enforcing producer extended responsibility and introducing circular economy approaches as part of its commitments to multilateral environment sustainability pledges. The 2019 National Environment Act also created room for the country to incorporate a broad range of partners and stakeholders into plastic pollution actions. Uganda continues to collaborate with other countries within and outside Africa to curb land-based forms of pollution in marine and coastal ecosystems. In June 2021, the country joined the Clean Seas Campaign, demonstrating its commitment to curtailing the flow of marine litter and plastic waste entering lakes, rivers and the ocean.

140 FAO, Fishery and Aquaculture Country Profile (2022). Available at <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/facp/uga?lang=en>.

141 Biginagwa, F. J., Mayoma, B. S., Shashoua, Y., Syberg, K., & Khan, F. R. (2016). First evidence of microplastics in the African Great Lakes: recovery from Lake Victoria Nile perch and Nile tilapia. *Journal of Great Lakes Research*, 42(1), 146–149.

142 Egessa, R., Nankabirwa, A., Ocaya, H., & Pabire, W. G. (2020). Microplastic pollution in surface water of Lake Victoria. *Science of the Total Environment*, 741, 140201.

42,000 km²

Uganda has several freshwater lakes and rivers and a vibrant fisheries sector. Natural water bodies cover 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.

1.7 million

The fisheries sub-sector employs around 1.7 million people directly and over 3.5 million people indirectly.



Fishermen on Lake Victoria, Uganda
© James Anderson

Uganda is also a member of the Nile Basin Initiative, an intergovernmental partnership of 10 countries in the Nile basin ecosystem. The initiative's aims include fostering the sustainable management and development of water and related resources within its covered geographical areas, including curbing pollution, waste, land degradation and biodiversity loss, all of which affect life below water.

As marine litter and plastic pollution pose an existential threat to ocean health, it is imperative for development partners and the Government to build on ongoing engagements and interventions tied to Uganda's actions on the Clean Seas Campaign and accelerate the country's contribution to the relevant facets of SDG 14. Among others, there is an opportunity to establish a workable circular economy intervention that not only addresses the proliferation of plastic waste but also creates employment opportunities across the entire value chain for plastic transformation. This intervention should focus on the country's young people in rural areas and urban informal settlements.

The above activities and interventions feed into Uganda's contribution to SDG 14 and also help stem the rising tide of plastic waste and other forms of land-based pollution in the country.¹⁴³ Pursuing options to widen the reach and impact of sustainable land management policies and practices, including in Uganda's agricultural sector, will also be pivotal in stemming the tide of nutrient pollution that continues to adversely affect life below water.

3.15 Life on land

Strengthening measures for the protection, restoration and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, as well as the sustainable management of forests, combating of desertification, and curbing land degradation and biodiversity loss, are pivotal to Uganda's national development agenda. At the moment, however, the country's biodiversity, forests and land are faced with multiple constraints that continue to limit benefits accruing to the people, environment and economy. The immediate consequences of weak measures include the limited capacity of natural resources to sustain human health and well-being and the country's desired economic trajectory.

An estimated four million Ugandans live in and around wetlands and rely on agriculture and livestock rearing for food security. The impact of climate change, coupled with other environmental stresses, is increasing the degradation and loss of wetlands and their associated ecosystems; wetland cover stood at 8.9 percent in 2020, down from 10.9 percent in 2014.¹⁴⁴ This loss threatens the country's socioeconomic stability. A good example of the potential consequences is the risk to the country's cattle corridor, which accounts for 4.5 percent of Uganda's GDP and contributes substantially to the 70 percent of employment generated by the agricultural sector.¹⁴⁵

In 2020, the Ugandan Government reported a decline in its forest cover (SDG indicator 15.1.1) from 24 percent (or 4.9 million hectares) in 1990 to 9 percent (1.83 million hectares) in 2018.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ UNEP, *Africa Waste Management Outlook* (2018). Available at www.unep.org/ietc/resources/publication/africa-waste-management-outlook.

¹⁴⁴ Uganda, MWE, *Updated Nationally Determined Contribution* (2022). Available at https://www.mwe.go.ug/sites/default/files/library/Updated%20NDC%20_Uganda.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ Uganda, MWE, *Submission of Uganda's Interim Nationally Determined Contribution* (2021). Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Uganda%20interim%20NDC%20submission_.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ Government of Uganda, *Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2020). Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26352VNR_2020_Uganda_Report.pdf.

This is a loss of 3 million hectares in just 25 years. The country identifies land degradation as a key drawback in the attainment of its national development plans and priorities. National reports show 20 percent of the country has been identified as land degradation hotspots. The extent of degradation threatens Uganda's national economy – governmental estimates indicate that at least 50 percent of the country's GDP is attributed to the natural resource sector, including land for agriculture and livestock production.¹⁴⁷ As well as land degradation, multiple sectors are also being affected by declining forest cover.

Uganda has a proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity covered by protected areas (SDG indicator 15.1.2) and these protected areas mainly fall under either forestry or wildlife. Out of a total surface area of 241,551 km² consisting of both land and water, 25,981.57 km² (10 percent) is wildlife conservation areas, 24 percent is taken by forest reserves and 13 percent by wetlands.^{148, 149} The country has 10 national parks, 12 wildlife reserves, 10 wildlife sanctuaries, five community wildlife areas, 506 central forest reserves and 191 local forest reserves.¹⁵⁰

It is, however, estimated that over 50 percent of Uganda's wildlife resources remain outside designated protected areas, mostly on privately owned land, which is an urgent concern for protection and development. The water level in Lake Victoria began to rise in 2019. By 30 April 2020, it had risen from 12 m to 13.32 m.¹⁵¹

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 containing silt into lakes and rivers, which has further reduced the water storage capacities of those water bodies. In addition, urbanization and the related increase in highly impermeable surfaces, like roads, roofs and pavements, has reduced water infiltration into the soil, interception and the evapotranspiration capacity of forests and wetlands. The rising water levels in the lake have had negative impacts, including flooding of hospitals, schools and infrastructure, that have disrupted businesses, destroyed property and displaced thousands of people living and working on the lake's shores.

For over a decade, the frequency and magnitude of disasters has been increasing and risks of loss and damage rising, with grave socioeconomic consequences for citizens' survival, dignity and livelihoods, particularly for the poor. Uganda is exposed to an array of hazards that strike vulnerable communities and systems and affect the country's GDP growth. Disasters are estimated to have reduced GDP performance by an average of 3.5 percent between 2010 and 2014 and their impact was calculated to total 7.5 percent of GDP in 2010.¹⁵²

The country has experienced widespread natural and human-induced hazards, including droughts, floods, earthquakes, hailstorms, windstorms, lightning,

147 Uganda, NPA, *Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25* (2020).

148 Uganda, NEMA, *Sixth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity for Uganda* (2019). Available at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/nr/nr-06/ug-nr-06-en.pdf>.

149 Uganda, NEMA, *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II (2015–2025)* (2016). Available at <https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/NBSAP%20Uganda%202015%20-%20Re-designed.pdf>.

150 Uganda, NEMA, *Sixth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity for Uganda* (2016).

151 Sam Cheptoris, MWE, *Statement on the Rising Water Levels of Lake Victoria and the Nile System* (2020). Available at <https://www.mediacentre.go.ug/media/statement-rising-water-levels-lake-victoria-and-nile-system>.

152 Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister, *National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas* (2021).

landslides, fires, conflicts, desert locust invasion and disease (human, crop and livestock). Though their magnitude and coverage vary, these hazards 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).

The July 2021 torrential rains caused the Nyamwamba River in the Western region and Lake Kyoga in the Northern region to overflow, resulting in loss of lives, damage to infrastructure and localized crop losses. In mid-June 2021, the FAO Agricultural Stress Index warned of severe drought conditions affecting cropland in several eastern and northern districts. The rains were also below average in central and southern areas and had a negative impact on vegetation conditions and yields in some districts.¹⁵³ By August 2021, the Office of the Prime Minister had received at least 18 alerts from district local governments regarding decreased crop production and the associated risks to food security and livelihoods of vulnerable communities. Additionally, various socioeconomic indicators (such as food prices, household food stock and labour wages) were reported to be outside normal ranges, a sign that these hazards were affecting communities.

Between 1993 and 2018, flooding was blamed for 93 percent of damage to health facilities (129 of the 138 damaged facilities), while storms and earthquakes accounted for 5 percent and 1 percent, respectively. Of the 49 health facilities destroyed, about 89 percent were lost to floods, 6 percent to fires and 4 percent lost to other hazards.

Of the 11 sectors assessed in the National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas, the social development sector, followed by the agriculture sector, appeared to be the most sensitive to hazards. The education and sports and land, housing and urban development sectors were highly exposed to four of the major hazards in the Atlas while the water and environment and works and transport sectors were highly exposed to three.¹⁵⁴

Uganda's fast-growing urbanization and human population (estimated at about 3.2 percent per annum) in a climate of limited resources and technical capacity remain a key factor in the erosion of ecological stability.¹⁵⁵ Combined, these anthropogenic phenomena drive the need for more space for settlements and the opening up of new lands for food and agricultural production; and this often happens with limited application of the relevant environmental safeguards and standards. Most of the mandated institutions in the environment sector, such as the National Environment Management Authority, have limited enforcement capabilities, even where there are clear violations of the existing development rules and guidelines.¹⁵⁶ Weak or misguided policy interventions also contribute to the increasing instability of the country's biodiversity, including in the mountain and rangeland ecosystems.

Despite Uganda's attempt to initiate local mechanisms for the conservation and sustainability of its biodiversity, several challenges abound and continue to hamper implementation. However, the country could curb some of these challenges through targeted policy-based interventions that enhance public awareness of and participation in conservation at national and sub-national levels.

¹⁵³ FAO, GIEWS Country Brief: Uganda (2021) Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UGA_18.pdf.

¹⁵⁴ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister, National Vulnerability and Risk Atlas (2021).

¹⁵⁵ Uganda, NEMA, Uganda National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II (2015–2025) (2016). Available: <http://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/NBSAP%20Uganda%202015%20-%20Re-designed.pdf>.

¹⁵⁶ Government of Uganda, National Environment Act, 2019. Available: [https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/National%20Environment%20Act,%202019%20\(I\).pdf](https://nema.go.ug/sites/all/themes/nema/docs/National%20Environment%20Act,%202019%20(I).pdf).

Most of the mandated institutions in the environment sector, such as the National Environment Management Authority, have limited enforcement capabilities, even where there are clear violations of the existing development rules and guidelines.

This is in addition to fostering strong coordination among the government entities with interest in biodiversity, forests and land, with a view to enhancing coherence and utilization of the Government's limited human and financial resources.

Uganda's forest ecosystem restoration interventions have however not kept pace with the annual loss of forest cover and loss of individual trees. Interventions need to be paired with other correlated measures, such as clean energy supply and connection of households to reliable power supply systems, to aid offsetting wood fuel pressure. New interventions should build on existing and previously made gains. These gains include 3,500 hectares of degraded natural forests having been restored and 950 km of external forest boundaries having been resurveyed and marked.

Uganda is at an opportune moment to transform its agricultural sector and wider food systems towards being more responsive to the changing climate, while also curbing the sector's impacts on biodiversity and other ecosystems. This transformation would go a long way in minimizing pollution of freshwater systems by agriculture and other land use activities, while also feeding into the country's long-term development plan. A key area in the transformation could be the full-scale national roll-out of extension services for land use best practices that are consistent with nature protection.

In acknowledging the surging threats to the country's biodiversity, lands and forests, Ugandan authorities have taken various actions. Key among them are legislative and policy interventions, which continue to evolve in the face of the shifting nature of the environmental shocks on ecosystems, as well as emerging regional and global instruments of cooperation.

The Government 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. Ugandan authorities have also continued to promote elaborate legal regimes that feed into strengthening the management of biodiversity and other ecosystems in the country. Most of the interventions are grounded in the country's 1995 Constitution, which obligates the Government to "protect important natural resources, including land, water, wetlands, minerals, oils, fauna, and flora on behalf of the people of Uganda".

Some of the constitutional facets provide for the country's legislative arms, such as the Parliament, to enact laws intended to protect the environment from abuse, pollution and degradation, as well as for managing the environment for sustainable development. Uganda's biodiversity policies, objectives and priorities are implemented by various governmental entities with the overall coordination of Uganda's National Environment Management Authority. The country is currently implementing its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II for the period 2015–2025.

Through this plan, the country intends to increase the awareness of all stakeholders of the purpose and importance of conserving the country's biodiversity as well as to strengthen stakeholder coordination and build capacity for information management, research and monitoring. Uganda's development agenda, as set out in Vision 2040, is integrated into the biodiversity plan. The actions in the biodiversity plan are in addition to building greater alignment between the SDGs and the Africa Union Agenda 2063, and with the natural resource management targets and priorities of the East African Community's Member States. Uganda has also developed and is currently implementing the Biodiversity Finance Plan (2019) for resource mobilization.

Uganda has acceded to various international environmental agreements for biodiversity conservation and management at global and regional levels. These include the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992); the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000); the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973); the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the RAMSAR Convention); the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1994); and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992).

The Government established the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Centre in 2014 under the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management. The centre contributes to an integrated and multisectoral systems approach to disaster planning, preparedness and management that is fundamental to sustained productivity and socioeconomic growth. The national policy is the guiding domestic resource mobilization document for disaster preparedness, but does not recognize that disasters disproportionately impact women, children, the elderly and PWDs. Advocacy is needed to lobby for revisions to ensure that the policy is gender-responsive and includes preventing and responding to GBV.¹⁵⁷

Uganda has taken a comprehensive approach to gender-related issues in the third national action plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The plan, 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, based on the national plan, make strong commitments regarding women's role in mitigating these conflicts.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ UNICEF, *Gender Responsive Disaster Risk Management: An Analysis of Gender Integration in National and Regional Disaster Risk Management Frameworks in Eastern and Southern Africa (2021)*. Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/gender-responsive-disaster-risk-management>.

¹⁵⁸ Kasese District Local Government, *Local Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2021)*. Available from https://www.kasese.go.ug/local-action-on-peace-security-and-conflict-resolution-2021_25/



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3.16 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 – middle-income status. While the 2005 constitutional referendum introduced a multiparty system in Uganda, 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. Some analysts described the January 2021 general election as the most violent in the country's history. The election was characterized by persistent claims of arbitrary arrests and detention of members of the opposition and pre-election riots that resulted in the death of at least 54 people.

Challenges of political patronage, weak governance institutions, limited accountability, shrinking civic space, human rights violations, gender inequality and limited access to justice are some of the key areas that affect Uganda's ability to fulfil the 2030 Agenda. The 2022 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance indicates that Uganda's ranking has declined in all key indicators, besides public perception of overall governance, in the last decade.¹⁵⁹

The country ranks 31 out of 54 countries on overall governance, at 31 on security and rule of law, at 37 on participation, rights and inclusion, at 15 on foundations for economic opportunity, at 26 on human development and at 12 on public perception of overall governance.

Despite the recent decline in governance rankings, remarkable progress has been made on some indicators related to internal security. Data from the 2017 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).¹⁶⁰ For both men and women, the feeling of safety was more marked during the day than at night, having increased significantly from 51 percent in 2013 to 94.3 percent in 2017. 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.

Sporadic incidents of insecurity, including widespread VAWG in some parts of the country, have undermined the feelings of safety and security reported in 2017. In mid-2021, for example, citizens in the south of the country were terrorized by machete-wielding killers.

Additionally, the results of the 2017 survey show that violence in all forms remains a serious and life-threatening human rights violation for many girls, boys and women in all contexts. More than half of women and men aged 15–49 reported that they had experienced physical violence since age 15 (men: 52 percent, women: 51 percent) and one in five had experienced physical violence in the 12 months preceding the survey (men: 20 percent, women: 22 percent).

Data from household surveys, the Demographic and Health Surveys and prevalence studies completed in 11 countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa region reveals the severity of the violence against children in Uganda. The data show that the magnitude and severity of sexual, physical and emotional violence against children are among the highest in the world.

¹⁵⁹ See <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiaa>.

¹⁶⁰ Uganda, UBOS Report of the National Governance Peace and Security Survey 2017 (2017). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/12_2018The_NGPSS_Report_2017.pdf.

More than one in five girls (23.2 percent) and one in 10 boys (10.5 percent) experience sexual violence before reaching 18 years. More than half of boys (53.8 percent) and four in 10 girls (40 percent) experience physical violence in their childhood. Nearly 18 percent of girls and 20 percent of boys report experiencing emotional violence in childhood.¹⁶¹

Women and men who have been divorced, separated or widowed report that they experience higher rates of physical violence (women: 64 percent, men: 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.¹⁶²

While the internet can be a powerful tool for children to connect, explore, learn and engage in creative and empowering ways,¹⁶³ online child sexual exploitation and abuse has become a threat. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to online platforms in many aspects of children's lives, with 40 percent of 12–17 year olds in Uganda reported to be internet users. Of a nationally representative sample of 1,016 children who are online, an important proportion has been exposed to online abuse. One in 10 had been offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos of themselves and 3 percent had been threatened or blackmailed online to engage in sexual activities. While many refuse such attempts,

161 Data is based on 11 countries that completed the national violence against children survey from 2007 to 2020: Botswana, Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

162 Uganda, UBOS Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016 (2018).

163 General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, CRC/C/GC/25.

164 Uganda, MGLSD and others, Violence against Children in Uganda: Findings from a National Survey (2018). Available at <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/2156/file/Violence%20Against%20Children%20Survey%202018.pdf>.

165 Uganda, MGLSD, The National Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence in Uganda. Available from https://uganda.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/15_03_18_%20MALE%20INVOLVEMENT%20STRATEGY%2024%20JULY%202017.pdf.

166 Ibid.

around 8–15 percent of children who are threatened online comply.¹⁶⁴ Boys and girls were equally likely to experience online child sexual exploitation and abuse. A third of children who had experienced online child sexual exploitation and abuse did not tell anyone about their experiences.

The Government of Uganda's commitment to addressing GBV as a serious human right, public health and a socioeconomic concern in Uganda, is reflected in the Elimination of Gender Based Violence in Uganda policy and the Domestic Violence Act (2010) and its regulations (2011). These documents focus on the protection of rights holders and offer strategic guidance to duty bearers.¹⁶⁵ The prevalence, complexity and the social acceptance of GBV have generated the recognition that the prevention and response to GBV requires broad community participation and particularly the participation of men and boys.¹⁶⁶

Regional peace and security

Much of the country has been free from armed conflict since 2006 when the Lord's Resistance Army relocated from northern Uganda to the DRC and the Central African Republic. However, the threat of armed conflict remains prominent, with rebel groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces still active in eastern DRC and engaged in terrorist activities in Uganda. Uganda experienced a terrorist attack in November 2021 when suicide bombers, allegedly linked to the Allied Democratic Forces, detonated a bomb on the streets of Kampala.

Instability, conflict and insecurity in the Great Lakes region have negatively affected Uganda, stretching available resources and having a negative socioeconomic and environmental impact. The poorest districts in Uganda are among those hosting the largest numbers of refugees, with 53 percent of the total refugee population in Uganda living in the West Nile region. In some cases, the refugee numbers are almost equal to those of the host population. Uganda currently hosts 1.5 million refugees, the largest refugee population in Africa and the third largest in the world.¹⁶⁷ This additional population increases pressure on natural resources and demand for social service delivery, particularly in health and education, as 60 percent of the refugee population are children. Women and girl refugees are at high risk of and particularly vulnerable to GBV and violence against children. Given the operating environment, refugees are also subject to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by workers in the refugee settlements.

Since 2017, Uganda has implemented the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, whose approach is among the most progressive 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. 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 the investigation and feedback process regarding cases of SEA. All refugee settlements should have SEA risk mitigation measures in place.

Human rights

Uganda has a broad institutional and legislative framework that protects human rights. The country has developed a National Action Plan on Human Rights, which is now awaiting Cabinet approval. To eliminate human rights violations, a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 was developed and then launched in October 2021. This action plan is a measure to strengthen the State's duty to protect human rights, enhance the corporate responsibility to respect human rights and ensure access to remedy for victims of human rights violations and abuses resulting from non-compliance by business entities. In addition, Uganda is developing a National Affirmative Programme for Indigenous Peoples which is awaiting validation and approval by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. Uganda has also established human rights bodies and structures to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights. These institutions include the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. The Human Rights Committee in Parliament was established in 2012 to track and report on human rights concerns and monitor government compliance with international and national human rights standards. The Committee has been active in scrutinising allegations of torture, visiting places of detention and calling for accountability for violations.

Uganda engages with international and regional human rights mechanisms and with the Universal Periodic Review, with the third review conducted in January 2022. Uganda accepted several recommendations, including those relating to the rights of persons with disabilities and adoption of a national action plan on human rights.

¹⁶⁷ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, "Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal". Available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga>.

The Government's report to the Committee Against Torture was also considered in November 2022. To address online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA), Uganda is developing a national action plan on OCSEA, has developed the National ICT Policy on OCSEA and the Cyber Security Strategy 2022, and will develop guidelines for child online protection. There is a need to develop coordinated approaches to ending violence against children and GBV in humanitarian and development contexts.

Despite these developments, the human rights situation in Uganda remains of concern, with testimonies 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 weakened, 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, abductions and detention, as well as enforced disappearances. In addition, opposition political party activities were met with serious repression, culminating in the November 2020 incident during which at least 54 individuals were killed in Kampala.¹⁶⁸ During the election period, public institutions restricted civic space, for example, the Uganda Communications Commission ordered the closure of internet services and suspension of social media platforms, citing the possibility of using these forums to incite subversion, violence, and other illegal activities which would have undermined the integrity of the elections. Media freedoms were curtailed overall.

¹⁶⁸ European Union External Action Service, 2020 EU Annual Human Rights Report – Uganda Update (2021). Available at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/101396/2020-eu-annual-human-rights-report-uganda-update_uz.

¹⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch, World Report 2021: Uganda Events of 2020 (2021). Available at <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/uganda>.

¹⁷⁰ 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".

While the ban on most social media platforms has been lifted, the ban on Facebook is yet to be lifted. Under the guise of the Government's COVID-19 restrictions, opposition rallies were dispersed, and political leaders arbitrarily arrested and detained.¹⁶⁹ 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.

The disarmament operation in the Karamoja subregion, operating since July 2021, has been criticised for undermining the enjoyment of human rights and resulting in over 10,000 civilians being arrested, most of them subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment. The practice of trying civilians by military court martial continues, which breaches the right to fair trial guaranteed by the Constitution. The efforts of holding security forces personnel responsible for having committed human rights violations remains ineffective since the investigation and prosecution of alleged violations often fail to be carried out in a fair, impartial and timely manner.

Despite the existing protective legislative framework, including Article 29 of the Constitution of Uganda,¹⁷⁰ the interpretation and misuse of existing legislation and ongoing police practices indicate a drift towards restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly and association. These restrictions mainly target opposition groups, media and civil society organizations, and include targeted arrests of media workers and opposition members as well as stricter controls on and disruption of peaceful gatherings and the media's work.

The continued misinterpretation and excessive use of discretionary powers by the Uganda Police Force (UPF) under the Public Order Management Act (2013) has resulted in unlawful restrictions of peaceful public assemblies, particularly those organized by opposition groups. Since the act came into force, gaps in the law have enabled the UPF to use discretion in implementing it. The security forces have faced criticism for using excessive force in responding to protests and causing unnecessary harm to individuals demonstrating.

This conduct by UPF is inconsistent with the principles of proportionality, legality and necessity in policing. While protestors have blocked roads and, in some instances, burned 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. On 25 October 2022, the Computer Misuse (Amendment) Act, which is widely perceived as an effort to censure freedom of expression and exchange of information, came into force.

Functional performance benchmarks for institutions, such as the Electoral Commission, Judiciary and Uganda Human Rights Commission, have been strengthened, resulting in the successful review and enhancement of the Electoral Commission Strategic Plan (2021/2022–2024/2025).¹⁷¹ Enactment of the Judiciary Administration Bill, which is currently the Judiciary Administration Act (2020) has contributed to the separation of powers by providing for autonomy of the Judiciary in several aspects, including financial independence, effective control of resources related to administration of justice and personnel. Completion of video conferencing systems for two courts and two prisons has enhanced services and accountability in the Justice System as well as enabled critical training on international human rights standards and law enforcement in the conduct of elections.

The Human Rights Enforcement Act of 2019 revolutionised the legislation around the protection and promotion of human rights. The Act imposes defined obligations on duty-bearers to protect and promote human rights.

¹⁷¹ A plan is in place and in alignment with the NDPIII's priority programme of Governance and Security and the 2030 Agenda, specifically Goal 16 on peace, justice and accountable institutions and Goal 5 on gender equality.

54 people

Opposition political party activities were met with serious repression, culminating in the November 2020 incident during which at least 54 individuals were killed in Kampala.

10,000 civilians

The disarmament operation in the Karamoja subregion, operating since July 2021, has been criticised for undermining the enjoyment of human rights and resulting in over 10,000 civilians being arrested, most of them subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment.

However, its implementation has divided opinions among the judiciary. In some cases, judicial officers have used the Act to nullify prosecutions that include human rights violations, such as torture, and the court system has ruled that the Act cannot be used to bring human rights public litigation cases before the High Court. These decisions are despite the Act allowing any person to bring an action before the High Court, for the benefit of the general public. Furthermore, the implementation on the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act of 2012 has been slow. This delay is mainly attributed to the preference of State Attorneys to use the Penal Code Act to prosecute perpetrators of torture, despite the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act providing stiffer penalties to perpetrators and better remedies for victims.

3.17 Partnerships for the goals

Development cooperation and partnership

Partnerships are a critical lever to delivery on global, regional and national development aspirations, such as the 2030 Agenda, Africa Union Agenda 2063, the EAC Vision 2050, Vision 2040 and the national development plans. The NDP III underscores the importance of multi-stakeholder development partnerships in the country's journey to sustainable development through its 18 programme areas. The NDP III conceptualizes partnerships with a broad realm of development stakeholders, including, civil society, development partners, donors and private sector. One of the major shifts in the NDP III is the change from a disjointed sector approach to a more coherent programme-based approach to planning, budgeting and implementation which strengthens cooperation among different sectors of national development. This approach offers an opportunity to improve collaboration among stakeholders, reduce duplication of efforts and exploit synergies based on competitive advantage of the respective contributing stakeholders.

Recognizing the role of partnerships among actors in the successful implementation of SDGs, the Government of Uganda set up the National Coordination Framework for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, under the leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister. The coordination structures of the framework include representatives of government ministries, departments and agencies, 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 the multi-stakeholder National SDG Taskforce chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister.

The framework sets out and assigns responsibilities for coordination, monitoring and reporting; planning and mainstreaming; resource mobilization and financing; data systems; and communication and popularization. At the technical level, the coordination framework is actualized through technical working groups led by different oversight institutions with specific roles: (i) the National Planning Authority ensures that planning frameworks at all levels are well aligned with the SDGs, (ii) the Uganda Bureau of Statistics coordinates data production for SDGs, (iii) the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development ensures resource mobilization and financing for SDGs, (iv) the Ministry of Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance coordinates communication and popularization of SDGs; and (v) the Office of the Prime Minister is in charge of the overall coordination, monitoring and reporting for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

At the policy level, the NDP III emphasizes the need to promote the implementation of the National Partnership Policy (2013)¹⁷² as a reform for effective NDP III implementation. The Office of the Prime Minister is tasked to promote the partnership policy among the various players so they can align their activities for the effective implementation of the NDP III. The programme approach adopted in the NDP III also necessitated the reorganization and restructuring of the way the Government relates with its partners. Under the National Partnership Policy, the National Partnership Forum (NPF) was established in 2014 to ensure efficient and targeted cooperation between the Government and its development partners, as well as to promote transparency and accountability.

However, NPF's effectiveness in addressing the development partnership challenges, trends and needs has been questioned by several stakeholders. The NPF has not been convened since 2018 and has not responded to the rapidly evolving development partnership landscape, which requires involvement of all the key development actors as is prescribed by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.¹⁷³ Some of those excluded from the NPF include civil society, non-traditional development partners and donors, and the private sector.¹⁷⁴

On the development partner's side, the Local Development Partners' Group (LDPG), established in 2006 and currently co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator, coordinates development partners' engagement with the Government on issues related to development cooperation at the policy, programme and project levels. The LDPG is composed of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) donors and the associated multilateral and vertical funds.

The Government and the LDPG are currently renewing their commitment to improving the effectiveness of development cooperation. This renewal is being done through promoting national ownership and leadership, effectiveness for results and inclusive partnerships, and increasing transparency and mutual accountability in the management of development cooperation. They have initiated discussions on establishing a framework for partnership dialogue, which is envisaged to involve biannual high-level engagements at the NPF. The ongoing efforts to

172 The National Partnership Policy (2013) sets out the guiding principles and priorities for the Government's management of the relationship with its Development Partners and the external assistance provided within the context of the National Development Plans.

173 See <https://effectivecooperation.org/>.

174 Uganda, MFPED, Uganda's Development Partnership Review: A country Pilot of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2020). Available at https://effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-09/undp-ug-Uganda_Partnership%20Review-2020.pdf.

reform the NPF could be an opportunity to provide a more inclusive and vibrant coordination mechanism. The reformed NPF would also be an anchor for a consolidated development support approach that is aligned to national priorities, fully transparent and accountable to the people of Uganda.

Internally, the UN System in Uganda is establishing the UN Common Partnership and Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy to promote shared understanding of the key concepts and approaches to UN partnership and joint resource mobilization. The strategy will also articulate a joint UNCT vision on partner engagement, resource mobilization and development financing. This strategy will enhance the UN's positioning and effectiveness for mobilizing resources.

The preliminary report of the 2022 mid-term review (MTR) of the NDPIII has identified several gaps which have hindered the effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation in Uganda. While the MTR acknowledges that the LDPG periodically engages with the Government through the Economic Management Group at Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the NPF and programme working groups, which to some extent involve civil society and the private sector, it also notes that this engagement is primarily through discussion groups rather than decision-making platforms and is without binding actions.

The NDPIII MTR also found that the effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation is in part constrained by lack of a joint assessment and accountability framework that would bind the Government and its partners – the Government Annual Performance Report has not been an effective anchor for mutual accountability on either side. The MTR's recommendations emphasize the need to: (i) have a revitalized mechanism to facilitate regular government-led dialogue with development

partners and other actors, including representatives of private sector and civil society; (ii) strengthen the operation mechanism of the NPF by adopting a framework for mutual accountability; and (iii) promote an integrated data tracking mechanism for all development financing and other forms of support from partners towards development activities in Uganda.

The findings of the NDPIII MTR reveal that new approaches are required to better integrate development partnership, planning and financing. 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 created to overcome the country's development challenges. All available resources, both on and off-budget, need to be consolidated and aligned with core government development priorities.

Uganda's development financing landscape

While new forms of development finance have emerged, traditional forms of aid remain significant, particularly in the social sectors. Uganda has not fully utilized the opportunities offered by new and innovative financing prospects, such as concessional loans, public-private partnerships and green financing. For over two decades, the Government of Uganda has mobilized resources from a narrow base of financing options composed of domestic tax revenues, concessional and non-concessional loans, and borrowing from the domestic market in the form of treasury bills and bonds. Tax remains the primary source of revenue for the country. However, the country's needs have evolved, from a focus on poverty reduction in the 1990s to higher development aspirations like infrastructure to spur productivity growth in key sectors of the economy. This evolution has been amidst a new global financing landscape characterised by declining official development assistance.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development provides a global framework for financing sustainable development, requiring alignment of all financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities. In recent years, financing for development and the SDGs has been at a crossroads. Many developing countries, including Uganda, are struggling to raise the level of finances needed to achieve the SDGs and other national development priorities. The 2019 Development Finance Assessment¹⁷⁵ and a review of the partnership arrangements in Uganda¹⁷⁶ recognize that an increasingly complex and diversified development finance landscape is emerging.

¹⁷⁵ UNDP Uganda, *Development Finance Assessment (2019)*.

¹⁷⁶ Uganda, MoFPED, *Uganda's Development Partnership Review: A Country Pilot of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2022)*. Available at https://effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-09/undp-ug-Uganda_Partnership%20Review-2020.pdf.



The landscape evolution has implications for the Government's approach towards development finance mobilization and management. Not only have new donor options, such as South-South Cooperation and non-traditional lenders, emerged, but also new and innovative forms of finance, such as private finance, digital financing, and green or climate financing, are increasingly present.

Joint accountability mechanisms have been negatively affected by the high levels of corruption in Uganda, which has led to a significant reduction in on-budget support, with more development financing being directly channelled through off-budget modalities to beneficiaries using the private sector and civil society. This is notwithstanding the country having a "Zero-tolerance to Corruption Policy" in place.¹⁷⁷

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine have created multiple macro and micro-level risks and vulnerabilities domestically and externally, creating fiscal and external financing gaps that have implications for debt sustainability and the entire financing landscape.

The country has been undertaking several initiatives to address challenges related to mobilization and efficient use of resources and the alignment of budgets, plans, policies and processes in order to strengthen its domestic revenues and improve management of its expenditures. These initiatives are aimed at accelerating achievement of the country's priorities, enhancing overall economic stability, and achieving sustainable socioeconomic transformation.

As the country strives to enhance its revenue mobilization capacities, it is cognizant of the need to raise revenue in a way that is fair, reduces inequalities and sustains economic growth. It also acknowledges the need to include all relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors in the entire discourse on mobilizing finance for socioeconomic transformation. In this regard, the Government of Uganda developed a Domestic Resource Mobilization Strategy (DRMS),¹⁷⁸ which recognizes the importance of having a medium-term strategy for government revenues, to guarantee a reasonable, realistic and practical approach to sustainable resource mobilization. The Government is also taking a more holistic and strategic approach to managing financing through development of an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), to ensure that the country aligns its development plans, policies and financing with the NDP III and the SDGs. As part of the INFF development process, a Public Investment Financing Strategy,¹⁷⁹ which provides a framework for widening the scope of mobilization of financial resources from domestic, external, emerging and innovative financing options, was developed. In addition, an SDG Investor Map – a market intelligence tool that translates SDG needs and policy priorities into actionable investment opportunities to help the country shift billions of dollars towards the SDGs – was also used.¹⁸⁰ The Government also implemented Tax Inspectors Without Borders¹⁸¹ – a joint initiative of OECD and the United Nations Development Programme – to recover revenues lost to the private sector through transfer pricing.

177 Government of Uganda, *Zero-Tolerance to Corruption Policy* (2019). Available at http://www.igg.go.ug/media/files/publications/Zero_Tolerance_to_Corruption_Policy_ZTP_2019.pdf.

178 Uganda, MoFPED, *Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy* (2019). Available at https://www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/NEW%20DOMESTIC%20REVENUE%20MOBILISATION%20STRATEGY_FEB%202020_0.pdf

179 Uganda, MoFPED, *Public Investment Financing Strategy* (2022). Available at www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/PUBLIC%20INVESTMENT%20FINANCE%20STRATEGY%20FINAL.pdf.

180 SDG Impact, *Impact Intelligence and Facilitation Services for COVID-19 Rebuilding & Sustainable Development Progress* (2021). Available at <https://sdgimpact.undp.org/assets/SDG-Investor-Maps.pdf>.

181 See www.tiwb.org.

Despite the above initiatives, domestic revenue remains low compared to government expenditure, leading to huge budget deficits that are being financed through domestic and external borrowing. This has led to a sharp rise in public debt (see figure 11) and ultimately limited fiscal space for development financing. For instance, the period 2019/20 saw a significant shortfall in tax revenue, amounting to UGX 3,592 billion (18 percent) less than the Government's target for the year; the shortfall was due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Shortfalls were not the case before the pandemic – surplus revenue was collected in 2018/19.

According to the National Budget Framework Paper for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28,¹⁸² domestic revenue is projected to amount to UGX 28,831 billion (13.8 percent of GDP) in 2023/24 from an estimated UGX 25,551 billion in 2022/23.

Out of this, 93 percent is expected to be obtained from tax revenues while the remainder will be obtained from non-tax revenue sources. The projected rise in revenue is attributed to gains on account of higher economic growth and gains due to implementation of the DRMS. Over the medium term, domestic revenue is projected to grow by 0.5 percent of GDP in line with the target set out in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility.¹⁸³

The medium-term financing outlook for Uganda's development agenda highlights that external sources remain an important avenue for deficit financing, representing approximately 4.12 percent of GDP compared to domestic financing at 1.03 percent of GDP in 2021/22 (see table 3).

Table 3: Deficit Financing (percentage of GDP)

Description	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	NDPII	Outurn	NDPII	Outurn	NDPII	Outurn	NDPII	Proj. Outurn
Financing	4.91	4.9	7.48	7.1	7.82	9.0	6.18	7.3
External Financing (Net)	2.81	2.8	4.86	4.0	5.48	4.0	4.12	3.3
Disbursements	3.72	3.7	5.4	4.6	6.29	5.0	5.2	4.3
Budget support loans	0.14	0.1	2.73	1.7	2.7	2.2	2.04	1.8
Project loans	3.58	3.6	2.66	2.8	3.59	2.8	3.15	2.5
Armotisation	-0.91	-0.9	-0.53	-0.6	-0.81	-1.0	-1.07	-1.0
Domestic Financing (Net)	0.92	1.9	0.91	3.4	1	4.6	1.03	4.0
Bank Financing (Net)	0.96	1.0	1.3	2.1	1.33	1.6	0.81	2.4
Non-bank financing	0.9	0.9	0.92	1.3	1	2.9	0.8	1.5

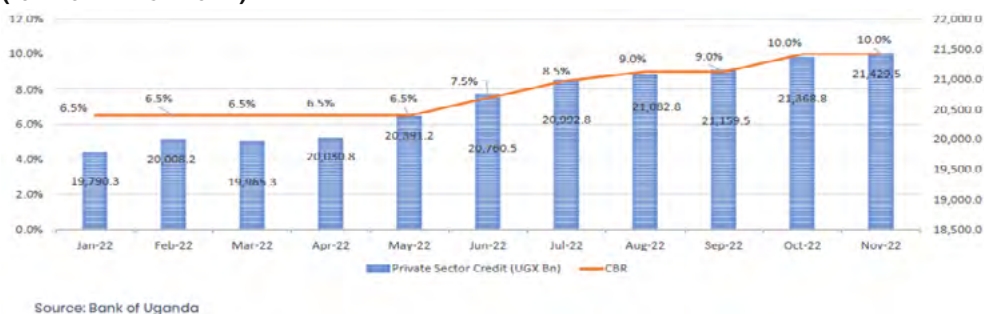
Source: NPA and MFPED (2022)

¹⁸² Uganda, MoFPED, *Final National Budget Framework Paper (2022)*. Available at www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/Final%20National%20Budget%20Framework%20Paper%20FY%202023-24.pdf.

¹⁸³ Uganda, MoFPED, *Charter for Fiscal Responsibility (2022)*. Available at www.finance.go.ug/sites/default/files/Publications/Charter%20for%20Fiscal%20Responsibility%202021-2026.pdf.

The deficit financing strategy under NDPIII has seen increasingly more financing being obtained from domestic sources as compared to external sources, which has had negative ramifications for private sector development. Domestic financing was projected to constitute 4 percent, beyond the NDPIII target of 1.03 percent of GDP in 2021/22. This has contributed to higher commercial bank interest rates, reduced the size of growth in private sector borrowing and hindered expansion of private sector investments to generate income, jobs, goods and services (see figure 10).

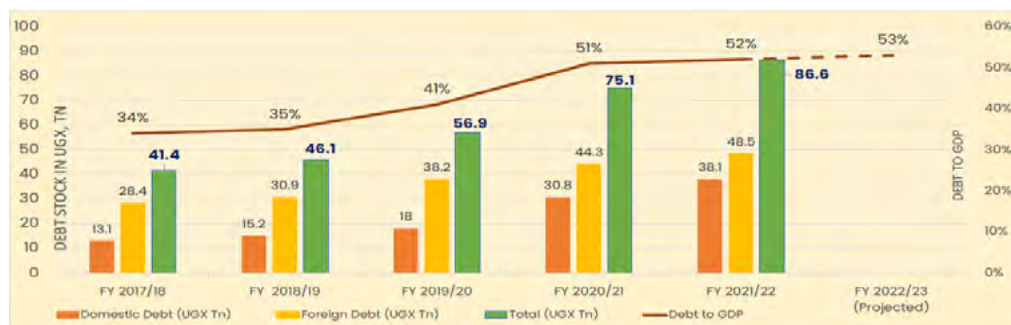
Figure 10: Private sector credit growth vs Central Bank interest rate (Jan 2022–Nov 2022)



Source: Bank of Uganda (2022)

As a consequence of the deficit financing strategy, Uganda's debt situation has deteriorated rapidly over the past five years, exacerbated by the COVID-19 shock. With persistently higher deficits, the debt to GDP ratio surpassed the East African Community convergence threshold of 50 percent and reached 51 percent in 2020/21, slipping the country into "moderate risk of debt distress". The ratio further increased to 52 percent in 2021/22 and is expected to reach 53 percent in 2022/23 (see figure 11). The NDPIII MTR established that high domestic borrowing was partly driven by financing of huge supplementary requests against substantial revenue shortfalls.

Figure 11: Uganda's public debt



Source: Office of the Auditor General Report, 2022.

Rising debt will widen the current account deficit, putting more strain on the NDPIII budget. Rising debt will also mean more resources are allocated to interest payments, which are projected to take 23 percent of the entire NDPIII budget. Coupled with the fact that Uganda's budget is highly committed (in the form of the wage bill, statutory costs and multi-year commitments for ongoing projects and presidential directives), the debt situation will considerably narrow the available fiscal space for development spending and delivery of basic social services.

The NDPIII MTR calls for urgent austerity measures to reign in the levels of spending across all levels of government, including rationalizing the government structure to reduce the wage bill. While recent wage enhancements are justifiable, there is a need to phase wage increases over time in line with the available resource envelope. Enhancing monitoring mechanisms of disbursed funds, would result in savings of the available resources.

Commitment to the Government's own Charter for Fiscal Responsibility needs to be demonstrated in the remaining half of the NDPIII. The intentions of the Charter are to provide fiscal policy objectives for 2021/22 to 2025/26 to ensure sustainable delivery of the country's goal of socioeconomic transformation. The MTR recommends using the Charter as an anchor to enforce fiscal discipline. For example, currently, frequent use of supplementary budgets not matched with revenue collections continues to undermine budget credibility and is not in line with the Charter.

Infrastructural development has been at the core of fiscal policy for the past 12 years. Although this is justifiable, the NDPIII MTR notes that there is need to reprioritise infrastructure projects, with a possibility of phasing them over a longer term if the Government is to meet the targets in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility. The growing national emphasis on flagship infrastructure projects to stimulate long-term growth implies that reliance on the central government to address local development needs will no longer produce sustainable development results. Financing for local governments, whose own-source revenue is insufficient to finance local priorities, needs to be addressed.

While Uganda was among the first countries to commit to and take action towards an INFF, as recommended by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the country's momentum for INFF implementation has slowed down since 2019, when the Development Finance Assessment was prepared.

1.43 billion

Investing in trade facilitation, as well as providing accessible and affordable trade financing, will position Uganda as one of the first movers in the AfCFTA market and ensure that Uganda's small and medium-sized enterprises benefit from the opportunities presented by the huge (1.43 billion people) market.



Nearly 85 percent of all farming households in Uganda are smallholder farmers and their operations are characterized by low levels of productivity.

The country has remained stuck on the third block of the INFF process, with a Public Investment Financing Strategy in place but not yet nationally launched or implemented. Fast tracking the implementation of the INFF as a means of mobilizing resources globally and nationally to support sustainable development will be critical to ensuring more diversified and sustainable development financing. A comprehensive public-private financing strategy also needs to be developed to enable the Government to mobilize resources from the private sector in Uganda and the diaspora.

Government efforts to promote domestic resource mobilization are highly commendable, but progress on the DRMS reforms has been mixed, with some reforms yet to be implemented. Some of the outstanding reforms include: (i) review and rationalization of the value-added zero-rated items, (ii) review of the exemptions under both personal and corporate income tax heads and (iii) review and rationalization of all the tax incentives provided in the tax code. For the taxpayers, appreciation and adoption of the Electronic Fiscal Receipting and Invoicing Solution system and its full integration with their systems is moving at a slow pace. There is also a need to revise the DRMS and its associated policies to take external events, such as pandemics and the effects of geopolitics, into consideration, including creating more flexibility in the tax system to address the impacts of these events.

Financing reforms need to be taken for private sector growth to catalyse investment in the production and trade sector, such as through credit guarantees and restructuring incentive schemes. Investing in trade facilitation, as well as providing accessible and affordable trade financing, will position Uganda as one of the first movers in the AfCFTA market and ensure that Uganda's small and medium-

sized enterprises benefit from the opportunities presented by the huge (1.43 billion people) market.

With the agriculture sector still playing a significant role in Uganda's transformation agenda, agricultural finance and insurance are critical to reducing the vulnerability of households who depend on this sector for their livelihoods. In 2019/20, 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 and their operations are characterized by low levels of productivity. The agricultural sector is highly exposed to risks and access to finance continues to be a major constraint. Therefore, agricultural finance and insurance would support an acceleration of poverty reduction and economic transformation, alongside other interventions such as investing in irrigation systems.

Status of data and statistics for SDGs

National, regional and global reporting obligations have significantly increased the demand for more timely, high quality and disaggregated data. The national statistical system in Uganda has become increasingly stronger and more responsive to these reporting requirements by using existing legal infrastructure, coordination mechanisms and statistical strategies. However, despite efforts by the Government and its partners, Uganda was only able to report on 92 (46 percent) out of 201 applicable indicators in its 2020 Voluntary National Review.¹⁸⁴ By 2022, the number of indicators for which data is available had increased to 119 (59 percent), with a further 6 percent partially available. Despite the increase, this status is still inadequate as some of the available data are based on proxy indicators, which do not adequately satisfy the SDG data needs.

¹⁸⁴ Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister, Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development, (2020).

A review¹⁸⁵ of the status of SDG-related data and statistics in Uganda identified challenges in the enabling legal and policy environment, inadequate capacity for data production, slow adoption of advanced technology in the data value chain and inadequate use of data for decision-making. The report generated the following key findings and strategic actions to address the current data gaps:

- The evolving data landscape has created demand for a stronger and broader institutional coordination mechanism to include other data producers and users.
- To meet the data demands that emerge from the regional and global development frameworks, the Development Frameworks Unit at the Uganda Bureau of Statistics must be expanded to make it more responsive and effective in meeting reporting requirements.
- Statistics units should be established and operationalized in all ministries, departments, agencies and local governments.
- The existing legal frameworks for data and statistics should be reviewed and revised so that they are more inclusive and responsive to the current data needs and requirements.
- Joint programming and resource mobilization between the Government and development partners is required to reduce duplication of efforts and improve efficiency.
- Uganda must address issues of disaggregation, proxies and non-availability of data for the SDG indicators. These inadequacies could be corrected by reviewing the data collection methodologies and tools, strengthening administrative data systems, using emerging innovative data sources to complement traditional data and strengthening data quality assurance.
- The limited use of evidence to inform decision-making should be addressed through timely production of data and statistics to ensure harmonization with other national development policy and planning processes.
- Dissemination and communication of SDG data should be strengthened and data should be provided in a user-friendly manner to inform decision-making, monitoring and reporting at all levels.

¹⁸⁵ See <https://uganda.un.org/en/219513-status-sustainable-development-goals-data-and-statistics-uganda>.



Batwa Pygmies
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Chapter 4: Groups Left Behind or Likely to be Left Behind

The “Leave no one behind” principle is a central promise of the 2030 Agenda and a priority for Uganda. The promise is a commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind.

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From a human rights-based perspective, it is critical to provide opportunity for everyone to meaningfully and effectively participate in society and access resources.¹⁸⁶

The UNCT has identified the marginalized and 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 orphans and vulnerable children, women and girls, children and youth, PWDs, persons with albinism, older people, Indigenous Peoples, ethnic minorities, people living in remote and hard-to-reach areas, sexual minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrants and mobile populations, 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 percent 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 conflict, those in child-headed households, those working under exploitative labour conditions, and those who suffer sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, and other forms of abuse and 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.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ UNDP Committee for Development Policy (CDP), *Leaving no one behind* (2018). Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2018-1.pdf>; UNDP (CDP) *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality* (2019). Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2019-1.pdf>.

¹⁸⁷ UNICEF, *Going Beyond Monetary Poverty: Uganda's Multidimensional Poverty Profile* (2020). Available at <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6146/file/UNICEF-Uganda-Multi-dimensional-child-poverty-2020.pdf>.



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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 and those in child-headed and grandmother-headed households. These children are exposed to various forms of abuse and discrimination and poverty and are often driven into child labour and exploitation. Widows and orphans are routinely denied land and inheritance rights.

Children in the marginalized and fragile areas of Karamoja, Northern Uganda and West Nile experience the highest rates of multidimensional poverty because of their socioeconomic 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 subjected 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.¹⁸⁸

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 and forced 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 and communities and the country at large. National statistics show that 56 percent of women and girls aged 15–49 experience spousal violence and 22 percent experience sexual violence.¹⁸⁹ About 35 percent of girls experience sexual violence and 59 percent of females report having experienced physical violence during childhood.¹⁹⁰

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 a 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. Refugees, adolescent girls and youth, PWDs and PLHIV are also at greater risk.

¹⁸⁸ See publications by Equal Opportunities Commission on gender and equity compact on various sectors in Uganda.

¹⁸⁹ Uganda, UBOS, Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016 (2018).

¹⁹⁰ Uganda, MGLSD and others, Uganda Violence against Children Survey: Findings from a National Survey (2018).

Persons with disabilities

In Uganda, PWDs are vulnerable because of limited targeted support from the Government, and the negative societal attitudes arising from fear, ignorance and superstition, as well as from neglect and lack of awareness of their rights. Historically, PWDs 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 inclusion of PWDs through a rights-based approach to disability but its implementation is not evident. 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 PWDs. 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.

Ugandan law grants power to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to determine whether a person who has been found not guilty by reason of insanity may be confined in a mental hospital, prison or other suitable place of custody or be

discharged.¹⁹¹ The exercise of this power has been a subject of controversy as well as litigation. For more than 25 years, no minister has exercised this power and persons with mental health disabilities and illnesses have languished in prisons as opposed to being sent to mental health hospitals for treatment. The plight of this group of inmates has been addressed by the guidelines issued by the Principal Judge on 22 September 2022, which describe the steps that must be taken to detain and treat such inmates.

In 2017, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics undertook a countrywide functional difficulties survey, which was followed in 2019 by a situational analysis of PWDs.¹⁹² The survey found that overall, 8.5 percent of Ugandans have a disability. Prevalence increases sharply with age – 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 5 to 17 were found to have some form of disability.¹⁹³ 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 and 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 and boys are slightly more likely to experience disability, but prevalence is higher among women after age 40.

¹⁹¹ Section 48 of the Trial on Indictment Act, 1971; Section 113 of the Magistrates' Court Act, 1971.

¹⁹² Uganda, UBOS Persons with Disability. Bridging the Gap Through Statistics (2018). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2019DISABILITY_MONOGRAPH_-_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁹³ Uganda, UBOS 2017 Uganda Functional Difficulties Survey (2018). Available at www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/07_2019Uganda_Functional_Difficulties_Survey_2017.pdf.

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, including Uganda. The complexity and uniqueness of the condition means that their experiences touch on several human rights issues, significantly and simultaneously. These issues include discrimination and stigma; limited accessibility to specialized services in health and education; harmful traditional practices; violence, including killings and 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 programmes. However, because this is only a recent development, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics has not included albinism in any census of persons with disability and 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 1.5 million (4 percent) of the population.¹⁹⁴ Older persons face challenges of loneliness, poverty, poor housing, poor health and nutrition, among others. Income shortfall is a major challenge for almost three in 10 older persons and can force them to remain actively engaged in income-generating activities well beyond the age of 60, which could cause 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.

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 (29 percent) living in the Eastern region. In addition, 85 percent of active older persons are still engaged in crop farming and have no social security. The economic situation of many older people 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.

¹⁹⁴ Uganda, UBOS, *Uganda National Survey Report 2019/2020* (2020).



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As noted above, older persons, especially older women, are also far more likely to experience one or more forms of disability.

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 as contrasting with "the modern lifestyle". These are mostly hunter-gatherer 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 Indigenous Peoples, the Government has indicated that Indigenous Peoples include the Abayanda (Batwa), Benet, Ik and Karamojong pastoralists and the Tepeth in Karamoja. These inclusions are 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 those of 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.¹⁹⁵ GBV 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.¹⁹⁶ Indigenous people in Uganda have been displaced by the establishment of national parks and conservation areas, leading to negative impacts including loss of livelihoods and higher poverty levels.

In 2019, the Government formed the National Indigenous Peoples Reference Committee and initiated a drafting and consultation process for a national affirmation action programme on Indigenous Peoples.

Ethnic minorities

Ethnic minority groups are scattered across Uganda. In the north there are the Alur, Ik, Kakwa, Karamojong cluster, Lugbara, Luluba, Ma'di and Nubian. In the east there are the Bagungu, Bakenyi, Bavuma, Ik and Soo and in the west there are the 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 retrogressive assumption made by Ugandan society is that minorities are "temporary" societies destined to disappear because of modernization and this has led to attempts to assimilate them into the dominant society. This approach has had a tremendous negative impact on Ugandan minority groups.

¹⁹⁵ A 2009 report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) noted, for example, that in Karamoja, an estimated 82 percent of the population lived in poverty (compared to 31 percent nationally); 9 percent had access to sanitation units (compared to 62 percent nationally); 31 percent had access to safe water (compared to 63 percent nationally); maternal mortality rates (per 100,000 live births) were 750 in Karamoja (compared to 435 nationally); and literacy rates were 11 percent (compared to 67 percent nationally). OCHA, Focus on Karamoja, Special Report No. 3 – October 2008 to January 2009. Available at www.cultura21.net/karamoja/docs/FocusKja-SpecRep3.pdf.

¹⁹⁶ A 2010 study reported that 100 percent of Batwa women who participated in individual interviews had experienced some form of violence. See: Minority Rights Group International, *Uncounted: The Hidden Lives of Batwa Women (2010)*. Available at <https://minorityrights.org/publications/uncounted-the-hidden-lives-of-batwa-women-may-2010/>.

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 the, often rural, 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

People, including children, living in remote and geographically inhospitable areas in mountainous terrain, impenetrable rainforests, islands and floodplains are highly vulnerable to multidimensional 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 socioeconomic services, such as education, health, agricultural extension services and credit.

Sexual minorities

Sexual minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, have historically been isolated, marginalized and discriminated against by family members and communities. In Uganda, there is a general social tendency to express aversion towards individuals who are or are perceived to be sexual minorities.

Sexual minorities have faced backlash, 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". There has also been legislation targeted at sexual minorities. On 4 May 2021, Parliament passed the Sexual Offences Bill (2019) that among its provisions criminalized same sex relationships.

The President did not assent to the Bill but returned it to Parliament for reconsideration on grounds that several of its clauses were already captured and provided for in the Penal Code Act and Article 9 (3) of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda. Parliament action on the Bill is still pending. Sections 145 and 146 of the Penal Code Act, Chapter 120, criminalize "unnatural offences" and attempts to commit such offences. Homosexual acts are considered unnatural offences and are punishable by imprisonment for life. Attempts to commit such acts are punishable by seven years imprisonment.

The Anti-Homosexuality Act (2014), which was assented to by the President but later annulled by the Constitutional Court was retabled and passed by Parliament in March 2023 as a new bill, awaiting assent by the President.

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. These include behavioural, sociocultural and biomedical factors, including concurrent sexual partnerships, sero-discordance and lack of disclosure, transactional and commercial sex, low and inconsistent condom use, low rates of male circumcision, and alcohol and drug use. Structural, sociocultural and economic aspects include poverty, gender inequalities, stigma and discrimination as well as gaps in access to prevention, care and treatment services.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Uganda AIDS Commission Uganda Aids Country Progress Report July 2017–June 2018 (2018). Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/country/documents/UGA_2019_countryreport.pdf.

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 its 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 Stock¹⁹⁸ estimates place the number of international migrants in Uganda at 1.7 million people, constituting 3.9 percent of its total population. In the same year, approximately 740,000 Ugandans were living outside the country. Ugandans' participation in regional, continental and global labour markets is growing, contributing an average of 4.5 percent of GDP through remittances received. Since most Ugandans migrate within Africa (76.5 percent), the AfCFTA will 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 towards urban centres or regions with high economic activity.¹⁹⁹ 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. These populations include migrant workers facing sexual exploitation and abuse, victims of trafficking, migrants in detention, unaccompanied children, stranded migrants, displaced persons, and pastoralists.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *International Migrant Stock 2019* (2019). Available at www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/docs/MigrationStockDocumentation_2019.pdf.

¹⁹⁹ International Organization of Migration, *Qualitative Research Study on Rural-Urban Labour Migration of Young Ugandans* (2015).

These groups can find themselves in vulnerable situations requiring protection and assistance at various points during their journeys, while 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 and mobile 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 implementing actions towards relevant priority objectives and associated commitments and ensure those actions and objectives do not create, exacerbate or unintentionally increase vulnerabilities of migrants.

In September 2022, the Employment (Amendment) Bill (2022) was re-tabled for first reading. It seeks to regulate the employment of Ugandans abroad by mandating the minister responsible to prescribe minimum requirements for recruiting someone for employment abroad. The minimum requirements, according to the bill, should include a job description, details of working hours, guaranteed wages and emoluments, details of worker compensation benefits, and war hazard protection. The bill states that the Employment (Recruitment of Migrant Workers) Regulations (2005) does not provide principal provisions on the recruitment and placement of Ugandan migrant workers for work abroad.

The lack of comprehensive provisions regulating the recruitment and employment of migrant workers has resulted in reports of Ugandan migrant workers ending up in conditions indicative of human trafficking, limited monitoring and protection, and, in the worst-case scenarios, loss of lives. The new bill further seeks to regulate employment of migrant workers in Uganda, arguing that the current Employment Act only prohibits the illicit movements of migrant workers in and out of the country. The proposed law tasks an employer to ensure that the migrant worker has a valid work permit, as well as to keep a register of all migrant workers employed at the workplace.

Refugees

Poverty remains high among the refugee population, at more than twice the level of the host communities, and although refugees in Uganda receive land and mobility rights, they remain food insecure and are heavily dependent on food and nutrition assistance. Despite the positive provisions on the right to work for refugees, few are able to achieve self-reliance. The refugee population is excluded from economic growth and benefits only in a 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. Employment among refugees is half that of host community members.²⁰⁰ Most earn an income from small-scale agriculture.²⁰¹

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

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



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 the relevant age group in 2018.²⁰² 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 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 and inadequate services to respond to reported cases.²⁰³

Access to quality maternal health care is limited and compounded by the scarcity of water and sanitation services. Due to the lack of livelihood opportunities, some women engage 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 of SGBV were reported. Refugee women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence against women and by other harmful practices owing to their increased vulnerability. For example, SGBV has been systematically employed as a weapon of war and has been widely documented in ongoing regional conflicts, most notably in the DRC and South Sudan.

202 Ibid.

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

204 These groups include: Rwandans who fled the genocide and who now would fall within the scope of the Cessation Clause; Congolese who fled in 1961; and South Sudanese who fled the previous civil strife and did not return in 2005 after the attainment of self-determination in South Sudan.

205 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Addressing the global prison crisis: Strategy 2015–2017*. Available at www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Strategy_on_Addressing_the_Global_Prison_Crisis.pdf.

206 World Prison Brief, "World Prison Brief data". Available at www.prisonstudies.org/country/uganda.

Stateless persons

People who do not have a nationality are often invisible and face high levels of discrimination and social exclusion. The population of those who are stateless or at-risk of being stateless in Uganda is currently unknown, although the phenomenon has been reported among some marginalized tribes and segments of the undocumented population, including children born of war. Children born in Uganda to non-Ugandans are stateless if their parents are stateless or if their parents 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 Uganda.²⁰⁴ Uganda 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.²⁰⁵

The latest statistics indicate that there are 74,444 prisoners in Uganda, with a prison population rate of 150 per 100,000 of the national population.²⁰⁶

While the official capacity stands at 20,036, prison facilities operate at 372 percent of this. Of the prison population, 48.4 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.²⁰⁷ Even the basic requirement of separating different categories of pre-trial detainees from sentenced prisoners can be implemented only partly. 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.²⁰⁸ 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 the 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.

Young people

With 53 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 24 percent of the populace and over 60 percent of the working age population. The economy has not reached the degree of structural transformation needed to create enough 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 was worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Informal labourers and workers

Though there is a legal framework for employment in Uganda, many times people are hired without formal contracts, exploited with required long hours of work and hired and fired at will. Informal labourers and workers, including migrant workers, work in factories, homes, building sites and road construction sites enduring harsh conditions of work and receiving minimal wages. These workers are normally in a disadvantaged position, are not educated and have no bargaining power, which leaves them exposed to exploitation by their employers.

²⁰⁷ United Nations Security Council, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, “CTED Co-Organizes Scoping Mission to Uganda”. Available at www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/news/cted-co-organizes-scoping-mission-uganda.

²⁰⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Addressing the global prison crisis: Strategy 2015–2017*.

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Chapter 5: Commitments Under International and Regional Norms and Standards

05

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, except for the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.²⁰⁹ It has ratified: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its two optional protocols;²¹⁰ the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (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.²¹¹

In 2021, the Government successfully submitted the State Party Report on the United Nations CRC, in response to observations made in 2005. Uganda domesticated the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court through the International Criminal Court Act of 2010 – the Act is intended to allow individuals suspected to have committed crimes of an international nature to be tried in local courts. Uganda submitted its second state report to the Committee Against Torture on 10 November 2022.²¹²

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 to Action, 1995 and the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994.

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 (the Maputo Protocol), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Uganda is also committed to implementing the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Addis Ababa Declaration on the Demographic Dividend, among others.

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. 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).

209 ICCPR (1995), ICESCR (1987) CERD (1980), CEDAW (1985), CAT (1986), CRC (1990) including Optional Protocols, CMW (1995), CRPD (2008). CED signed, but not yet ratified.

210 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, A/RES/54/263. Available at <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/tools-for-action/optional-protocol/>; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Available at www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-rights-child-sale-children-child.

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

212 OHCHR, "In Dialogue with Uganda, Experts of the Committee against Torture Welcome the State's Human Rights Institutions, Ask about Unauthorised Places of Detention and Inaction in Prosecuting Several Torture Cases". Available at www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/11/dialogue-uganda-experts-committee-against-torture-welcome-states-human-rights.

Uganda has participated actively in the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, in which the United Nations Human Rights Council reviews every state once in five years. To date, Uganda has been reviewed three times:

- In 2011, Uganda received 171 recommendations, of which 129 were fully accepted, six were partially accepted and 46 were rejected.
- In 2016, Uganda received 226 recommendations, of which 148 were accepted and 78 were noted.
- In 2022, Uganda received 273 recommendations of which 138 were accepted and 153 were noted.

The Government has made progress in addressing some of the recommendations from the three reviews. For instance, a Standing Human Rights Committee of Parliament was created in 2012 with a mandate to ensure compliance with human rights standards and the National Action Plan on Human Rights (currently pending cabinet approval) in all business of Parliament. The National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights was approved 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 made considerable progress in drafting the long overdue state reports, as per the reporting obligations under the human rights treaties.

Despite some progress, Uganda is yet to ratify 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 the optional protocols under CEDAW, ICESCR and

CRC accepting individual complaints procedures

- 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
- 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.²¹³

Labour and employment, and industry

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. This initiative and the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, adopted in October 2021, are expected to enhance respect for human rights in business. It is too early to determine how well the initiative will influence the availability of information about oil and gas operations or impact human rights concerns arising from those operations.

213 See <https://spinternet.ohchr.org/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?visitType=pending&lang=en>.



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Chapter 6: Cross-boundary, Regional and Subregional Perspectives

Uganda has shown its commitment to several continental and regional development cooperation arrangements. The Uganda Vision 2040 states that, “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”.

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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”.

In line with the statements in its Vision 2040, the Government of Uganda has committed to the following organizations, blocs, agreements, approaches, policies and protocols:

East African Community: The EAC comprises Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. It has implemented a 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, and timelines are being revised in consultation with the Partner States. The delay is largely due to the Partner States’ 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 policies 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, railways, aviation, communications and inland waterways. It also emphasizes alignment with the treaty establishing the EAC, which states that provision of basic infrastructure by the Partner States is one of the Community’s operational principles. Uganda has plans to fast track the construction of the standard gauge railway, with two main routes (Tororo–Amuru and Tororo–Kampala, although the entire process is progressing slowly.

COMESA: COMESA comprises 21 member states. 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, after joining. However, trade performance has not changed significantly since 2012, reaching \$1,278 million in 2020. During 2018/19, 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 established to facilitate product and price information sharing among Member States, 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.

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. AfCFTA offers 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 plus the 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 a least developed country (LDC), Uganda will have more time than non-LDCs to phase out its own tariffs.

East African Community-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement: The EAC finalized negotiations for an economic partnership agreement (EPA) with the European Union (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. Although it is finalized, the EPA is not yet in place, and Uganda is yet to sign the agreement. Since Uganda (like 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 Uganda's market access in the EU.

Policy frameworks on the externalization of labour: To expand employment opportunities, the Government 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.

Regional approaches: Uganda's trade and investment cooperation with the wider international community is increasingly embedded within regional approaches, which many of the leading economies have adopted in dealing with African countries. Developments within these approaches in 2018/19, and related plans, are highlighted below.

1. China-Africa Cooperation: The Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in September 2018 and was attended by 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; and an agreement on emergency humanitarian assistance.

2. 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.

3. 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 United States (US) and African private sector executives, international investors, senior government officials and multilateral stakeholders.

The summit is a platform for US and African business and government leaders to advance a resilient and sustainable US–Africa partnership by: engaging on key sectors, including agribusiness, energy, health, infrastructure, ICT and finance; networking with key private sector and government decision makers; exploring new business opportunities and meeting potential business partners; and advocating to shape effective US–Africa trade and investment policies. The US signed the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act in October 2018. The act 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.

The corporation's 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.

4. The Joint Africa–EU Strategy:

This strategy 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". Additionally, 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 over 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: a 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.²¹⁴

5. BRICS: The BRICS Summit is an international relations conference attended by the heads of state and government of the five member states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). The tenth summit was held 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. The President of Uganda addressed the BRICS Africa Outreach meeting and held bilateral meetings with other heads of state.

6. Uganda has 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 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 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. Uganda attended the 20th session of the High–level Committee on South–South Cooperation held between 1 and 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 other global crises.

While the above present opportunities for economic growth, poverty reduction and socioeconomic 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.

²¹⁴ African Union, Joint Press Statement Second AU–EU Ministerial Meeting (2021). Available at <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20211028/joint-press-statement-second-au-eu-ministerial-meeting>.



Chapter 7: Development Opportunities

This CCA, informed by triangulation of data from various sources, has identified opportunities that have the potential to accelerate progress towards achievement of the NDP III and SDG targets. Some of these opportunities are highlighted below.

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7.1 Sustaining good governance and strengthening capacity for effective service delivery

The 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 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 development interventions on the NDP III 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, NDP III provides opportunities to strengthen synergies for enhanced delivery on development solutions, build 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.

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 the Integrated National Financing Framework and this presents opportunities for effective and sustainable financing.

The Local Government Own Source Revenue Mobilisation Strategy, once finalized, will contribute significantly to strengthening the capacity of local governments to generate resources to fund local priorities and contribute to local economic development.²¹⁵

7.2 Promoting and sustaining poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth

NDP III identifies industry as one of the key accelerators for: agro-industrialization; fast-tracking oil, gas and mineral-based industrialization; and promoting local manufacturing and exports, among other activities. 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 76 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 socioeconomic challenges of an unplanned youth bulge, strategic social and economic investments should be made in skills development, productivity enhancement and job creation for young people. These investments will need initiatives that target the needs of young people to be incorporated into the national development strategies. Uganda has opportunities to make investments to ensure

215 Local Development Partners' Group in Uganda, *Local Government Own Source Revenue Mobilisation Strategy (2020)*. Available at www.ldpg.or.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LG-Own-Source-Revenue-Mobilisation-Strategy_Draft-v01.pdf.

that its young people have reliable routes into productive work so they can accelerate the socioeconomic development of their nation and be in charge of their prosperity. Furthermore, empowering young people to carry out formal cross-border trade as well as informal regional and international trade will have a positive multiplier effect on employment generation, poverty reduction, economic growth and tax revenue. It will be crucial to comprehend the needs and priorities of young people and provide them with the necessary market information and train them to meet the standards of the global market and other market entry requirements. Empowering young people through trade will have to be augmented by creation of the necessary investment enabling environments to bridge the income inequality gap.

- 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 these goals 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 limited ICT and science, technology, engineering and mathematics capacities.
- The Government's commitment to regional economic initiatives – such as the EAC, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, COMESA and AfCFTA – offers 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 to benefit from the regional economic initiatives.
- 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 such as engineering, housing construction, road infrastructure design and construction, environmental hazard control, hospitality services and vocational training services. Continued efforts to articulate the local content provisions in the oil and gas 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 partnerships with other actors, such as the private sector, youth, academia and development partners, create opportunities to mobilize the development resources needed to achieve national and global development goals. Full exploitation of this mobilization potential will require creating inclusive partnership platforms and developing policy and regulatory frameworks to guide engagement.

7.3 Surplus production of selected food commodities

Uganda's competitive advantage as a surplus producer of selected food commodities is an opportunity for trade internally and for the Eastern Africa region. If this competitive advantage is harnessed, the country would be able to supply food to deficient regions and refugee hosting areas in Uganda and produce a surplus for export to neighbouring countries. This supply can be actualised by the review, strengthening and development of policies, programmes and initiatives that promote efficiency in domestic and regional markets by removing trade barriers and reducing transaction costs. The supply will also require coordinated and medium to long-term investments from the Government, donors and the private sector.

7.4 Addressing human rights, gender equality and sexual and gender-based violence

Uganda's commitment to mainstream SDGs in the NDP III provides an opportunity to promote the principles of sustainable development and the NDP III's Community Mobilisation and Mindset Change Programme aims to leave no one behind. The goal of this programme is to empower families, communities and citizens to embrace national values and actively participate in sustainable development. This programme goal 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 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 foreign direct investments 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 action plan will also reduce challenges related to discrimination against women and other vulnerable groups as well as threats to human rights and environmental activists.

The recommendations generated in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process offer an opportunity for the Government of Uganda to address some of the gaps in the protection and promotion of human rights. Uganda's human rights record has so far been reviewed three times under the UPR process, in 2011, 2016 and 2022. The Government of Uganda has taken steps to implement some of the recommendations from the first two reviews while others remain pending.

Implemented recommendations include: the establishment of the Human Rights Committee of Parliament and the Cabinet subcommittee on human rights and enactment of the Human Rights Enforcement Act. Some recommendations from the first review, including the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights, remain outstanding. The third UPR was held on 27 January 2022 and presented an important opportunity for the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review to highlight the human rights situation in Uganda and recommend actions that the Government of Uganda should take to fulfil its human rights obligations. During the UPR session, Uganda received 273 recommendations out of which, 138 were accepted while 153 were noted. It is expected that full implementation of these recommendations and those from the previous reviews will go a long way towards improving the human rights record of the country.

7.5 Harnessing the transformative potential of digitalization

In Uganda, global and local restrictions on the movement of people and goods and the provision of services to contain COVID-19 resulted in lower consumption, loss of jobs and a reduction in remittances. The use of digital technologies and channels increased during the COVID-19 lockdowns, such as mobile money, online shopping, online education, digital disease surveillance and monitoring, and online dissemination of public health messages. This increased use suggests the potential of digitalization 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 limited access denies the country the potential of a digital-enabled socioeconomic transformation. Through its transformative potential across various sectors and spheres of life, digitalization has the potential to propel Uganda towards achieving the SDGs.

Harnessing digitalization is an opportunity to enable new approaches to sustain livelihoods, support vulnerable people, reduce inequalities and improve public service delivery. These prospects remain promising as the Government identified the ICT sector as fundamental to enabling Uganda to achieve its Vision 2040. Uganda's resolve to embrace ICT is set out clearly in its Digital Uganda Vision,²¹⁶ the NDP III and the latest National 4IR (Fourth Industrial Revolution) Strategy.²¹⁷

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

7.6 Partnerships, coordination and collaboration

As emphasized in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, Governments 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 the potential of this collaboration, the following action areas will need attention: multisectoral integration

of Voluntary National Review commitments at central and local government levels and across sectors to harness intersectoral linkages that will help to achieve the SDGs; coordination of youth and innovation hubs through the use of local government structures; strengthening public-private partnerships 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.²¹⁸

7.7 Harnessing the potential of urbanization for socioeconomic transformation

While rapid urbanization presents challenges for Uganda's current governance systems and infrastructure, planned urbanization has the potential to significantly improve livelihoods, propel economic growth and enhance quality of life of the population. The creation of secondary cities presents an opportunity for better planning to guide human settlement patterns, provide investment opportunities, expand markets for rural areas and increase the opportunities for own source revenue to finance the cities' needs. More so, planning that creates linkages between rural and urban areas is critical in creating markets and boosting the urban economy. Solving many of the urbanization and inclusion challenges requires innovative strategies in the most critical areas, such as land tenure regularization and adequate housing. With a 2.4 million housing deficit, Uganda's housing market contains a large demand which, if harnessed, could provide a crucial stimulus to the economy. Unlocking housing investment, focused on affordability to allow the 80 percent households that comprise the informal urban housing market, could support inclusion in cities.

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

217 Uganda, MoICTNG. *Uganda's National 4IR Strategy (2020)*. Available at <https://ict.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Executive-Summary-Ugandas-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf>.

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

Chapter 8: 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. These risks include those in table 4 below.

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Table 4: Risks to progress on SDGs

Nature of risk	Description and analysis of risk	Assessment	Impact
Natural disasters, environmental degradation, climate change and other socioeconomic disasters and risks	<p>Uganda faces risks of climate shocks, such as floods, landslides, drought, famine, severe storms, wildfires, zoonotic diseases and pests, that have a negative impact on economic production and productivity and thus affect household livelihoods and have serious implications for food security. The country is also vulnerable to an increased frequency of outbreaks and spread of diseases, such as Ebola and COVID-19. Climate and disease shocks have destructive impacts on investment and economic transformation and could jeopardize the achievement of SDGs.</p> <p>Despite action against pollution at multiple levels, Uganda continues to face challenges related to air, chemical and water pollution that have adverse outcomes on human health and livelihoods. Its response measures are constrained by the limited availability of credible, actionable and up-to-date data. Such data could be harnessed to inform targeted interventions, such as circular economy approaches, that have potential to not only reduce the proliferation of pollution and waste but also create employment opportunities.</p> <p>Climate change presents a huge risk to Uganda's gains on integrated water management and could have adverse implications for the country's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, which are pivotal to its water, agriculture and food security, tourism and manufacturing sectors. Rising temperatures are not only hostile to human physiology but also conducive for more vector-borne diseases and this has far-reaching effects on aspects of the country's economy.</p> <p>At the global level, a rising tide of radical nationalism, mounting division and continued stress and assault on multilateralism negatively impact on the efforts to address climate change and environmental degradation as a coordinated global community.</p>	High	High

Nature of risk	Description and analysis of risk	Assessment	Impact
Slow economic growth and increased inequalities	<p>The growing inequalities in Uganda pose social, economic and environmental threats. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ebola outbreak and the conflict in Ukraine have dampened Uganda's projected economic growth rates, worsened unemployment and led to loss of income and livelihoods.</p> <p>The economy has been growing far below the national development target in 2020/21–2021/2022, as a result of the significant decline in economic activity.</p>	High	High
	<p>The agricultural sector is anticipated to experience slightly slower growth in 2023 as a result of supply chain delays for fertilizers and other items caused by the conflict in Ukraine.</p> <p>In the short, medium and long-term, Uganda is at risk of slow and unequal economic growth and shared prosperity, limited creation of decent jobs for young people and women, and food insecurity, despite the anticipated foreign direct investment growth in the oil and other extractive sectors. As noted in chapter 4, many vulnerable groups could be left behind.</p>		
Insufficient efforts and capacity to manage shocks	<p>There have been multiple socioeconomic shocks since 2020, with wide-ranging impacts on SDG progress. These shocks have included the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine and the Ebola outbreak in Uganda. The impacts of these shocks have demonstrated that a failure to plan and have mechanisms in place to protect the vulnerable in anticipation of risks and shocks constrains the already scarce budgetary resources needed to meet the basic social needs of the population.</p>	High	High
Existing gender biases and stereotypes which deny women access to resources and opportunities	<p>Women are hampered from attaining full economic engagement by gendered structural limitations. These impediments are long-standing and systemic. The idea that women will provide unpaid care, housekeeping and farm labour restricts women's economic capacity. Additionally, unstable tenure and gender disparities in land ownership, inheritance and decision-making have a negative influence on agricultural output, expansion and adoption of sustainable land management methods. This is true even though women manage more land and perform more agricultural labour than men.</p>	High	Medium

Nature of risk	Description and analysis of risk	Assess- ment	Impact
Limited data and statistics to inform decision-making, including response to emergencies	<p>Uganda was able to report on only 92 (46 percent) out of 201 applicable SDG indicators in its 2020 Voluntary National Review. By 2022, the number of indicators for which data is available increased to 119 (59 percent). However, that number is still inadequate and includes some proxy indicators that are unsatisfactory.</p> <p>The existing health information and surveillance systems are weak and have limited scope. Specifically, the country is challenged by poor data quality, the lack of a functional central repository for all statistical products and datasets, limited data from the community level, as well as limited use of data and evidence-based planning and action.</p>	Medium	Medium
Mismanagement of aquatic resources	<p>At present, overfishing, destructive fishing methods, illegal fishing and other issues, like water pollution, pose a significant risk to the country's fish stocks and fisheries sector. Local statistics, for instance, show about 40 percent of large species in Lake Victoria are caught before they can reproduce. These forms of mismanagement are compounded by threats from pollution associated with land-based activities and invasive aquatic weeds, such as water hyacinth. Combined, these issues not only slow down Uganda's progress on SDG 14, but also have adverse implications for freshwater biodiversity, food security, health and livelihoods.</p>	Medium	Medium
Land disputes and ethnic conflicts	<p>Land and ethnic disputes remain a conflict driver across Uganda, especially in the Albertine Graben area, Central region, Karamoja subregion and Northern region, where there are prospects of business interventions related to extractive and economic industries, (such as timber, commercial farming and mining). In other areas, such as the Mount Elgon region, Teso and southwestern Uganda, there are protracted conflicts related to government-led conservation efforts. In western Uganda, specifically in the Rwenzori subregion, various ethnic groups have been engaged in a long-standing ethno-political conflict over resources, including land.</p>	Medium	Medium

Nature of risk	Description and analysis of risk	Assessment	Impact
Human rights, rule of law and unresolved political tensions	<p>Concerns relating to the timely implementation of the recommendations from the UPR process remain. With speculations relating to the 2026 elections and political transition dominating public discourse, there is anxiety that human rights concerns facing the country may not be prioritised in coming years. Political tensions continue to prevail due to unsettled issues involving governance, electoral processes, human rights and rule of law. These issues and tensions could negatively impact the country's development trajectory and erode its gains.</p> <p>The closure of the Democratic Governance Facility is likely to impact on the realization of human rights as many state and non-state actors who depended on the financial support from the facility may not be able to carry on with their governance and human rights related work.</p>	High	High
Corruption and mismanagement of public resources	<p>Corruption is a major obstacle to Uganda's socioeconomic transformation. 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 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. The highest single sector corruption cost was found in the environmental protection sector and estimated to be about UGX 2.28 trillion a year. The other top four losses were: 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 Government procurement, estimated at UGX 614 billion.</p> <p>If Uganda could eradicate corruption, the potential savings would be equivalent to a 23 percent increase in the annual government budget that could be used to increase access to public services.²¹⁹</p>	High	High

219 Inspectorate of Government, *Cost of Corruption in Uganda (2021)*. Available at www.igg.go.ug/media/files/publications/Cost_of_Corruption_Popular_Version.pdf.

Nature of risk	Description and analysis of risk	Assessment	Impact
Dwindling resource allocation to basic social and protection sectors	Reductions in spending on basic social and protection sectors 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 risk of negative impacts on human development has been exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ebola outbreak and the conflict in Ukraine.	High	High
Unplanned urbanization	Uganda's current urban growth is unsustainable and requires urgent attention – it is urbanizing rapidly with an annual urban growth rate of 5.2 percent. The urban population as a percentage of the total population increased from 14.8 percent in 2000 to 25.6 percent in 2021. Kampala and secondary cities have a large informal sector with high and increasing youth unemployment challenge, urban poverty and inequality, which affect inclusiveness. Secondary cities, with their smaller economies and with less capacity within their governments compared to Kampala face severe challenges of poor infrastructure, insufficient social services and crime among others.	High	Medium
Slow recovery from the impacts of COVID-19	The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the existing challenges of poor human development especially through its negative impacts on education for the children. Some girl children fell pregnant and dropped out of school as a result, while other children (boys and girls) dropped out of school because their parents lost jobs and livelihoods (in both informal and formal sectors). Without exceptionally effective strategies, the impacts of the pandemic are likely to have far reaching implications on the future of human development in Uganda.	High	Medium
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 exceed the EAC convergence threshold of 50 percent, there are risks to sustainability of the financing architecture. This risk is worsened by challenges related to accountability and inefficiency in the use of public resources.	Medium	Low

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Uganda's progress towards achievement of the SDGs will involve both challenges and opportunities related to the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Risks exist, and if they are not mitigated, they could have adverse impacts on whether the country achieves the development targets in the NDPIII, the 2030 Agenda and Vision 2040.

Uganda's development trajectory requires inclusive participation, comprehensive planning, sustainable financing that reflects the current financing landscape, and effective monitoring and reporting. Interventions will need to be facilitated by an enabling governance environment that gives people the opportunity to influence their socioeconomic transformation and where human rights and the rule of law prevail.

Comprehensive annual reviews of the CCA are an opportunity to capture the current national development context and inform the policy and programming of the UN system in Uganda. These updates require adequate available data and statistics, which creates a need for the continued support of the national statistical system in order to strengthen its capacity to collect, analyse and manage data and report on Uganda's progress in different aspects of sustainable development.

ANNEX: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACHPR	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights	ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
AMN	Acute Malnutrition	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa	INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
CCA	Common Country Analysis	ISDG	Integrated Sustainable Development Goals
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa	LDC	Least Developed Country
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease	LDPG	Local Development Partners' Group
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women	MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
CRPD	Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities	MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child	MTR	Mid-term Review
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework	NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	NDPIII	Third National Development Plan
DRMS	Domestic Resource Mobilization Strategy	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
EAC	East African Community	NPA	National Planning Authority
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement	NRM	National Resistance Movement
EU	European Union	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	OCSEA	Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation	PLHIV	People Living with HIV
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition	PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
TrC	Triangular Cooperation
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UGX	Ugandan Shilling
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPF	Uganda Police Force
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
US	United States of America
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization



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