



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



ISSUE 14 MARCH 2022

# UGANDA WOMAN



**Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow**







# *Appreciation!*

**The Women of Uganda would like to appreciate His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for the exemplary leadership in promoting gender equality and women empowerment**

# Women's Anthem

## Chorus

Mothers, Daughters All women  
everywhere Stand up and  
embrace Your roles today

We are proud mothers of our  
nation The backbone without  
which it can never stand We  
wake up, wake up We wake up  
at the crack of dawn And feed  
the nation with our brains With  
love and joy we care for our  
baby

## Chorus

Mothers, Daughters All women  
everywhere Stand up and  
embrace Your roles today

2. Step by step with tender  
care We nurse her we mould  
her at home and in school  
Leading, leading Spearheading  
her identity productionn and  
development In government  
and profession Name it women  
are there

## Chorus

Mothers, Daughters All women  
everywhere Stand up and  
embrace Your roles today

We call on you women of  
Uganda Wake up if you have not  
yet embraced your roles Wake  
up, wake up Beside our men  
let's play our role In solving our  
nationals' needs In every walk of  
life to develop Uganda

## Chorus

Mothers, Daughters All women  
everywhere Stand up and  
embrace Your roles today

Composed by  
Prof. Rose Mbowa (RIP)



**H.E. Maj. (Rtd.) Alupo Jessica R.E**  
Vice President of the Republic of Uganda



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**Editor In Chief:**

Aggrey David Kibenge - Permanent Secretary

**Managing Editor:**

Angela Nakafeero - Commissioner Gender & Women Affairs

**Deputized by:**

Muhindo E. Ngene (Editorial) - Under Secretary & Maggie M. Kyomukama (Admin) - Asst Commissioner Gender & Women Affairs

**Editor:**

Frank Mugabi

**Contributing Editor:**

Collins Mwijuka

**Administrators:**

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**The Editorial Assistants:** Brian Masimbi & Maline Godfrey

**Distribution Assistants:** Aidah Namuwanga & Phillip Mwandha

**Compiled, Edited & Designed by:**

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**Compiled, Edited & Designed by:**

 **Ideashouse**  
Ideas House (U) Ltd

0772/0752 - 729516  
gmulengi@gmail.com

# Minister's Message:

As Uganda joins the rest of the world in commemorating the International Women's Day (IWD) - 8th of March 2022, we as government, all state and non-state actors take stock of the achievements on promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in light of the existing commitments and lay strategies for addressing existing inequalities in future. Uganda prides as one of the leading countries globally in driving the Woman agenda among other Social – Economic interventions.

International Women's Day has its origins in the struggle by women for social change and to be able to participate on equal terms with men in social, political and economic processes. In 1975, the United Nations (UN) declared an International Women's Year and recognized March 8th as a day upon which all Member States should recognize and honor women. It is a global day for celebrating the achievements made on the delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment. The day also serves as a call for action to accelerate progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

The International Women's Day was first celebrated in Uganda on 8th March, 1984 at State House Entebbe and since then this remarkable day has been commemorated and celebrated every year. The IWD for 2021 celebrations were held at State House Entebbe and presided over by the H.E. the President of Uganda under the theme "Building on Women's Strength for a Better Future in a Covid 19 World".

Since the previous celebrations,



**Hon. Amongi Betty Ongom (MP)**  
Minister of Gender, Labour & Social Development

the Country has witnessed a significant change in attitudes towards women and their contribution to national development. While there are more women in decision – making, greater equality in legislative rights, and better development outcomes in health, education, labour and employment among others, it is important to note that there are still gaps that deserve more attention in terms of laws, policies and programs.

The Theme for the International Women` Day provides a framework and direction for annual IWD activities and takes into account the wider agenda of both celebration as well as a broad call to action for gender equality and women's empowerment. The themes for the global IWD

are collaboratively developed each year with stakeholders and widely adopted Worldwide.

The theme for the International Women`s Day (IWD) 2022 is, "Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow", recognizing the contribution of women and girls around the world, who are leading the charge on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response, to build a more sustainable future for all."

Uganda adopted the theme for the International Women's Day 2022. Uganda will in addition put emphasis on male engagement in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk management.



# Ugandan Women, Girls on Climate Change

**C**ongratulations all Uganda Women and Girls upon celebrating the International Women's day (IWD) - 8th of March 2022, this year's theme brings the Ugandan Woman and Girl in the limelight as far Climate change is concerned.

Gender is a significant aspect to be taken into account when considering actions both to adapt to and mitigate climate change. Climate change impacts are not only physical and economic but also social and cultural. Because of gender differences in social and economic roles and responsibilities, climate change affects men and women in varied ways and often affects women more severely. Women constitute the majority of the world's poor and depend heavily on natural resources for their livelihood.

At the same time, women generally advocate a wider set of actions than men for addressing climate change. Women tend to be affected differently, and more harshly, by climate change because of their social roles and more impoverished status in both developed and developing countries. In Uganda for instance, women are responsible for 70-80%



**Hon. Mutuuzo Peace Regis (MP)**  
Minister of State for Gender and Cultural Affairs

of agricultural production and nutrition and food security at the household level and yet women own only 16% of the registered land. The effects of climate change make all the traditional tasks of rural Ugandan women increasingly uncertain and dangerous whether it is cultivating the fields or collecting water and firewood. Yet the fact remains that rural women have no voice in decision-making processes regarding the environment.

**Advancing gender equality in the context of the climate crisis and disaster risk reduction is one of the greatest global challenges of the 21st century.**

Climate change can adversely affect crop yields and thus the livelihoods and food security of women who are largely responsible for food production as well as family nutrition. Supplying water and fuel for families, which is typically the responsibility of women, becomes more difficult as environmental changes negatively affect clean water supply, existing infrastructure, and urban and rural settlements. Coping with the damage of extreme weather events such as storms, floods, and cyclones may also fall more on women who hold together families and households.

Climate change can lead to shortages of resources and unreliable job markets, causing male emigration in the search for work and increasing the agricultural and household duties of women. Women and children are far more likely to die than men during extreme weather events linked to climate change owing to their greater vulnerability (Mirza, 2003).

For mitigating climate change, women propose more comprehensive approaches to those advocated by men, but they have less power and influence to affect public policy. Women tend to focus more on lifestyle

and social changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including reducing the impact of unsustainable consumption and production patterns on the environment and promoting actions such as energy-saving and greener purchasing.

Advancing gender equality in the context of the climate crisis and disaster risk reduction is one of the greatest global challenges of the 21st century. The issues of climate change and sustainability will continue to have, severe and lasting impacts on our environment, economic and social development. The most vulnerable and marginalized experience the deepest impacts. Women are increasingly being recognized as more vulnerable to climate change impacts than men, as they constitute the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent on the natural resources which climate change threatens the most.

At the same time, women and girls are effective and powerful leaders and change-makers for climate adaptation and mitigation. They are involved in sustainability initiatives around the world, and their participation and leadership results in more effective climate action. Continuing to examine the opportunities, as well as the constraints, to empower women and girls to have a voice and be equal players in decision-making related to climate change and sustainability is essential for sustainable development and greater gender equality. Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal

future, remains beyond our reach.

The theme for International Women's Day is aligned with the priority theme for the upcoming 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66): "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes".

“  
**At the same time, women and girls are effective and powerful leaders and change-makers for climate adaptation and mitigation**







**Mr. Aggrey David Kibenge**

Permanent Secretary - Ministry of Gender,  
Labour and Social Development

## Word from the Editor in Chief

I would like to welcome you all to our Issue 14 of the Uganda Woman magazine 2022 and congratulations to all Women and Girls. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development initiated this annual Magazine as a tool to disseminate critical updates on the gender equality and women empowerment drive, and we have published it since 2012. The magazine is tailored towards apprising the general public on the critical assignment of empowering women in Uganda. It features notifiable milestones scored in the agenda while paying homage

to personalities that have made distinguished contribution to the empowerment of the Ugandan Woman.

The theme for the magazine is "Gender Equality today for a Sustainable Tomorrow". This is also the theme for the national celebrations.

There has been a significant reduction in forest cover from 15% in 2010 to 9.5% in 2017 as well as wetland degradation and encroachment; from 11.9% in 2012 to 10.9% in 2017. There is a significant increase in temperature at a rate of 0.520 per

decade while some districts in sub-regions of Acholi, Karamoja, Bukedi, Lango and South-Western Uganda over time have registered a modest decrease in annual rainfall. Despite Uganda's contribution to climate change being negligible accounting for only 0.099 per cent of global emissions, it is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts given its low coping capacity.

Climate change effects such as frequent and prolonged dry spells as well as erratic and poorly distributed rainfall amplify the level of vulnerability experienced by the majority of the population (68 per cent) that are dependent on rain-fed agriculture as their source of livelihood. To compensate for the reduced productivity, farmers are forced to encroach on forests and wetlands. Hence, climate change becomes both a driver and a result of environmental degradation starting a vicious cycle of vulnerability.

These changes are contributing to increased food insecurity; higher incidence of diseases and pests in humans, livestock and crops; soil erosion and land degradation; loss of biodiversity; flood damage to infrastructure and settlements and shifts in the productivity of agricultural and natural resources.

I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our partners, in particular, UN-WOMEN, UNDP, UN Resident Coordinator's Office, CARE International, ENABEL who have contributed to the success of the National celebrations of the International Women's Day 2022.



# Multi-sectoral Framework to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancy and Support Adolescent Mothers in ESAR

## Purpose of the Framework

Adolescent pregnancy in ESAR requires an integrated and multi-sectoral approach, bringing together all UNICEF sectors to work in an interconnected, comprehensive, coherent and holistic manner to prevent early and unintended adolescent pregnancies and to support adolescent mothers and their newborns. A multi-sectoral approach is imperative to tackle the direct determinants of adolescent pregnancy and the multiple inequitable outcomes for adolescent mothers, as well as to address the structural, normative and systemic issues affecting the health, wellbeing, empowerment and enjoyment of rights of adolescent girls and mothers. In addition, long-term, sustainable progress towards reducing adolescent pregnancies can only be achieved when governments begin to adequately invest in evidence-based multi- and cross-sectoral interventions.

This framework is not meant to be exhaustive. It is meant to assist in designing a

contextualized Theory of Change for programming. Promoting evidence-based and client-centred, rights-based and equity-based approach, it focuses on both intended and unintended adolescent pregnancies, and in pregnancies within and outside marriage.

Few adolescents and young people receive the preparation they need to be empowered to take control and make informed decisions about their sexuality and relationships freely and responsibly. Respecting and protecting adolescents' rights entails engaging them in the decision-making process from the individual through the policy level, ensuring that they are fully informed about their sexual and reproductive health, have the skills to voice their perspectives and priorities, and that approaches are non-coercive as well as evidencebased.<sup>3</sup> It is important to note and consider that decision making for adolescents might be influenced or determined by peers, family pressure and/or social norms, among others.

Therefore, this framework re-affirms the importance of meaningfully engaging adolescents and young people in the design, implementation and M&E of interventions related to addressing adolescent pregnancy and supporting adolescent parents and their babies. Similarly, the framework promotes prioritization of partnering with women and girls-led organizations and youth-led networks in UNICEF's programming across all sectors.

The proposed multi-sectoral approach in this framework will be impactful and transformative by challenging social norms, especially discriminatory gender norms. To this end, men and boys are essential partners throughout the approach. They should be engaged in the development of any programming aimed at addressing gender norms rooted in societies; and their needs, agency and voice are also to be considered.



## Main consequences of adolescent pregnancy and motherhood in ESAR

Adolescence (10-19-year-old) is a key phase in human development as it represents a transition from childhood to physical and psychological maturity. Pregnancy and motherhood present several challenges for the health, wellbeing and empowerment of adolescent girls that impede their development and impact their present and future opportunities and enjoyment of their rights. Progress in preventing adolescent pregnancy has been more limited in rural areas and among disadvantaged populations, leading to increasing inequity among adolescent girls.

Pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers tend to become trapped in an intergenerational cycle of poverty, low education and poorer health outcomes compared to peers who do not have childbearing and rearing responsibilities. Pregnant and adolescent mothers and their babies face a broad number of vulnerabilities and risks to their health, wellbeing, and enjoyment of their rights, and challenges that are unique or greater than the ones of adult women, such as: services that are not tailored to their needs as an adolescent, social isolation, lack of support and negative attitudes and social stigmatization from peers, family, community and service providers such as healthcare professionals and teachers. In addition, the full responsibility for the pregnancy and childrearing is often assigned to the adolescent girl, while the male partner may deny involvement, reject the girl, and even, in some cases, be affirmed by peers and his community for his masculinity and choice to leave the mother. Culturally in many countries, pregnancy

is often considered to be the girl's fault, whether planned, unplanned or as a result of abuse.

These challenges can all increase the risk of poor mental health and psychosocial well-being, which can adversely affect both mothers and their children across the life course<sup>18</sup>, and can act as barriers to adopt healthy behaviors during and after pregnancy and result in diminished utilization of health services and education opportunities.

While pregnancy and motherhood can bring status for a married adolescent in cultures where childbearing and rearing is the core aspect of a woman's identity, early pregnancy and motherhood is in general a limiting factor for girls in achieving their rights and full potential.

Pregnancy and motherhood often force girls to abandon their education and confine them to the household.

Unmarried pregnant and adolescent mothers may face rejection by their families and partners, and they are more likely to be exposed to violence and are at a higher risk of being left with no means of support<sup>19</sup>. In addition, pregnant unmarried adolescent girls are also likely to be pressured to get married.

Evidence shows that girls who marry young are more likely to: become pregnant before their bodies are mature, increasing the risks of both maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality, experience complications from pregnancy and childbirth which are the leading cause of death among adolescent girls, not re-

enroll in school because they are expected to assume significant domestic and childrearing responsibilities, which limits their future potential, and makes it harder for their families to provide for themselves and/or escape poverty, and not be able to advocate for the well-being of themselves and their own children. The children of young mothers and child brides have higher mortality rates, worse nutritional outcomes, and tend to be less educated.

The health of the pregnant and adolescent mother and their babies is often compromised. The high number of maternal deaths among adolescent girls and young women in ESAR (21.5% prevalence in maternal mortality)<sup>24</sup> is most often caused by early childbearing, high fertility rates and inadequate access to maternal health services. These are the main contributing factors for girls aged 15-19 years being twice as likely to die during childbirth compared to women aged 20 years and above. Furthermore, when transitioning to motherhood, girls face exacerbated vulnerability and tremendous challenges, and studies have shown that adolescent mothers experience an increased burden of responsibility during the transition to motherhood. For first-time pregnant and adolescent mothers, this transition and the subsequent challenges and need for careful monitoring and quality care and support are more acute than for second-time mothers.

**Girls aged 15-19 years are twice as likely to die during childbirth compared to women aged 20 years and above**

**14%**  
of preterm newborn deaths in ESAR are a result of births by adolescent mothers

Poor mental health and mental health conditions will likely have adverse impacts on the mothers' ability to provide responsive caregiving - a core requirement to enable early childhood development.

Almost half of all adolescent pregnancies (44%) end in miscarriage or induced abortion. Adolescent girls and young women make up 40 per cent of all unsafe abortions worldwide, and 2.5 million unsafe abortions occur every year globally among this age group.

In sub-Saharan Africa, 57% of all unsafe abortions happen in

the age group 15-24, with girls 15 to 19 years accounting for 25% of all unsafe abortions. As self-performed abortions are becoming common and when these are performed at an early stage of pregnancy, determining the true prevalence of adolescent pregnancy becomes difficult.

With only half of the countries in ESAR having legislation and policies on the management of pregnant students and their re-entry to school<sup>41</sup>, pregnant and adolescent mothers often lose opportunities for education and employment. A study from South Africa suggested that adolescent

girls and young women who are the primary caregivers of their children are 77% more likely to drop out of school than they peers without children.

At school level, pregnant girls often experience negative attitudes from teachers and learners alike, and are frequently expelled, even if this is not national policy. The mother's age at first birth is also a powerful determinant of long-term parental economic capacity, including income and housing.





**Pregnant and adolescent mothers are 2-9 times more likely to develop perinatal depression and adverse mental health outcomes related to their pregnancy**



**In 2015, 90% adolescent births worldwide were from adolescent girls married or in informal unions...**

### **Main contributing factors of adolescent pregnancy and poor outcomes for adolescent mothers and their babies in ESAR**

Adolescent pregnancies are often a consequence of harmful social practices and genderbased violence (GBV), including child marriage and sexual violence, poverty and/or a lack of knowledge about or access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including family planning. In addition, community beliefs and practices such as initiation rites are one of the main drivers associated with early sexual debut in many rural communities and considered to be one of the main drivers of adolescent pregnancy in several countries such as Angola, Malawi<sup>46</sup> and Mozambique among others.

#### **01**

Gender-Based Violence (GBV), including Sexual Violence and Child Marriage

While most evidence focus on the lack of access to contraceptive information and services, and poverty as the main contributing factor to adolescent pregnancy, the influence of sexual violence has received limited attention. However, understanding the link between sexual violence and pregnancy is critical towards developing a multifaceted, multisectoral intervention to reduce pregnancies among adolescents.

A recent study from South Africa showed that unintended pregnancy was higher among survivors of sexual violence (54.4%) compared to those who never experienced sexual abuse (34.3%). In the multivariable analysis, sexual violence was consistently and robustly associated with increased odds of having an unintended pregnancy. A study found an estimated 21.4% prevalence of sexual violence among refugees and displaced persons in complex humanitarian emergencies, indicating that

approximately one in five women who are refugees or otherwise displaced experience sexual violence. A 2017 prevalence study in South Sudan found that up to 65 per cent of women and girls experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. According to the Botswana VACS Study (2018) among females aged 13 – 17 years who had experienced pressured or forced sex, 10% reported a pregnancy as a result.

International research has shown that children and adolescents with disabilities are at heightened risk of violence, as they are 3.7 times more likely than those without disabilities to be victims of any form of violence; 3.6 times more likely to be victims of physical violence; and 2.9 times more likely to be victims of sexual violence. In the aftermath of a disaster especially girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and sexual abuse. Gender, disability, and legal status can render adolescents more vulnerable to violence, usually perpetrated by adults.

ESAR has one of the highest levels of child marriage in the world with 8% of women aged 20-24 years married before age 15 and 31% of women aged 20-24 years married before age 18. ESAR is home to nearly 50 million child brides, with the largest share in Ethiopia - home to 15 million brides. Girls who have dropped out of school are more vulnerable to child marriage and evidence shows that girls who are better educated are less likely to be married off as children and are more likely to have opportunities to build a healthier and more prosperous life for themselves and their families<sup>54</sup>. According to UNFPA, in all countries, the poorest, least educated girls are far more likely to become adolescent mothers than their better-off peers.

Attending and completing quality secondary level education is shown to be highly beneficial for adolescent girls in terms of being able to delay marriage and/or advocate towards delaying marriage, as compared to only attending and completing a quality primary level education. Girls who complete secondary education tend to be healthier, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more, marry later, have fewer children and provide better health care and education for the next generation; mainly because women tend to reinvest 90% of their earnings into their family.

In 2015, 90% adolescent births worldwide were from married adolescents (whether in formal or informal unions). As much as early marriage remains a strong factor underlying adolescent fertility, data from a UN DESA report showed that in Kenya, Lesotho and Eswatini, adolescent fertility is high despite having low proportions of ever married adolescent girls. Furthermore,

the report found that in Africa it was a common practice that pregnancies outside wedlock led to marriage of the pregnant girls. Having a mother and older sister who was an adolescent mother significantly increases the risk of the younger sister having children during adolescence, and daughters of adolescent mothers became much more likely to become adolescent mothers themselves. Evidence suggests that unmarried pregnant adolescents suffer severe consequences including stigma, rejection, violence by partners, parents and peers and an increase in forced marriages due to unplanned adolescent pregnancy.

Inequitable gender norms can reinforce sexual risks and intimate partner violence, and exacerbate power imbalances, which often make women suffer and enable men with disproportionate power to make decisions and negotiate sexual

relationships. Adolescents are confronted with gender norms and social information from early in life and build these into their worldview. Harmful practices are strongly connected to and reinforce socially constructed gender roles and power relations that can influence discriminatory beliefs, such as the belief that men with HIV/AIDS can be cured by engaging in sexual intercourse with girls and women with disabilities.

The simultaneous high prevalence of FGM, child marriage, sexual violence and adolescent pregnancy and motherhood in some countries in ESAR suggests that harmful practices such as FGM, sexual violence and child marriage need further study to examine and determine the correlations between them and how they contribute to and act as determinants of pregnancy and adolescent motherhood.

**ESAR has one of the highest levels of child marriage in the world with 8% of women aged 20-24 years married before age 15 and 31% of women aged 20-24 years married before age 18**





**02****Early Sexual Debut and Risky Behaviors**

Early sexual debut is defined as the first sexual intercourse as well as sexual relation before the age of 15 - it is usually associated with sexual risk behaviors, unintended pregnancy and HIV infection. Early sexual debut is also associated with living in rural areas, girls with low education levels, peer pressure, experimentation, intergenerational sex and being from the poorest households.

Poverty is a key driver because adolescent girls are able to obtain money and material goods, that would otherwise be unaffordable, through relationships with older men, who give them basic goods and/or gifts in exchange for a sexual relationship.

Studies have found correlations between early

sexual debut and experiences of sexual coercion/ violence as well as direct relations to adolescent pregnancy. In Lesotho, for example, the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (2020) found that among the 18-24-year-old population, 31.4% of males and 11.0% of females had early sexual debut, and 13.5% of girls had been pregnant before age 18 and 11.0% were married before age 18.

A situational analysis of early and unintended pregnancy in ESAR from 2018<sup>67</sup> found evidence of lack of access to and use of modern contraception among adolescent girls aged 15-19 years despite high levels of sexual activity. In Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, about 10% of adolescent girls and young women (ages 15-24) reported first sexual intercourse by age 15 and 40-60% by age 18. Despite moderate-high sexual debut

by age 18, demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods was between 50-65%.

In Rwanda, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe, married adolescent girls (15-19) and married young women (20-24) had significantly higher demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods than their sexually active unmarried counterparts<sup>69</sup>. Evidence shows how in Malawi, for example, while 64% of adolescent girls (15-19) are sexually active, only 15.2% use modern contraception, and in Tanzania and Zambia, only 33% and 18% of unmarried sexually active girls respectively use modern contraception. In Mozambique and Namibia sexually active unmarried adolescent girls and young women had significantly higher demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods than their married counterparts.



### 03

#### Limited Access to Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

Lack of available, accessible and affordable adolescent friendly SRH information and services and lack of utilization by adolescents greatly contribute to adolescent pregnancy and poor outcomes for adolescent mothers and their babies. Family planning plays a crucial role in preventing pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality, and for improving the health outcomes of adolescent mothers and their children.

Girls who have dropped out of school are less likely to be equipped with information about safe sex and contraceptive use and how to protect themselves from STIs and avoid unintended pregnancy. In ESAR, community and/or religious beliefs also hampers access to SRH information and services, even when they are made available.

Unmarried girls and women with low educational status in rural areas who want to access family planning and maternal health care "are often subjected to community sanctions and discriminatory behaviour".

Health care providers and pharmacists may refuse or provide only limited services to this group because of perceptions of sexual activity and pregnancy outside wedlock are negative due to sociocultural norms. These norms are particularly harmful

for the SRH outcomes of adolescent girls<sup>79</sup>. Adolescent girls (10–14) are most excluded from programmes and services even though they are very vulnerable and have little agency in sexual relationships. Due to lack of access to information and support, they are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, unwanted and high-risk pregnancies and STIs<sup>80</sup>. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is essential for reinforcing positive values about bodies, puberty, sexuality and family life; it helps young people develop and sustain essential life skills and health-seeking behaviour; and equips girls and boys to establish healthy relationship. There is clear evidence that CSE has a positive impact on SRH, notably contributing towards reducing STIs, HIV and unintended pregnancies. CSE is proven to delay the age of sexual debut, reduce risk-taking behaviour, decrease the number of sexual partners and frequency of sex, and increase the use of contraception, including condoms. This is the basic lever for enhancing girls' abilities, building self-awareness and self-esteem, and options to prevent pregnancy and fertility choices. Even though boys tend to be less likely to bear the consequences of pregnancy, they too need to be part of CSE.

### Due to lack of access to information and support, adolescent girls (10–14) are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, unwanted and high-risk pregnancies and STIs

### 04

#### Limited Access to Education for Adolescent Girls

The available evidence confirms the clear and convincing role of the education sector in preventing early and unwanted pregnancies and ensuring the right to education of pregnant and parenting girls. Education is a protective factor to prevent adolescent pregnancy because for every additional school year, the fertility rate will decrease 10% and the use of contraceptives will increase.

As mentioned above, educated girls are more likely to avoid child marriage. Girls without education are three times more likely to get married or reunite before the age of 18 than girls with secondary or higher education. Education can also affect girls' attitudes towards child marriage.<sup>88</sup> For example, in Malawi, after a training programme based on a curriculum on Safe Schools, 90% of girls disagreed with the statement that it was acceptable for a teacher to get a girl pregnant so long as he married her. Early education, especially for girls, is an important measure to reduce early pregnancy, child marriage and childbearing. The empowerment of girls is related to the increase in quality and quantity of education.

The Education for All Global





Monitoring Report 2013–2014 emphasizes that if all girls in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia receive primary education, child marriages will be reduced by 14% and if all girls receive secondary education, the number of child marriages will

be reduced by 64%. Girls who have been in school for ten years will get married in six years.

Girls who can continue in and complete school are also less likely to give birth at a young age. There is ample evidence

that girls who study longer have lower rates of childbearing. Lower levels of education, exacerbated by the fact that children start school late, were associated with an increased risk of first birth in adolescence in Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya.



**Education is a protective factor to prevent adolescent pregnancy because for every additional school year, the fertility rate will decrease 10% and the use of contraceptives will increase.**

## 05

### Financial Barriers and Lack of Targeted Investments

Only around 10% of the population in ESAR has access to at least one type of social protection service, which means that very few governments implement cash transfers (the most common social protection programme) at scale to address different deprivations and determinants that lead to adolescent pregnancy such as poverty, school dropout and child marriage. Additionally, implementation of Cash Plus programmes that link social assistance to complimentary services is not fully utilized among those who are covered by social protection, which is of particular relevance in terms of preventing child marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

Girls are most often deeply affected by financial barriers<sup>91</sup> and those at the household level are one of the root causes of school dropout and child marriage among adolescent girls, which are main contributing factors of adolescent pregnancy.

Although there have not been any attempts found to analyze government budgets through the lens of adolescent pregnancy, it can be inferred from the massive funding gaps facing the health sector that public investment gaps in addressing adolescent pregnancy may be even larger.

Research shows that postponing marriage has a positive impact on women's social development. Poverty, socio-economic disadvantages and low expectations for future

economic success make young girls prone to early sexual debut, intergenerational sex and transactional sex. If well designed and implemented, social protection can address gendered life-cycle risks and transitions.

The evidence increasingly points to the role that social protection can play in augmenting women's savings and access to productive assets, increasing women's empowerment and decision making (including over expenditures and contraceptive use), improving school enrolment and attendance, and improving health service utilization, as well as supporting improvements in adolescent girls' mental health and reducing intimate partner violence.

# National Campaign to Address Defilement, Child Marriage, Teenage Pregnancy and Promote Positive Parenting



## The Champion and the Leader of the National Campaign

Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni  
First Lady of the Republic of Uganda

**H**on. Janet Kataaha Museveni is the First Lady of the Republic of Uganda and the current Minister of Education and Sports, having served since 2016. She was previously Minister of Karamoja Affairs (2011-2016) and a Member of Parliament representing Ruhaama County in Ntungamo District between 2006 and 2016. The First Lady has long been an advocate for women and girls throughout Uganda, having founded multiple NGOs that support war-affected and HIV/ AIDS-affected orphans, while promoting safe motherhood. Ensuring equitable opportunities for adolescent girls continues to be a driving priority of her work both as First Lady and as Minister of Education and Sports.







### Co-Champion of the National Campaign

H.E. Maj. (Rtd.) Alupo Jessica R.E  
Vice President of the Republic  
of Uganda

H.E. Maj. (Rtd.) President of the Republic of Uganda on 8 June 2021. An educator by training, H.E. Alupo previously served Alupo Jessica R.E was appointed Vice as Minister of Education and Sports (2011-2016) and Minister of State in charge of Youth and Children's Affairs (2009-2011).

Reflecting her long-standing commitment to improving the lives and prospects of Uganda's children. While serving as Minister of Education and Sports, H.E. Alupo championed school feeding initiatives, student loan schemes, and the growth of public universities throughout the country. A retired Major in the Uganda People's Defense Forces, H.E. Alupo is also an elected Member of Parliament representing Katakwi District as Women's Representative.

### Background

In 2020, the world was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and accordingly, His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda announced a total lockdown throughout the country, which included the closure of all educational institutions in March 2020. The prolonged closure of these institutions exposed institutional failures such as weak law enforcement, negative social practices, parenting challenges and the general vulnerability of children,

especially girls. Consequently, as widely reported in print and electronic media, the country has witnessed unprecedented levels of deflement, domestic violence, and sexual abuse which resulted in increased teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

Since March 2020, studies have shown an increase in cases of domestic violence, deflement, and teenage pregnancy in the country. For instance, a study supported by United Nations Population Fund (2021) found that a total of 354,736 teenage

pregnancies were registered in 2020 and a total of 290,219 teenage pregnancies were registered between January and September 2021, implying an average of over 32,000 teenage pregnancies recorded per month.

According to Uganda Police Annual Crime Report (2020), there were 13,613 deflement cases reported in 2019 and 14,134 deflement cases in 2020, indicating an increase of 3.8 per cent over the two-year period. The most affected gender and



### Co-Champion of the National Campaign

Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja  
Prime Minister of the  
Republic of Uganda Leader  
of Government Business in  
Parliament

Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja was appointed Prime Minister in June 2021, becoming the 11th person and first woman to occupy the office since Uganda's independence in 1962. Prior to this appointment, she was the Minister of State for Health in Charge of General Duties (2019-2021). An educator by training, Hon. Nabbanja

taught in a secondary school in the mid-1990s, an experience that cemented her commitment to child welfare and the importance of educating girls. She went on to serve in local government as District Councillor in Kibaale District, Resident District Commissioner in Pallisa, Busia and Budaka, and eventually Member of Parliament Woman's Representative in Kibaale District (2011-2016) and Kakumiro District (2016-Present). Drawing on her background in local government, Rt. Hon. Nabbanja is passionate about community mobilization and service delivery.

age group are adolescents between 15 and 17 years (9,954) followed by younger adolescents between 9 and 14 years (2,986). Of those adolescents defled during this period, 301 were defled by persons living with HIV/AIDS, while 120 adolescents were defled by their parents.

A survey on violence against children by the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (MoGLSD,2018) found that 35.3% of girls and 16.5% of boys between the ages of 13 and 17 were sexually abused, reflecting the reality that both genders experience abuse, although girls experience sexual abuse in higher numbers.

A study by Forum for Africa Women Educationalist in Uganda (FAWEU, 2020) on the situation and impact of COVID-19 on adolescent girls found that between March and June 2020, the number of adolescents seeking their first antenatal care appointment increased from 80,655 to 98,810 (an increase of 22.5%). For girls aged 10-14 years during the same period, the number of pregnancies increased from 290 to 1,353, representing a staggering increase of 36 per cent. Although the number of child marriages was found to be low 46 out of 1639 (2.8%) - the fact of child marriage suggests challenges around parenthood and the possibility that parents have been pressuring young girls to get married during the lockdown and period surrounding school closures.

### Scope of the National Campaign

The campaign will target every stakeholder including MDAs, parents and guardians, political leaders, religious leaders, cultural leaders, community leaders, development partners,

private sector, civil society organizations, academia, the media, young people, and the general public.

The national campaign will last for a period of 12 months with effect from December 2021. After 12 months, a national evaluation exercise will be undertaken to assess the progress and effectiveness of the campaign.

### Implementation Arrangements

The campaign will use a multi-sectoral approach with key MDAs and local governments to develop strategies and action plans. The activities to be carried out during the campaign are structured in three pillars of action:

#### 1. Prevention of deflement, child marriage and teenage pregnancy

- a) Sensitize the public and all duty-bearers about laws and policies around rights of children and adolescents, dangers of deflement, child marriages, STDs, HIV/AIDS, girls' education and teenage pregnancies
- b) Mobilize the political leaders, CSOs, development partners, the private sector, academia, community leaders, and parents and caretakers to participate and support the campaign goals
- c) Mobilize support to the campaign against deflement, child marriage, teenage pregnancy and to promote positive parenting
- d) Conduct social dialogues with religious leaders, cultural leaders, political leaders, parents and guardians on positive parenting
- e) Engage media in the national campaign
- f) Develop and implement life skills for adolescent girls and boys
- g) Mobilize and engaging religious, cultural and community leaders to drive social norm

change at community level for protecting adolescents

h) Mobilize for the return to school of all teenage mothers, and the ability to remain in school for all girls and boys as a protection and prevention mechanism

- i) Scale-up peer education and outreach to out-of-school adolescent girls and boys
- j) Increase access to youth friendly health services for adolescents

#### 2. Social protection for teenage mothers

- a) Strengthen parenting and caregiver support
- b) Empower teenage mothers with livelihood training and opportunities
- c) Facilitate the return of teenage mothers back to school
- d) Facilitate cash transfers and mentorship to teenage mothers
- e) Strengthen law enforcement to address deflement and other forms of violence related to teenage pregnancy
- f) Disseminate policies and implementing standards and guidelines against these vices

#### 3. Protection of babies of teenage mothers

- a) Build skills of adolescent mothers for parenting and resilience (Caring for Caregivers)
- b) Strengthen birth registration and certification
- c) Provide adolescent-responsive and age-disaggregated health and nutrition services to teenage mothers and their babies
- d) Train caregivers on key family care practices

#### 4. Evidence generation and knowledge management

Generate evidence and knowledge on deflement, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, STDs, HIV/AIDS, and girls' education.





# MGLSD Commits to the National Campaign on Ending Child Marriages and Teenage Pregnancy



**Hon. Sarah Mateke**  
Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs

childbirth related complications and death leading to loss of productive critical national resources. It is no doubt that the alarming and increasing trend of teenage pregnancies and GBV/VAC nationally if not arrested will cause substantial harm to families and negatively impact on the social-economic development of the nation. Emergency and immediate measures therefore must be taken and a multi-sectoral response mounted to address the situation not to escalate to a national disaster.

**Pregnant girls/  
mothers need  
a lot of support  
to be able to  
manage their  
lives and those  
of their babies.**

Uganda is faced with disturbing truth that 25 per cent of our adolescent girls of age 10-18 years are pregnant or have children of their own.

Since the onset, the COVID 19 pandemic continues to inflict far reaching negative impact on adolescents and young girls as seen through the increasing teenage pregnancies and child marriages in this pandemic period. The recent

UNFPA report on teenage pregnancy in Uganda during and post Covid-19 lockdown in the 55 supported districts indicates a 22 - 40% increase in teenage pregnancies and this is far higher than the national target of 15% in the NDP III (2021-2025).

It must be observed that under-age related pregnancies have been associated with girls dropping from school, child marriages associated with all forms of GBV, unsafe abortions,

Pregnant girls/ mothers need a lot of support to be able to manage their lives and those of their babies. They need a package

of support services in particular health care including sexual reproductive health, maternal and child nutrition, access to justice, skilling, protection and psychologically be prepared for the roles and responsibilities of being a mother and in most cases being “wife”. We must give the child mothers hope, choices and opportunities.

Ugandans appreciate the efforts of the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports for spearheading the National Campaign to end Child Marriage, Teenage Pregnancy and Promote Positive Parenting under the Theme Protect Girls, Save the Nation.

Second chance education is a great opportunity as Uganda recovers from the Covid 19 pandemic and a national campaign to mobilise all stakeholder’ support is key. As Uganda embarks on sexuality education for young people in schools and out of schools, skilling and economic empowerment is critical. Devoting more resources to preventing teen pregnancy

will not only save us money in the long run but will improve the lives, health, education, economic opportunities, and the well-being of these young people and their families. Child mothers need an opportunity to make a positive contribution to National Development.

**Time for action is now. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development commits to the following:**

1. Review the National Strategy on Ending Teenage Pregnancy and Child Marriage, 2016-2020.
2. Adopt and operationalize the Guidelines on Sexuality Education for Young People out of School,
3. Incorporate positive masculinity, second chance education and ending gender based violence in our ongoing community mobilization and mindset change efforts under the Parish Development Model. In fact we have already started to traverse the entire Country.

4. Coordinate the Technical Campaign. MGLSD has drawn and adopted an annual workplan together with UNICEF, UNFPA and other key Ministries, Departments and Agencies to this effect.
5. The MGLSD through the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) works closely with all the Religious Institutions in Uganda. MGLSD through IRCU will reach out and work with Women Religious Institutions in particular Uganda Catholic Women’s Guild, Mothers Union, Muslim Women, Seventh Day Adventists, Orthodox and Pentecostal and Born Again Church.
6. Roll out positive parenting guidelines in collaboration with the Inter-religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) and the Council for Traditional and Cultural Leaders in Africa (COTLA).







# Poem: Care Work is Work

Her hands are full yet she offers to  
hold one more

Her feet are blistered but she  
makes one more mile

Not a drop of water on the tap for  
days yet they eat, bathe and wash.

It's 5 o'clock, they retire but her  
next shift just began.

Buckets of tears in her ducts but a  
wide smile beams!

Arrears of sleep but their day won't  
start if she stays one more minute!

Three years with grey hair but she  
never noticed, never really looked  
at herself!

This resilience is her strength but  
it's conditioning, not choice.

She is brilliant, a visionary, an  
inventor, a scientist, but, "can she  
cook?"

She tries to prove herself most of  
the time rather than to just do the  
task!

There's plenty for everyone but we  
choose not to share

The voice, the skill, the duty, all  
rated as 'care'!

Care is for humanity's survival  
Let's cost it, stay-home dad and  
house-husband will be attractive.  
She is taking her space, she is a  
disruptor and she is unstoppable!  
Nothing without us; womanity!

The initial nutritionist, physician,  
teacher, judge, chemist, engineer!  
It will always come back to the  
beginning; female.

Happy International Women's Day,  
2022

**by Naluwende Lydia**

Senior Community Development  
Officer - Ministry of Gender, Labour  
and Social Development



# Empowering Women to Achieve Sustainable Development: Reflections on the Challenges and Lessons to Gender and Equity Responsive Budgeting in Uganda

It is a fact that women play a pivotal role in our own communities. Women are the driving force behind the economic survival of families in our communities and villages; and in this sense play an important role in the poverty reduction agenda which is at the forefront of our National Development Plan 2020/21-2024/25.

Uganda, like any other developing nations faces the challenge of generating wealth in order to combat poverty and address the problem of under-development. I am among those who are convinced that GEWE and equity is key for national development.

It's against this background that in 2015, the Parliament of Uganda enacted the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) with 3 provisions of compliance with gender and equity planning and budgeting (GEB) after proactive policy advocacy spearheaded by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE), Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association (UWOPA) and several stakeholders. Section 9(1) requires each accounting officer in consultation with the relevant



**Angela Nakafeero**  
Commissioner Gender and Women  
Affairs

**“Gender and Equity Responsive Planning and Budgeting is emerging as one of the good practice due to the fact that it helps to bridge the gap between commitments and practice. It is important to note that planning and budgeting is a process that would require all...**



stakeholders to prepare a Budget Framework Paper (BFP) for the vote, taking into consideration balanced development, gender and equity responsiveness and to submit the BFP to the Minister. Section 9(6) requires the Minister responsible for Finance in consultation with the Equal Opportunities Commission to issue a Certificate, certifying that the BFP is gender and equity responsive and specifying measures taken to equalize opportunities, which addressed the gaps in enforcement.

Section 13(11) mandates the Minister responsible for Finance to present the Gender and Equity certificates with the annual budget. Section 13(15) specifies that the Ministerial Policy Statements as well as Local Governments shall contain the Gender and Equity Certificates issued by the Minister responsible for Finance in Consultation with the EOC certifying that the Policy Statement is gender and equity responsive with specific measures taken to redress imbalances.

Six years after the implementation of the gender and equity budgeting provisions, annual assessments by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) have shown/ demonstrated success in planning and budgeting for gender and equity concerns by Ministries, Departments and Agencies and Local Governments (MDALGs).

**By focusing our efforts on annual plans and budgets and their implementation and budget execution, we in most cases miss the basis of the programmes and budgets- i.e. the development of the sector specific strategic plans their budget estimates. This is when and where strategic decisions that impact of the annual plans and budgets are made. So it's therefore important that Ministries and Local Governments develop the 5 Year Gender Strategies including programmes to inform their annual workplans and budgets.**

A recent assessment of progress made in the implementation of GEB from FY 2015/6 to 2019/20 reveals progress in Government commitment from 57% in FY 2016/2-17 to 61% in FY 2019/20. The assessment also identifies good practices and achievements across sectors in budget allocations for interventions that specifically target to meet the needs of different marginalized groups. Gender and Equity Budgeting in Uganda is implemented within the context of a progressive legal and policy framework that Government has put in place

to support gender equality and women's empowerment. This includes the 1995 Constitution, the Uganda Gender Policy 2007, Uganda Vision 2040 and the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII 2020/21- 2024/25). Equally significant is the alignment of these national frameworks to the global agenda for sustainable development under the SDGs with the overall principle of leaving no one behind. Gender and Equity Budgeting therefore is an important strategy in the global effort to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Gender and Equity Responsive Planning and Budgeting is emerging as one of the good practice due to the fact that it helps to bridge the gap between commitments and practice. It is important to note that planning and budgeting is a process that would require all Ministries and Local Government to develop and implement specific programmes to respond to critical gender and equity issues. For instance GBV is a great concern for MGLSD and the Country at large; the GBV Policy and a National Action Plan (2016-2021) is in place to this effect. Due to higher levels of poverty among women in Uganda, MGLSD has been implementing the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) to increase women's income levels. Similarly the Ministry of Education and Sports has been implementing the National Strategy for Girls' Education as well as the National Strategic Plan for Ending Violence Against Children in Schools among others.

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### **Limited Sex and Gender Disaggregated Data**

One of the most important pieces of information needed for a gender compliant Budget is sex and gender disaggregated data. Some sectors have endeavoured to institutionalize Information Management Systems- EMIS, HMIS, NGBV Database; with minimal or without specific sex or gender indicators. Most institutions do not have such data or it's scanty, or out dated. In most cases Ministries rely on UBOS census data and reports to inform plans, programmes and budgets. It is critical that Ministries review their Information Management Systems and UBOS data generation mechanisms to integrate relevant indicators and building the capacity of the Planning Departments to generate sex and gender disaggregated data to inform planning and budgeting. Sex and Gender disaggregated data is very important.

### **Capacity Gaps (resources, institutions, skills) among policy implementers especially Departments of Planning and Budgeting:**

Government funding is directed through a set-up institutional framework. Most Ministries lack the required institutional mechanisms in form of Gender Units and Departments for spearheading gender and equity responsiveness. Ministries

which are performing better in GENDER AND EQUITY responsiveness have in place the institutional mechanisms required to spearhead gender mainstreaming. For instance MGLSD, MoES, Ministry of Water and Environment. We need to have in place the Gender Units or Departments and Ministries. Ministries still have knowledge and skill gaps among the policy implementers especially the officials involved in planning and budgeting.

### **Funding for gender and equity mainstreaming among sectors remains a challenge**

There are still limited funds earmarked in budgets for gender responsive programmes. Most institutions do not have adequate ('ring-fenced') resources to plan and implement interventions to address gender inequalities thus the reliance on Development Partners' support which is not sustainable.

Limited coordination and complementarity of the different government institutions responsible for coordinating efforts that promote gender responsive budgeting in the country. For example, the National Planning Authority (NPA) issues a certificate of compliance of MDA budgets to the priorities of NDP that should be aligned to the G&E compliance certificate issued by the EOC. The NPA certification considers the previous financial year, while the EOC certification focuses on the subsequent financial year that makes it difficult to link the two processes. Institutional Roles and Coordination Framework Gender responsive budgeting should be regarded as a critical element of mainstreaming gender in the formulation, implementation and accountability of development initiatives. Mainstreaming

gender in government programs and projects is the core mandate of MGLSD. MGLSD needs to strengthen her work with key stakeholders such as the MFPED and the EOC to coordinate the GRB process.

**Conclusion:** Mainstreaming gender concerns in sector policies and program, including the budget requires commitment at all levels and in all planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Comes with great benefits and associated costs for developing gender and equity responsive plans, building capacity for integration of gender into the budgeting, and systematic assessment, monitoring to holding MDAs accountable.

“

**Gender and equity responsive planning and budgeting is a good practice to the delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment. As a country we can only do better**





# Q & A with Bryan Toshbwi Bwana of UMOJA Conservation Trust



**Qn: How would you summarize 2021 as a year in the Environmental sector**

Uganda's forest cover across the country tremendously declined from 24% (4,933,271 hectares) of land area in 1990 to less than the current 9% (1,956,664 hectares) in 2021, Uganda should have utilised the covid 19 lockdown to grow trees since agriculture was literally the only sector allowed to operate for almost two years. I therefore summative 2021 as a lost mass conservation opportunity.

**Qn: What were the highs for the Environmental sector in Uganda in your view in 2021?**

The Albertine Conservation Week that UMOJA Conservation Trust coordinated was one of the highs of 2021. This is an event intended to rally Oil sector players, local leaders and government agencies to effectively plan to absorb the carbon that will be emitted by the oil production, refinery, transportation, and refinery processes within the region. In a country that is fond of reactionary tendencies, this was a considerable high for me.

**Qn: The ban on kavera has still failed to shape fully in Uganda in spite of previous efforts by NEMA and other stakeholders to push it through, how do you suggest this ban can be best effected?**

As we recognise the efforts of Government on burning kavera, Ugandans need to change the behaviours and practices in waste disposal and management which requires the strong arm of Government to take action. On 1st June 2019, Tanzania joined hands with 33 other African countries in banning plastic carrier bags. I happen to have been in Tanzania when His Excellence Dr. John Pobe Magufuli was President and I witnessed him ban kavera with three months ultimatum to all single-use kavera users, importers, manufacturers, sellers, exporters, importers, etc. Therefore it is a no-brainer, the laws are very clear in UGANDA. It is only enforcement.

**Qn: Which government entity in your view did a good job working towards the protection and preservation of the environment in 2021 and why?**

To some extent, I think KCCA did a good job. They included in the new strategic plan the objective of increasing Kampala's Urban tree density to 11%. This is key to developing a Green Environmentally Sustainable Kampala City. With the support of the European Union, they conducted a detailed tree audit in four (4) precincts of Kampala. They discovered that they have over 328 tree species but only 20% are indigenous. This clearly gives them an indication of where to put more effort.

KCCA also developed the First Online Tree directory in Uganda and this is freely accessible to the public on their website. In 2021, they also developed the first Kampala Urban Green Infrastructure Ordinance.



**Qn: Which public sector entity do you think fell short on its mandate when it came to Environmental matters last year?**

**N**EMA, NFA AND MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT.

**Qn: Climate change was a hot issue across the globe in 2021 and remains so even as this year takes shape, what do you think are the major drivers of climate change in Uganda today?**

**P**ersonally, when I look at the road to Glasgow and what other countries were working on in that regard, I don't see major drivers of climate change in Uganda. The latest IPCC report (Working Group I contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report) confirms that the Earth is hotter than it has ever been in the last 125,000 years and that climate extremes such as heatwaves, extreme precipitation, droughts, and storms are on the rise and human-driven climate change has made them worse.

Remedies and climate mitigation strategies should have been at

the heart of Uganda's 2021/2022 budget. I think the government needs to wake up and realise that over 49% of its GDP IS NATURE NASED and that we must protect nature jealously. The continuous decimation of natural resources needs to be halted sap fro the good of future generations.

**Qn: How can these factors above be mitigated and reversed for the good of our environment as a whole?**

**T**he government needs to encourage carbon-neutral investments while pushing for nature-positive policies. It does not matter how many trees we plant, if we keep losing our natural forest cover at this rate, we shall soon find ourselves in a whirlwind of playing catch up. Climate change mitigation is everybody's business. We all need to engage in saving and protecting biodiversity and planting trees. Al of us e.g Local and Central governments, private sector, public sector, the clergy, multinationals, etc.

**Qn: The UPDF has played a role in bettering the Environment through 2021 and it's recent Tarehesita celebrations CA with a number of conservation-related activities, how do you think this can be further harnessed by the security forces and also introduced to the common man?**

**I** think the UPDF has started off very well with its civil-military engagements, particularly in Mbale. Given that they are one of the most trusted institutions in Uganda, this gives me and many other Ugandans a glimmer of hope. Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia have seen their national armies play a huge role in not only planting trees but growing them. At one time the Ethiopian defense forces planted 100 million trees. This is evidence enough for the UPDF to borrow a leaf.

We (Umoja Conersationn Trust) have written to the Chief of Uganda People's Defence Forces General Mbadi requesting for a partnership that shall largely see us repopulate key ecosystems of the Elgon, Rwenzori, and Albertine with indigenous trees







military bases and their homes. This is one way of enhancing UPDF civil-military cooperation.

**Qn: What in your view can the common man do within their everyday lives to improve the environment in 2022?**

**F**irst, the common man should be a responsible citizen of the Republic of Uganda by being very vigilant and reporting any destructions to nature within his or her area. Secondly, all of us should endeavor to eat fruits daily, keep the seedlings and plant them in our compounds during the weekends. This is one sure way of minimizing pressure off our natural resources.

This approach is very necessary or a time like now when we are trying to plant 60 million trees. Every Ugandan should participate in this patriotic noble cause. It would be nice for the head of state to work with us in identifying, recognising, and rewarding the best performing schools, institutions, and individuals in this anniversary campaign. This is our humble appeal to the head of state and all Ugandans.

**Qn: The private sector and civil society are key players when it comes to conserving our environment, any particular organisation, company, or campaign that stood out for you in 2021, and why?**

**F**or me, it was the European Union and their efforts to save Bugoma Forest together with the civil society organisations that tagged along. Their determination towards protecting that ecosystem and the wild animals in it was amazing. Although not much has been yielded yet, at least the momentum and awareness created showed that we have human beings who still have

nature at heart.

**Qn: Where do you think the above entities should put focus in this year 2022?**

**I**t is vital to focus environment conservation efforts on individuals, women, and private sector players. Firstly they own more land than all Uganda Government Agencies combined. Sensitising people on the proper disposal of the plastics or contracting companies to assist in the collection of the plastics for re-use and growing of trees is a game changer.

With over 15 million school-going children, all our efforts need to be geared towards attaining a solution to sustained wood full consumption in our schools. Umoja Conservation Trust has a plan of advocating for each school in Uganda to have a bamboo woodlot for woodfuel consumption. This can only start by engaging the school headteachers and then subsequently setting up school nurseries.

**Qn: What do you think will be the biggest threats to our Environment locally this year?**

**I**ncreased deforestation and limited government interventions will lead to extreme seasons which will eventually affect people's livelihoods.

**Qn: Any particular neglected environmental issue national in nature that you think has been neglected for long and ought to be looked into and fixed in 2022 and why is this specific issue in your view?**

**T**he disposal of the textile industry and E-waste products.

effective this year. This program is dubbed the '60 MILLION TREES FOR UGANDA @ 60 CAMPAIGN. This is a campaign that will see us establish indigenous trees nurseries (bamboo, coffee, candlenut trees, jack fruit trees, mangoes, etc) at all UPDF training bases and camps. These nurseries will help us achieve a strong rooting for the 60 million trees to celebrate Uganda's 60 years of independence.

The trees from these nurseries will then be distributed to the communities surrounding the bases so that they can grow them within and around the

# The 4 by 4 Strategy

## Domestication of Fruit Trees to Enhance Family Nutrition, Food Security, Environmental Conservation and Income Generation



**Faridah Kibowa (Hajjat)**  
Chairperson, National Women Council



Hon Peace Mutuuzo state minister for gender and cultural affairs together PLANTING A TREE IN KALANGALA

At the inauguration of the Women's Council leadership in 2018, His Excellency, the President emphasized the need for economically independent Women with an aim to increase the income at household levels. This called for gender equality in all aspects. The economic and social imperative for women's economic empowerment is clear. Greater gender equality boosts economic growth and leads to better development outcomes. It contributes to reducing income inequality and boosting economic diversification and in turn, supports economic resilience. Gender equality is one of the 17 global UN Sustainable Development Goals, which provide a roadmap for ending poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The Ugandan 1995 Constitution Article 33 (4) and Article 21(2) has upheld the women's rights and non-discrimination in social or economic standing.

Subsequently other policies and Acts have been passed to enhance women participation in socio economic activities as (i) investing in education and health to provide a level playing field for women to take on economic activities and reduce the gender gap in skills and income; (ii) increasing access to financial services, including digital financial services, to provide women with equal access to resources, which in turn fosters labor productivity; and (iii) promoting equal rights for women in all areas, including the right to property ownership; (iv) advocating for Gender Mainstreaming in Climate Change to find possible solutions to mitigate the effects. National Women Council Leaders have a mandate to mobilize and advocate for this.

Even though the Government put laws and a regulation to shield the women in all aspects many gaps have been realized through existing gender inequalities in relation to access

of resources and opportunities, discrimination, threats to health, loss of livelihood, food insecurity, displacement, forced migration due to climate change, poverty, human trafficking, gender-based violence and harassment. Turning a blind eye to the underlying causes would increase vulnerabilities and aggravates poverty and inequality.

Through this the National Women Council Secretariat came up with the 4 by 4 strategy that integrates its self in the 15 household model and strictly to address the gaps that greatly affect women in households that is ; (i) Climate Change, (ii) Environmental Conservation (iii) Income generation (iii) Nutrition and Food Security. Attaining to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan growth which is targeted at having women involvement in these key drivers. The 4 by 4 strategy has inclusive strategized components to mitigate key challenges that are under the above drivers that challenges





Hon Peace Mutuuzo state minister for gender and cultural affairs together with Hajjat Kibowa chairperson of NATIONAL WOMENS COUNCIL Donating a water tank at one of the schools in kalangala

the woman's wellbeing in the household.

Its objective is enhancing Fruit Tree Planting as a mitigating factor to combat food insecurity, conservation of environment, Provision of Nutrition to the family and a key factor was to enhance income generation to the family.

These fruits are essential to the livelihoods of most rural communities especially to the women in households. Notably, indigenous fruits contribute to food security of the rural population by providing a vast array of food which supplies essential nutrients especially at

times when other food sources are unavailable. The fruits act as an important source of vital nutrients and essential vitamins especially to the growing children who are prone to malnutrition.

Not only do indigenous fruits provide food for household consumption during the dry seasons, but they also act as a source of income for the households. Trade in indigenous fruits contribute to livelihoods through income generation and as a safety-net for consumption- and income-smoothing. Greater proportions of poor households engage in commercialization of indigenous fruits than do wealthy households and it represents a greater fraction of their total livelihood. Due to the recurrent crop failures and livestock losses, initiatives for integration of indigenous fruit trees in the farming systems could enhance contribution of indigenous fruits to food security besides income generation and ensuring short and long-term sustainability of agricultural production.



Hon Peace Mutuuzo state minister for gender and cultural affairs together with Hajjat Kibowa chairperson of NATIONAL WOMENS COUNCIL MEETING WITH STUDENTS IN KALANGALA

In addition to economic benefits, fruit trees provide a number of environmental services. Many of the species have traditionally been grown in mixed cropping systems where they enhance biodiversity and strengthen resilience against the effects of adverse weather conditions, poor soils and pests. In regions where climate variability is commonplace and adverse impacts of climate change are expected, fruit trees play an important role in buffering against production risks and providing a continuous supply of environmental services. While most production and primary processing are likely to occur in rural areas, fruit trees can also be incorporated in urban gardens and streets, where they can contribute to household food and income security as well as providing shade and other environmental services.

It's with these that the National Women Council took its mandate to raise awareness and provide information and promote sustainable livelihood diversification for the small scale household farmers using the Council structure. Mobilization and advocating for the cause will be the important activity. The most important factors to advocate for benefits of fruit enterprise deriving from increased income through marketing and value addition, food security, improved nutrition and Climate Change Mitigation.



Hajjat Kibowa chairperson of National Womens Council Meeting with students in Kalangala planting a tree

# Uganda's Commitments Towards Achieving Gender Equality and Women Empowerment by 2026

**T**he GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM is a multistakeholder global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women in partnership with the Governments of France and Mexico, in partnership with civil society and youth. The Forum kicked off in Mexico City from 29 - 31 March 2021 and will climax in Paris from 30 June - 2 July 2021. The GEF aims i) to generate multi-stakeholder alliances for gender equality and ii) to launch the 7 innovative, multi-year thematic action coalitions to advance on key aspects of the gender equality agenda.

In Uganda, the most recent Beijing+25 review report acknowledges that while there is modest progress towards the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women, gender-sensitive legal reform and public structures have not sufficiently made rights and socio-economic transformation real for women and girls.

In addition, the country experiences slow social norm and practices change with limited opportunities for women and girls, persistent male dominance in public service and decision making across levels and emerging resistance towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.

## CONTEXT

Uganda continues to make steady progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals by ensuring that its men and women, girls and boys, including adolescents, have an equitable chance in life, survive, thrive and are kept safe from violence and exploitation. With a population of 41 million people (2019 population projections) Uganda doubles as a country with one of the highest female populations at 50.74% [23.9million] and is one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in the world. Fifty-seven per cent of its citizens are under 18 years of age, and the number of children is expected to double by 2040. Rapid population growth, urbanization and the refugee influx continue to put pressures on the country's social service delivery.

**With a population of 41 million people (2019 population projections) Uganda doubles as a country with one of the highest female populations at 50.74% [23.9million]**

...

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda promotes women's

participation in leadership positions at all levels. While representation at both national and local level is above the 30% quota provided in the constitution, the number of women elected on contested seats remains very low, and until this year, the number in the Executive has been below the 30% quota demonstrating the deep rooted and slow to change cultural and traditional prejudices that continue to reject women as equal and rightful leaders. Overall, the number of women and girls in public service and corporate governance remains very low. The Country has an active civil society, with strong women's rights defenders and organizations that continuously carryout advocacy and lobbying for women's rights and gender sensitive legal and policy frameworks. However, their capacity and geographical reach is suboptimal. The women movement in Uganda requires a boost to enhance their participation in elective processes and other democratic and corporate governance processes over the longer term. Grassroots women and communities of vulnerable and marginalized women are yet to be mobilized. Despite progress made in reducing income poverty in Uganda, female-headed households face higher risk of poverty than male-headed households, a situation that has been exacerbated by covid-19.





Income inequality as measured by the distribution of wealth and income remains very low for women and women headed households. Overall, only 3 in 10 women own land and fewer still, are in gainful employment. While the constitution recognizes equality between men and women, very few laws in Uganda protect women's economic rights and women's opportunities for meaningful economic activities are limited. Evidence suggests that because they tend to have less education and fewer formal business skills, women find it harder to sustainably start and grow SMEs into larger enterprises and business corporations. Less educated, semi-skilled rural women find it even more difficult to comply with complex enterprise management requirements limiting their advancement to medium and large enterprises. Further, women in Uganda continue to face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination due non-supportive cultures, laws and practices, a slow change in attitudes towards gender equality by public institutions, weak implementation and enforcement of existing laws and policies, absence of accountability mechanisms for duty bearers and a lack of knowledge and information by rights holders to defend their rights and demand accountability. National statistics show that over half of adult women 15-49 years have experienced violence and more than 1 in every 5 women 15-24 years have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. Estimates for violence against children also show that violence against the girl child is high at 59% for young females prior to age 19 years. Child marriage is still high in Uganda; 34 percent of women 20-24 years were married or in union before age 18 and 7 percent were married

before the age of 15. FGM remains widespread in some districts in Uganda. The average FGM prevalence rate among women aged 15-49 across six districts in eastern Uganda is 26.6 percent; ranging from 13 percent in Kapchorwa to 52 percent in Moroto. The Uganda Police crime report 2020 also indicate over 14,000 cases of defilement were reported in 2020; 44 percent of girls and 59 percent of boys age 13-17 had experienced physical violence while 20 percent of children aged 13-17 had experienced emotional abuse. Violence against women and children deprives them their right to protection, safety and security, dignity and represents a substantial obstacle to equality between women and men

### **Country Commitment to the Generation Equality Agenda**

Given the Context above and the intersection of the multifaceted factors that slow down the attainment of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, the Government of Uganda is commits to:

- Eliminate all forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV) as reflected in the enactment of several legislation such as the Domestic Violence Act 2010, the prohibition of female genital Mutilation Act 2010, the Prevention of trafficking in persons 2009, Succession Amendment Act 2021, Employment Act 2006, Penal Code amendment Act 2007 and the and the Gender based violence Policy for Uganda.
- Promote Women's Economic Empowerment through multi-faceted programs that combine skilling, access to market information, innovative and time saving technologies, affordable credit and financing services including

the establishment of the Women's Entrepreneurship Fund, and other productive resources to enable women entrepreneurs expand their businesses into medium and large-scale enterprises.

### **Rationale**

Women's economic empowerment is central to realizing women's rights and gender equality. Women's economic empowerment includes women's ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, access to decent and gainful work, control over their own time, lives, and bodies; and ability to freely express their voice, agency, and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household, public, private spaces, and international institutions. Empowering women in the economy and closing existing gender gaps in the world of work are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on food security, Goal 3 on ensuring health, Goal 5 on achieving gender equality, Goal 8 on promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, and Goal 10 on reducing inequalities. Women's economic empowerment boosts productivity, increases economic diversification and income equality in addition to other positive development outcomes.

Over the years Uganda has fostered women's participation in the economy through gender responsive laws, policies and programs to make women key players in wealth creation and economic productivity and empowerment. According to the 2019/20 national household



survey 31% of households own an enterprise declining to about 28% with the onset of covid19 outbreak, and there was an increase in poverty incidence from 19% to 22%. The survey preceding this had shown that only 33.8% of businesses in Uganda belong to women, 40% of women are employed, and that the average wage earning for women had increased from UGX 66,000 in 2012/13 to UGX 110,000 in 2016/17, 38% of women own a house, while only 1 in every 3 women owned land. In addition, women bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work spending around 2.5X more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men which negatively affects their labour force participation. Government of Uganda therefore commits to mobilize resources and expound partnerships to foster women economic empowerment and autonomy.

The GoU has also enacted numerous laws including the Domestic Violence Act of 2010 that protects women's rights in family and marriage, and addresses Violence Against Women and Girls by criminalizing domestic violence, and in 2016, approved the National Policy on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and the National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing the GBV policy. The NAP for GBV provides a framework for all national and local government interventions aimed at preventing and responding to GBV, and spells out the roles of various state and non-state actors, the strategic actions that need to be undertaken, and milestones for measuring progress at national and local levels. The GBV policy is a vehicle for the achievement of a zero-tolerance environment

and a comprehensive response to support GBV survivors. GEWE and VAWG issues have also been addressed in Uganda's Vision 2040, the National Development Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25, the United Nations Sustainable development cooperation framework the Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA), and the GoU's framework on Integration of refugees into NDP III.

Additionally, there are several pieces of legislation that remain pending, and others require amendment. There is also a need for development of comprehensive implementation policies and regulations to effectively protect the rights of women and girls and address discriminatory implementation of laws and barriers faced by VAWG survivors in accessing essential services, including sexual and reproductive health services and rights (SRHR).

## GUIDING FRAMEWORKS FOR THE COMMITMENTS

1. Domestication of the CSW65 Agreed Conclusions  
The Commission recognizes the need to implement international and national commitments and norms, including through temporary special measures, create more enabling environments and institutional systems, eliminate violence against women in public life and strengthen the voice, agency, women's participation, in leadership and decision making in public and private spaces as was emphasized during the 65th CSW as a potential in influencing gender sensitive policy, legal frameworks, budgets and promoting equality programming.

The Commission also recognizes the importance of the full engagement of men and boys as

allies, agents, and beneficiaries of change, in the promotion of women's full and effective participation in decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, stresses that it is critical to address and integrate gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls throughout national, regional, and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to ensure synergies between the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender-responsive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda. (Based on CSW Agreed Conclusions)

2. Uganda has made significant progress towards the implementation of key commitments on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. In particular the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BDPfA), United Nations Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW), Maputo Protocol and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. Uganda has aligned its national development planning frameworks to the BPFa and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and has under the Third National Development Plan (NDP III) prioritized community mobilization and mindset change to address the negative social norms, practices and gender stereotypes that constrain the attainment of all SDGs. Specific interventions include investing in the education of the girl child to reduce persistent high level of teenage pregnancies and child marriages by keeping the girls longer in schools. Strengthening livelihood and economic



empowerment programmes and investing in gender-responsive national statistics development strategies to inform evidence-based monitoring, evaluation, and progress reporting on GEWE.

3. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commits Governments to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty. The Government of Uganda is committed to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social, and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner. Uganda's Vision 2040 of aims at achieving "A transformed Uganda Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous country within 30 years and Third National Development Plan (NPDIII) Goal focuses on increasing Household Incomes and the Quality of life of the people (2021 – 2024/2025).

### **SPECIFIC UNDERTAKINGS TO ASSURE UGANDA'S COMMITMENTS TOWARDS ACCELERATING GENERATION EQUALITY**

Based on the pronounced commitments and the rationale provided, Uganda commits to the undertake the following Actions as per the Generation Equality Coalitions to eliminate Gender Based violence and promote women economic rights and justice by 2026:

Action Plan 1: Promote Women's Economic Empowerment

i. Commit UGX 32 billion per year towards the Uganda Women's Entrepreneurship Programme to able to benefit at least 1 million Women in Small Scale Businesses including skilling them in entrepreneurship.

ii. Design and implement a National Women Economic

Empowerment Programme to support Women in Business to grow their enterprises.

iii. Work with 200 selected Private Sector Companies to enroll, participate in and comply with the Gender Equality Seal Certification.

iv. Commit USD 457,534,246.5 (UGX 1.67 trillion) for agro-industrialization in 2021/2022 financial year including implementing affirmative action of 40% to benefit Women Farmers.

v. Financial inclusion through cooperatives, SACCOs, Revolving Fund where USD 8,219 (ugx 30,000,000) will be provided per parish for a start targeting 10,594 parishes in the Country.

vi. Allocate USD 25,890,411 (UGX 94,500,000,000) for community mobilization and mindset change to take up Government Programmes especially Wealth Creation and Productivity.

vii. The Uganda Land Fund to put aside 40% of its budget towards supporting women in agriculture to access funds to acquire titled land within their own right.

viii. Allocate USD 8,767,123.2 (UGX 32,000,000,000) for Uganda Women's Entrepreneurship Program.

### **Action Plan 2: Elimination of Gender Based Violence**

Scale up the delivery of quality and comprehensive support services for survivors and victims of GBV.

i. Commit to full implementation of existing GBV laws and policies by adopting GBV indicators in the Government Performance contracting framework to track duty-bearers' level of accountability on enforcement and implementation of GBV laws and policies by 2025.

ii. Ensure that victims

and survivors' rights are fully protected through formal and alternative Justice Systems and perpetrators are held accountable for their actions/ crimes by supporting the Institutionalized Specialist Justice System and Structure for Management cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) against women and girls.

iii. Enhance the capacity of key Sectors/Ministries/Agencies (Justice Sector, Education Sector, Health Sector and Social Sector) on GBV case management including reporting, tracking, referral and response to cases of GBV including mainstreaming GBV prevention and response in their Action Plans and digitalization of GBV case management.

iv. Support the establishment of 8 regional GBV Shelters and Reception Centers.

v. Support the implementation of the Gender Based Violence Policy and Action Plan 2016 including strengthening partnerships with Development Partners, Civil Society Organizations, Religious and Traditional/Cultural Institutions and the Private Sector on prevention and response to Gender Based Violence.

vi. Implement the Male Involvement Strategy on prevention and response to GBV as well as social norm change using SASA and COTLA

vii. Commit to ratify and implement the ILO Convention 190 on eliminating Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in the world of work by 2026 in close partnership with the private sector.

viii. Commit to strengthen partnerships and collaboration with Civil Society, Private sector and the affected communities to build stronger and resilient communities to promote and protect the full rights of women and girls.





## Statement by UN Women Country Representative

**Ms. Adekemi Ndieli**

As we commemorate International Women's Day, the world is focusing on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs. This year we celebrate and amplify the crucial role of women in leading solutions to the climate crisis.

Climate change is a living reality of women, with two facets, on one hand, women are indeed most affected because of the long-standing gender issues;

on the other hand, they are also active agents in addressing immediate and strategic solutions to Climate justice. However, this consciousness has not yet permeated the current discussions and negotiations or the production of knowledge on climate justice. Women, girls, and marginalized persons need to be involved in the design and implementation of climate response actions to ensure the equal sharing of benefits. The inter-generational knowledge, skills and leadership of women and girl climate defenders and activists need to be fully brought to bear if societies are to

succeed in the conservation and sustainable use of our planet's limited resources. Without women's leadership, knowledge, and participation in climate response today, it is unlikely that solutions for a sustainable planet and a gender equal world tomorrow will be realized.

Because women possess unique knowledge and experience, particularly at the local level, their inclusion in decision-making processes is critical to effective climate action. A 2019 study found that increasing women's representation in national parliaments leads to





reduce the pressure to deforest more land, reducing additional emissions.

As we know now, gender-based violence is intensified by climate and environmental crises and disasters, at home, at work, and in public spaces as revealed by the shadow pandemic during the COVID-19 crisis. The economic and social fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted women and girls disproportionately, further challenging their ability to withstand the impacts of the climate and environment crises. Additionally, women's and girls' health is endangered by climate and environmental crises and disasters, potentially cutting off access to services and health care, and threatening sexual and reproductive health and rights.

UN Women Uganda Country Office is focusing supporting climate smart agriculture technologies in Bugiri, Nwoya, Adjumani and Yumbe districts to strengthen women farmers' resilience and adaptive capacity to climate variability. We also work with all stakeholders at national level in providing solutions at policy and implementation levels.

Ltd we are working with women to build capacity of women small holder farmers to adopt climate smart technologies and provide linkages to available markets.

At UN Women we believe that gender equality at the center of all climate change solutions. Therefore, increasing financing for gender-responsive climate, environmental and disaster risk initiatives will enable the country to attain a sustainable future. The UN Secretary General has instituted a road map in close collaboration with the private sector to attain net zero emissions by 2030. The global roadmap urges governments, businesses and all stakeholders to step up and drive the global energy transition forward by tripling annual investment for renewable energy and energy efficiency globally as well as global renewable power capacity.

To achieve this, we must all focus on empowering women and girls and addressing past gender inequalities as fundamental drivers of risk in the climate change context, strengthening disaster risk through adoption of environmental policies responding to environmental disasters, scaling up lessons learnt from successful projects, strengthen partnerships with key institutions, and put in place mechanism for tracking progress, not forgetting strengthening evidence base by generating and utilizing research based data and information .

Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal future, remains beyond our reach.

*Happy International Women's Day.*

the adoption of more stringent climate change policies, resulting in lower emissions. At the local level, the participation of women in natural resource management is associated with better resource governance and conservation outcomes.

Expanding women's access to productive resources can increase agricultural production and food security and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. If all women smallholders received equal access to productive resources, their farm yields would rise by 20 to 30 per cent. Increasing farm yields can

## **UN Women is actively engaged with the private sector to support women to be more resilient to climate change.**

UN Women is actively engaged with the private sector to support women to be more resilient to climate change. For example, in partnership with Delight Uganda



# A spotlight on women driving locally-led climate mitigation and adaptation



by Susan Nandudu

Uganda's vulnerability and adaptation assessments indicate that the poor (in both urban and rural areas), most being women and children, are most vulnerable to climate change impacts. This is supported by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that notes that "women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty, and the majority of the world's poor are women."

Despite women being disproportionately affected by climate change, they play a critical role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Women have knowledge and understanding of their local environment, and are quick adopters of technologies that are needed to adapt to the increased impacts of climate change. There are many inspiring examples of women driving change through knowledge building, application of sustainable practices, and advocacy for resources and conducive policies, among others. Sadly, not many are documented or given enough visibility.

This year's International Women's Day recognises the contribution of women and girls towards climate change adaptation, mitigation and response in building a more

sustainable future for all. What better way than to draw a spotlight on the women driving locally led adaptation and mitigation action in Uganda? While there are many women to celebrate, this article recognises the work of two women playing a critical role in mitigation and adaptation action in Uganda.

## Mrs. Ruth Kiwanuka

She is the Executive Director of the Joint Energy and Environment Project (JEEP), a non-profit organisation that constructs energy saving stoves for families, schools, health units, restaurants, prisons and barracks; planting trees and promoting the use of solar energy, among other important work. In a recent radio talk show on CBS FM 88.8, Mrs. Susan Wamala Sserunkuma, the Headmistress of Mukono Boarding Primary school, one of JEEP's beneficiary institutions, gave a testimony of

the multiple benefits the school had registered ever since they installed an energy saving cook stove. Previously the school depended on at least five trucks of firewood per term, which was scaled down to one and a half trucks per term. In addition, the kitchen and kitchenware, she said, is now smoke-free, protecting the workers from pollution and related health challenges such as cancer. Mrs. Ruth Kiwanuka has advocated for a greener and cleaner environment since 1987, when you joined JEEP as a volunteer.

Promoting the conservation and efficient utilisation of energy to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions is one of the key mitigation strategies in Uganda's national climate change policy. Energy saving cook stoves, solar energy and tree growing, are climate resilient and low carbon technologies.





### Awareness raising and training

This is a very critical pillar for mindset change that results in informed decision-making. It relates to Article 6 of the UN Convention on Climate change, Articles 11 & 12 of the Paris Agreement; and is one of Uganda's climate change policy priorities. "We formed the group to make people aware of climate change; why it is here, and what we can do about it", says Constance. Over the years, a learning centre was built, where women, youth and men, converge to learn about climate change.

Tree growing, not tree planting, is promoted. The difference between the two, is that tree growing emphasises nurturing the seedling until it grows, while tree planting does not necessarily do so. Osukuru United Women's Network has adopted progressive policies for its members including cutting a tree only if five plus, have been planted; planting a tree to celebrate the birth of a child and another for its baptism. These trees are then given the child's name with a plan that when the child is older, and the trees matured, they can be cut to keep the child in school. As a result, the value for education has increased in the area. "Those days when a child went to the University, a parent had to sell land because it was too expensive for them to afford. Today, however, even the children who were pregnant during the closure of schools due to COVID-19 have gone back to school and there is no shame." Constance adds.

### Food production

The women demonstrate practices consistent with climate smart agriculture. Such practices include agroforestry, where fruit



#### Mrs. Constance Okollet

She is the Coordinator of Osukuru United Women's Network, a community based organisation with 52 groups of 30+ members each, based in Tororo district. The Network was motivated to start, by the changes in the seasons that significantly

reduced food production in the area to the point of regular food scarcity. "When we were growing up, our fathers had granaries with a lot of food. Now people keep their food in sacks because it is not enough to keep in granaries" She recalls that in the past, it was difficult to see a neighbour's home because there were many trees. These days the place is bare without trees. "We are trying to make the situation change to make the climate better than where we are now, for instance, we think that planting trees will cover the area and pull more rain". The Osukuru United Women's Network thus engages in various adaptation activities, some of which have mitigation co-benefits, including the following.

“**women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty, and the majority of the world's poor are women.**”





trees with multiple purposes are emphasised. For example, jack fruit trees offer fruit that is edible, providing nutrition and income to households. In addition, the leaves can be used to feed animals; and when dried, the ash from the leaves is used to make briquettes to cook food at home.

**Those days when a child went to the University, a parent had to sell land because it was too expensive for them to afford. Today, however, even the children who were pregnant during the closure of schools due to COVID-19 have gone back to school and there is no shame.**

Other climate smart agricultural practices include composting to make manure to supplement soil fertility. The composting process begins with rubbish gathered, cut, mixed with cowdung and soil, and then covered for 21 days. It is then turned and covered again. This process is repeated three times, the product of which, is very good manure for the crops.

Soil and water conservation is another practice. This includes mulching, where members deliberately look for mulch material to cover their gardens to conserve soil moisture during the dry season. Mulching material is not easy to find, so the group deliberately looks for any kind of grass and waste from the gardens including maize stalks, from anywhere! Emphasis is placed on drying the mulch adequately to avoid harbouring pests that are multiplied as eggs grow into larva. To complement

this practice, trenches are dug to trap water during the rain season. The network has trained all its members to practice fanya juu and fanya chini. Water harvesting is also done for domestic purposes.

What also became very clear for the women at an early stage, was the need for each member to have a backyard garden to ensure food and nutrition, all the year around. "There is a lot of famine in the villages for the people who do not have backyard gardens". The women emphasise the need for vegetables, potato, cassava and yam (aroru) in their backyards; crops that can be grown at any time and be harvested anytime. This is intensive farming, and it calls for working harder than the average farmer to reap benefits. The group calls it double effort. This is climate change adaptation.

## There is a lot of famine in the villages for the people who do not have backyard gardens

### Energy saving cook stoves and Briquette making

The group invested in trainings of trainers for making energy saving cookstoves, basket stoves (fireless cooker) and briquettes. As a result, all the members use these cooking solutions for their cooking needs, thereby contributing to the mitigation efforts of the country.

### Youth empowerment

Constance and her team are committed to making the next generation better than their own. In addition to making the environment better (conservation of wetlands and forests), the team is mentoring young people with skills such as tree growing where they are encouraged to plant trees behind their houses if they have no land. "Now their fathers are offering them more land because they now value trees". Initially, the men used to say that they could not waste time planting trees on their land, when they could plant crops.

### Diversified sources of income

Earning income became an important objective early in the journey of the Osukuru Women's network. The women realised that in order to keep their children in school and to raise their own standards of living, having their own income and not depending on the men alone, was very important. A village savings and loans association became a key practice to support their financial security, and each member can save and borrow money. The loans have supported many members to

start and grow businesses such as selling silver fish, tomatoes, salt, sugar, and some have opened small shops in their homes. Other members have birds like ducks and chicken, as well as animals like goats that they can easily exchange for cash. They sell their produce during market days and from their homes. "The idea is to have something that can give them income every day to feed their families and reduce gender based violence", adds Constance.

### Addressing gender based violence

The programme started with an emphasis on women only. One day one of its members reported that she had been battered by her husband the previous night. The group reported the case to the police which intervened with sensitization for the families about gender based violence. There are times when the Network calls family protection officials to give a talk to its members. As a result, there was a realisation that most of the conflicts in the families came from inadequate food in the home, which is also associated to impacts of climate change. Talking through the challenges and seeking solutions to the family problems, has tremendously reduced the cases of gender based violence. Over time, three men requested to join the group, and the number has since grown 326.

### Lobbying and advocacy

There are issues that are beyond the control of the group, such as incentivising especially the men out of the wetlands where they grow rice to earn an income. Without an alternative livelihood, they claim they cannot move out. The same is true for those engaged in cutting down trees to burn charcoal. The Network engages with the Local government to try and come up with a lasting solution to such problems.

### Conclusion

These are but two examples of women championing adaptation and mitigation action in Uganda. Other examples can be traced in almost all the regions of the country, including stories from Katakwi, Kabale and Kalungu districts, where women are championing simple locally led adaptation to climate change. These efforts may be at a micro scale but have the potential to be scaled up. Development partners and government, need to channel climate finance to the local level, in order to scale up such efforts.

*The writer is the Executive Director of the African Centre for Trade and Development (ACTADE), a non-governmental organisation that champions climate action through policy engagements, and awareness raising and training*

**A spotlight on women driving locally-led climate mitigation and adaptation**



# Highlights of Government of Uganda Periodic Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW)

The Government of Uganda on 11th February 2022 addressed the CEDAW Committee on her progress on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW) for the period of 2010 to 2018. The Presentation was based on the Concluding Observations issued by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) following the presentation of the Combined Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports in 2010 and list of issues and questions in relation to the combined Eight and Ninth Periodic Reports of Uganda as highlighted in sections below.

The Government of Uganda, has been consistent in her pursuit for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The obligations to the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW) are well embedded in the legal, policy and planning framework of the Republic of Uganda. The provisions of the Convention have been embedded in Uganda's Vision 2040, the Second National Development Plan II (2015/16-2019/20), and Sector specific policies and strategies including the Social Development Sector Plan (2015/16-2019/20).

Since the ratification of CEDAW

in 1985, the Government of Uganda has demonstrated commitment to the provisions of the Convention, and continues to honour that commitment by fulfilling the requirement. The Combined 8th and 9th Periodic Report provides a comprehensive assessment of the progress that Uganda has made in implementing the commitments of CEDAW which reflect the collective action and collaboration of all stakeholders; Government, Development Partners, Civil Society, the Private Sector, Religious Institutions and communities.

The commitment is demonstrated by and through the ratification of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), becoming the 28th State to do so.

## Legislative Framework

The Government of Uganda has enacted a number of gender – responsive laws and regulations. These include;

- The Children (Amendment) Act 2016 enhances protection of children including the girl child;
- The Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019 protects the privacy of the individual and of personal data;
- The Mental Health Act, 2018 protects the rights of persons with mental illness;
- The Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Regulations, 2017 operationalises the

Prevention and Prohibition of Torture, Act, 2012 (PPTA);

- The Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Misc. (Amendment) Act, 2019 removes references to the mandatory penalty in specific legislation and restricts the application of the death penalty to the most serious offences;
- The Human Rights Enforcement Act, 2019 gives effect to Article 50 (4) of the Constitution by providing for the procedure of enforcing human rights under Chapter Four of the Constitution;
- Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020 provides for the respect and promotion of the fundamental and other human rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities.
- The Leadership Code (Amendment) Act, 2017. Section 15 (b) takes into account specific issues that affect women such as abuse of rights of the opposite sex including sexual harassment
- National Environment Act 2019,
- The Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Act 2017,
- The Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) (Amendment Act), 2020,
- The Land Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) (Amendment Act) 2020
- National Social Security Fund Amendment Act (2021) that provides for mid-term access for Savers.
- Public Procurement Disposal of Assets (Amendment) Act



2021 Section 22 provides for reservations of the participation of registered associations of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities.

### Measures taken to safeguard women's rights and promote gender equality in the COVID 19 era

The Third National Development Plan 2020/21-2024/25 and the Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs) have been revised to address impact of COVID-19 and new priorities have been set taking into account emerging issues in COVID-19 era.

In March 2020, the Government adopted strategies and guidelines to prevent and respond to the pandemic. The measures taken included suspension of public gathering i.e. public transport, closure of places of entertainment, schools, places of worship, markets and public rallies. Under the Public Health (Control of COVID-19) (Amendment No. 3) Rules, 2020, public gatherings were limited to a maximum of 200 people and music concerts were banned. Government has now fully opened.

The COVID-19 National and District Taskforces were established to execute the Ministry of Health guidelines and presidential directives geared towards public safety. The committee had female representation who were also heads of key Ministries. As a result specific gender issues were paid attention to which enabled women to access Sexual and Reproductive Health Services.

### Measures to improve access to justice for survivors of GBV

Uganda has an Equal

Opportunities Commission established under the Constitution, Article 32 and the Equal Opportunities Commission Act 2007 whose overarching mandate is to address inequalities and discrimination. In 2015, a Tribunal was operationalized and a total of 2,461 complaints have been resolved by the Commission through tribunal hearings and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. 1,367 cases for men and 1,194 for women.

The Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) has taken deliberate measures that include:

- The development and implementation of the Gender and Equity Mainstreaming Strategy
- Recruitment of female judicial officers. As of December 2021, Uganda has a total number of 465 Judicial Officers; of which 47.3% are females and 52.7% are males.
- Specialised training on gender responsive law enforcement for Judicial Officers through Uganda Judicial Training Institute
- The Judiciary has established 9 Special Courts in Mbale, Jinja, Mbarara, Masaka, Gulu, Kabale, Moroto, Soroti and Fort-portal for hearing and handling GBV cases with the aim of expeditious conclusion of cases including conducting closed court sessions for sexual violence i.e. rape, defilement, and marital rape to enhance victim and witnesses protection.

The above measures have contributed to improved compliance to gender equity responsiveness in the Budget Framework Papers and Ministerial Policy Statements hence the improvement from 54% in FY 2017/18 to 70% in FY

2021/22.

While there are delays in the enactment of the Marriage and Divorce Bill after the Second Reading, the Ugandan Judiciary has made progressive decisions that protect the rights of married women as well as those in cohabitation. For example in the case of Julius Rwabinumi vs Hope Bahimbisomwe Supreme Court Civil Appeal Number 10 2009 where the Supreme Court ruled that women are entitled to 50% of the matrimonial property upon divorce.

### Measures taken to strengthen the capacity of the National Machinery-MGLSD to coordinate the advancement of women

The Government of Uganda has put in place institutions to spearhead the delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is the Government Agency mandated to design and implement national gender programmes, policies and interventions on behalf of the Government of Uganda. The Government of Uganda has continued to strengthen the capacity of MGLSD for mainstreaming of gender and empowerment of women taking into account the provisions of CEDAW.

In this reporting period the MGLSD strengthened its coordination with other MDAs through:

- Liaison with the Specific Gender Departments and Gender Focal Point Officers in various MDAs on the development and implementation of Sector Specific Gender Strategies,
- Convening and participating in Gender and GBV focused Committees and Working Groups led by MGLSD and



- other MDAs,
- Coordinating the periodic reporting on CEDAW, Beijing Platform of Action (BFA), the Maputo Protocol and several International Instruments.
- Legislations and policy development
- Mobilisation and allocation of resources for gender mainstreaming including implementation of Special Programmes for Women such as UWEP, prevention and response to GBV; Women in Leadership among others.

The above measures have contributed to improved compliance to gender equity responsiveness across sectors as reflected through the Budget Framework Papers and Ministerial Policy Statements hence the improvement from 57% in FY 2016/17 to 78.9% in FY 2020/21.

### **Legislative measures taken to protect the rights of Women Human Rights Defenders**

Uganda is a signatory to several international and regional instruments that protect the rights of women human rights defenders that are domesticated in the Constitution; Chapter 4 on Fundamental and other Human Rights. Key national laws and policies that protect the rights of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) and promote their work are; The Equal Opportunities Commission Act 2007, The Employment Act 2006 and its Regulations, The Employment (Sexual Harassment) Regulations 2012, The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 and The Human Rights Enforcement Act 2019. The Computer Misuse Act No. 2 of 2011 provides for the safety and security of electronic transactions and information systems; Data Protection and Privacy Act of 2019 and its

accompanying Data Protection and Privacy Regulations of 2020.

There is a conducive environment to facilitate Women Human Rights Defenders to perform their work facilitate by the NGO Act, 2016, NGO Bureau to regulate NGO work in Uganda. Some of the good practices include:

- Quarterly dialogue between NGOs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs,
- Collaboration and joint Programming between Government MDAs and NGO. Through the multi sectoral framework adopted on prevention and response to GBV, stakeholders especially the Police, Civil Society Organizations, Community Development Workers work collectively to prevent and report cases of SGBV. Community policing and surveillance has enabled timely reporting of cases. Through the National Gender Based Violence Database (NGBVD), cases of GBV are captured to inform the Annual Crime Report and programming. The State working closely with CSOs such as Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), ActionAid Uganda, Mifumi and the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), manages 18 GBV Shelters.
- Representation of NGOs on Sector Specific Technical Committees such the National GBV Reference Group, JLOS Technical Committee such as Family Law Justice.

### **Temporary Special Measures to advance substantive equality between women and men**

GoU has enacted laws, formulated policies and initiated

programmes to accelerate equality between women and men. Government has adopted the gender mainstreaming strategy to give effect to article 33 (ii) of the 1995 Constitution. The strategy requires all actors to ensure gender is integrated into policies, plans, budgets, programmes and activities. Government enacted the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) 2015 to compel all MDAs to develop and implement gender and equity compliant plans and budget that specify measures to equalise opportunities for women, men, persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups. PFMA requires all MDAs and Local Government to obtain a certificate of compliance on gender and equity every Financial Year that is issued by the Ministry of Finance on approval of EOC.

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics has made progress on the production of Gender and Sex Disaggregated Data and Statistics to inform policy formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of national progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

In 2017, the Election Commission organised the elections of Women Councils under the multi-party dispensation; facilitating women representation and participation from the lowest levels.

In addition, the Government has enacted the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020 to facilitate inclusion of PWDs in the development process.

Government continues to operationalise the Constitutional provision on affirmative action in favour of women in constituting Committees, Boards for Statutory and Constitutional Commissions and Authorities.

### **Measures Taken to eliminate Discriminatory Stereotypes and Harmful Practices**

The Succession Amendment Act (2021) has been passed by Parliament awaiting Presidential ascent. The Succession Act Cap 162 brings in conformity the 1995 Constitution that provides for gender equality in accordance with Article 21 and 33 prohibit discrimination against women and girls and provides for gender equality and bring in conformity with internationally accepted human rights standards.

In 2015, the Supreme Court of Uganda upheld a decision of the Constitutional Court and declared the custom of refunding bride price contrary to Article 31(iii) of the 1995 Constitution.

In addition, the Government adopted the National Policy on elimination of Gender Based Violence 2016 and the National Male Engagement Strategy 2017 to provide a clear framework to address cultural barriers and tackle masculinities that perpetuate violence.

Government has strengthened her collaboration with religious and cultural institutions on positive social norm change which has resulted into several pronouncements by religious and cultural institutions on ending SGBV and promoting Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Government adopted the Sexuality Education Framework (2018) that provides young people in education settings with adequate and age appropriate values, and skills based information about their sexuality in accordance with the country's national religious and cultural values.

Several Institutions of learning such as Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies, Uganda Management

Institute, Civil Service College offer courses in gender and development aimed at producing professionals to spearhead gender equality agenda and women's empowerment

### **Measures taken to prevent trafficking in persons and exploitation women engaged in prostitution**

Government ensures the prevention of trafficking in persons and prosecution of offenders through enforcement of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009. Government has established a Multi-sectoral National Task Force; the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Immigration Department; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Ministry of Local Government. Other interventions to address trafficking include issuing of licenses to Labour Export Companies, Deployment of Security along border points to counter trafficking and resettlement of child who live on streets either through their parents or provision of alternative care.

### **Measures taken by the Electoral Commission to ensure equal participation in political and public life**

GoU upholds affirmative action for women in the electoral process. The Electoral Commission is implementing the Gender Strategy, 2020 which has contributed to more gender and inclusive electoral processes. Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) do undertake a cross-range of programs including leadership training, mentorship programs, capacity building, gender and equity responsive budgeting, movement building and policy advocacy to promote women's rights.

### **Measures taken to promote Special Needs Education, implement the guidelines on prevention of Teenage Pregnancy and second chance education for child mothers**

The Government has undertaken a number of measures to ensure girls with special needs have access to high quality education. These include the development of an inclusive policy for education, building the capacity of teachers to provide equity responsive education, creation of awareness on the unique needs of children with special needs, provision of assistive devices and development of specialized materials for the various categories of special needs.

With an open door policy for refugees, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) developed an Education Response Plan for refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda. MoES has trained teachers in refugee communities on gender and equity responsive pedagogy including sexuality education (SE), which has been integrated in the lower secondary curriculum.

The Government has reviewed the guidelines on teenage pregnancy and HIV (2015) to focus on teenage pregnancy prevention, management and re-entry of child mothers into the school setting in Uganda which has made it possible for the pregnant girls and child mothers to continue with their education even after the COVID 19 lockdown. In 2021, the Government launched a national campaign on prevention of teenage pregnancy and positive parenting including offering the second education to child mothers.



## Measures taken to address discrimination against women in employment

Article 33(3) of the Constitution provides for the protection of women and their rights. Article 40 (4) provides that employers shall accord women protection during pregnancy and after birth. The Government has also ratified various international human rights conventions that protect the rights of workers, including multiple ILO Conventions.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (2006), the Employment Act (2006), the Employment Regulations (2011), the National Employment Policy for Uganda (2011) and the Employment (Sexual Harassment) Regulations (2012) all aim to ensure decent, remunerated employment for all persons, including women. Under the Employment Act, women are entitled to maternity leave of sixty working days on a fully paid basis and the right to return to their jobs.

The Regulations also empower Labour Officers in Local Governments to conduct labour inspections and ensure that employers meet workplace standards.

Government has established strong partnerships with CSOs and the private sector in its efforts to address the needs of women entrepreneurs, who constitute 52.4 per cent of the 16.3 million working-age population (Employment Diagnostics Analysis Report, 2018).

GoU working with the employers, workers and the private sector/civil society has undertaken to ratify the ILO Conventions No.183- Maternity Protection at the workplace, No.189- Domestic Workers Convention and No.190

– Violence and Harassment Convention which will strengthen the legal and policy framework against discrimination including violence and harassment in the world of work. The Employment (Establishment of Breastfeeding and Childcare Facilities at the Workplace) Regulations were approved and the Final draft is with the First Parliamentary Counsel. The Office of the Solicitor General has reviewed and cleared the ratification of the above ILO Conventions so as to improve the employment relations in Uganda.

Government in partnership with the Private Sector Foundation (PSFU), is undertaking the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme for Private Enterprises aimed at reducing existing gender gaps, promote equality in workplaces and promote women's economic empowerment. So far 100 Private Sector Companies have been enrolled under the GES programme.

A total of 225 labor complaints were registered of which 55 were resolved and six (6) referred to industrial court; 214 cases were disposed of at the Industrial Court through regular Court sessions. Three Industrial Court Sub registries were opened in Masaka, Fort Portal and Mbale.

## Measures taken to enact the National Health Insurance, prevent cervical cancer and improve access to health service for older women, women with disabilities, refugees and indigenous women

Cervical cancer is big health threat to women and girls in Uganda, with annual incidence of 6,413 cases, annual mortality of 4,301 and accounting for 40% of all cancers reported in Uganda. MoH has taken measures to

prevent cervical cancer including; Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination for 10-year-old girls; training of health workers on screening for early diagnosis; incorporation of cervical cancer screening in routine Post Natal Care (PNC); strengthening case management at facility level; and creating public awareness.

Government is supporting Health Facilities to conduct integrated outreaches, offer integrated prevention, curative and rehabilitative services for older women and women with disabilities.

Government is implementing the Health Sector Refugee Response Plan in order to address the needs of refugees and host communities. Refugee host districts have been supported to provide comprehensive SRHR package through training and mentorships of health workers on SRHR, SGBV, FP; training of peer mothers among refugee communities to support referrals and linkages and demand creation within refugee communities.

The Ministry has developed the National Adolescent Health Policy and the Adolescent Health Service Standards and Guidelines in the provision of adolescent responsive services. The capacity of health workers has been built to provide Post Abortion services with a focus on Family planning, HIV counselling and testing among others. Mental Health for Children and Adolescents has been prioritized.

The National Health Insurance Bill was developed and awaits the approval by Cabinet.

### Measures taken to promote the Economic Empowerment of Women

Government has initiated special programmes for the economic empowerment of women, youth, older persons and PWDs and has allocated adequate resources for the implementation of these programmes. Key among these include UWEP, YLP, Special Grants for Persons with Disabilities, Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE).

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has undertaken the following measures:

- Developed and implemented a Gender Strategy for the National Land Policy;
- Legal reforms on land including the Survey Act and Registration of Titles Act.

To-date 32% of women compared to 68% of men own agricultural land. The Percentage of women who own land has doubled in the last 20 years;

from 16% in 2000.

### Measures towards mainstreaming gender into the national climate change policy and disaster risk management, relief and recovery

GoU has mainstreamed gender in the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management. The Ministry of Water and Environment developed and is implementing the National Water and Sanitation Strategy (2018-2022). The Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) has adopted affirmative action in favour of women as a strategy for inclusivity in the sector and to encourage economic and social development within the country.

### Challenges

1. Gender inequality is still a constraint to social-economic transformation of the economy. The Government is scaling up the implementation of the Male Engagement Strategy and

2. Positive Social Norm Change.
2. COVID Pandemic and its negative impact on the economy due to lock down measures. In this regard a National COVID 19 Recovery Program has been developed and implementation is on-going.
3. Poverty remains a challenge with 20.3% below the poverty line and has been exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic.
4. Sexual and Gender Based Violence remains a challenge with a total of reported cases of 13,693 in 2019 to 17,664 in 2020. GoU is partnering with Development Partners through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to prevent and respond to GBV.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I wish to pledge our continued collaboration with the CEDAW Committee to ensure the realization of the provisions of the Convention.







# MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

## ABOUT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Makerere University Business School is the leading provider of Business and Management education that facilitates professional development, promotes Entrepreneurship and Leadership in the region. The school was established in 1997 to centralize the development and standardization of business and management education in the country. MUBS provides aspiring people young and old, with an opportunity to develop their talents and strength; overcome their fears and weakness through different academic and training programmes. MUBS currently has 5 Campuses in Jinja, Mbarara, Arua, Mbale and the main Campus at Nakawa. It also runs outreach programmes through its leadership, entrepreneurship, ICT and the Career and Skills Development Centre. It is the place to be.

## ABOUT THE MUBS WOMEN FORUM

The MUBS Women Forum was established in the year 2010 to address the various issues affecting Women at MUBS and the MUBS stakeholders in general. The forum provides an opportunity for young Women to network and exchange ideas on issues affecting them. The forum also provides umbrella for Gender mainstreaming activities, the girl child programmes and community outreach. The forum has its secretariate at the Career and Skills Development Centre and is supported by all Outreach Centres of the School including:

- The MUBS Leadership Centre
- The MUBS ICT Centre
- The MUBS Disability Centre
- The MUBS Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre

## OBJECTIVES OF THE MUBS WOMEN FORUM

- To sensitize women on their roles and rights
- To generate a strong network of all women in MUBS
- To equip women with entrepreneurship and leadership skills
- To enhance awareness of women health issues
- To support community-based initiatives
- Conduct research in women related issues
- To address issues of sexual harassment and drug abuse

## ACTIVITIES OF THE MUBS WOMEN FORUM

Monthly Women Forum: The Forum organizes monthly sessions that give a platform to network and address the Challenges of the Girls Child at Home and at University. A number of topical issues are discussed monthly.



**Celebrating International Women's Day:** The MUBS Women Forum annually marks the International Women's day as part of its effort to recognize the contribution of women in the country and also to create awareness among different stakeholders on the need for women inclusion into various aspects of life. Therefore, March 8, is recognized as a special day and a series of activities are organized to celebrate Annual International Women Days including the following;

- Recognizing Women Achievers of the year in categories of Academia, Business, and unsung heroes, among others as per the theme.
- Career Guidance Talks to selected Girls Schools on the theme. This is meant to create awareness among High School girls the need for Gender sensitive policies among others.
- Involvement of the Local Women in markets, villages, slums and the under privileged to participate in the discussions about the theme.
- The Women Forum publishes success stories for the women and girls in the

International Women's Day Magazine.

- Run and organize an exhibition for Women Entrepreneurs. This gives a platform to Women Entrepreneurs at MUBS and Outside MUBS to showcase what they do.
- A panel discussion on the theme of the year. The panel normally includes expert from within and outside MUBS.

**Research:** The Centre conducts research and Publish work related to Women and the Girl Child.

**Health Awareness:** The forum also organizes health awareness workshops for Staff and Students especially in areas that have remained to challenge to Women like Breast and Cervical Cancer, Maternal health challenges among others.

**Provision of Scholarships:** The forum also identifies Scholarship and support vulnerable girls pursue higher education. Over ten girls have benefits from this scheme.

**Support to vulnerable Women:** The forum identifies vulnerable Women in the nearby communities and girls who are supported socially, emotionally and financially.

**Mentorship Career Guidance:** Mentorship Programmes are important for University students since they enable them learn from experts with the different skills and knowledge required to execute different assignments and activities. The forum conducts Mentorship Programmes to ease learning and transfer of skills. The core areas handled in these sessions include; Career Planning, Personal Branding, academic Excellence among others.

**Skills Empowerment program:** As part of the MUBS Skills Development Programmes, Female students are also equipped with Small Scale Manufacturing Skills like manufacturing house hold for example detergents, leather products, reusable pads etc. the programmes also equip them with soft skills as a way of empowering them economically.

# Women at the Forefront of Social-economic Transformation

A life of woman on Ssesse Islands, although different along personal dimensions, is mixed bag of activity and emotions. One day, she is the wife and foundation that holds her family together, on another, she is the sole breadwinner of her children when her partner disappears.

During the latest Women's Week activities organized by Uganda Women Council (UWC) in Kalangala district, women highlighted challenges ranging from inaccessibility to health-care facilities, lack of time and money to the dependence on men. In reaction, Women are in a constant hustle and bustle, against many odds, to trump over the challenges.

## Health is welfare

Nkose island, in Mazinga sub county, is one of the remotest habitant islands of Ssesse on Lake Victoria. Residents here depend on Mazinga Health Centre III, on Mazinga Island, one of the basic facilities provided by government to extend services closer to the people.

But as closer as the services get, there are several complexities of transport in this part of the country.

Sande Gerald Kaita, chairperson LCIII, Mazinga Sub county, said transport is a major challenge for the women who seek medical attention at the health centre from other islands such as Lula and Mwana.

"The fuel is expensive, the boats are scarce, sometimes the waters are rough due to the weather.

We have had incidents where some women have given birth on the boat during transit," he said.

Mary Namayanja, a midwife at Mazinga Health Centre III, the hospital has one maternity bed, which is shared by all and sundry who turn up from different islands to deliver safely.

In the past three years, government started a process to phase out Health Centre IIs (HCIIIs), as it focuses efforts on Health Centre IIIs (HCIIIs) at the sub county level.

Namayanja says because access from some islands in Mazinga sub country, their HCIIIs should be revamped to provide convenient basic healthcare to the people.

She says some islands such as Lujjabwa and Nkose, are far from this Health Centre, requiring fuel of up to shs 100, 000, which women can barely afford.

During her pre-International Women's Day celebrations tour, the Minister of State for Gender and Culture affairs, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo promised to ensure that the government's support to provide a water ambulance to enable transport for accessibility of medical care in the region.







In the meantime, women leaders formed themselves into village groups and created SACCOS. However, Rose Nakabira, the female councilor in Bugala West parish, highlighted that whereas they formed SACCOS and interest groups, money from government which is meant for development barely trickles down to them.

She also said as government rolls out more development programs, there is a need for tutoring on the creation and importance of effective groups, emphasizing that people should enter into groups when they have understood the objectives, mechanisms and methods of work so well.

Due to lack of income, residents revealed in a meeting with the minister, that some women introduce their school-going children to work by sending

them to hawk fish products, hence missing school.

Josephine Namulindwa, chairperson of the Kalangala district Women Council, said there have been some efforts to alleviate the vice and these include sensitization of women towards the importance of the girl child education.

There was a general consensus among different meetings of the need for economic empowerment of women in order to eliminate gender-based violence.

“As their adult counterparts live on meagre incomes and rumble to keep the family intact, some girls don’t go to school because they lack sanitary pads. But we have been sensitizing the women all levels of the society structure, and there has been improvement,” Namulindwa said.

The National Women’s Council (NWC) donated reused sanitary pads and underwear for teenage girls at different schools during the tour.

### **Green Economy**

The minister, who during the tour called on leaders to develop the ‘Kalangala Action plan for women emancipation’, also said, “As the communities continue reaping off the blue economy, which is dominated by fishermen, women should be at the forefront of building the green economy.”

During the tour, Honourable Peace Regis Mutuuzo planted bamboo and assorted high fruit trees at different schools and at the district headquarters in Bugala. Several trees of bamboo, mangoes, jack fruits, coffee, and candle nuts were given out to women leaders to experiment





first-hand how fast these trees grow.

In a partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) under the National Women Council, Umoja Conservation Trust (UCT) aims to extensively indulge women in growing high-value fruit trees through a nationwide campaign dubbed '60 million trees for Uganda @ 60'.

The campaign, which is being launched during the International Women's Day celebrations 2022, aims at growing 60 million high-value fruit trees as Uganda's 60th independence anniversary this year.

The minister said the campaign will be spearheaded by women because of their capacity. It will rally women in communities, CBOs, private sector and

government to safeguard, protect and sustainably harness Uganda's natural resources.

Bryan Toshi Bwana, a trustee at UCT who are the coordinators of the campaign, said the initiative will not further contribute to breaking the social, cultural, political, and economic gender bias in Uganda, but also help in restoration the highly degraded environment.

"Besides increasing awareness and sensitization on the dangers of deforestation and the need to grow more forests, this campaign will be vital in protecting of biodiversity in Uganda and availing raw materials for the Agro-based industries, i.e. Sustainable Green Economy," Bwana said.

Key tree crops forming the High-Value Fruit Trees are but

not limited to; Prunus Africana, Bamboo, Jack fruit, Mangoes, Coffee, Candle-nut, shear butter and Cashew nuts.

He said they have also listed a host of activities for the Elgon Conservation week slated March 21-27, 2022 in Mbale. Key amongst these activities are;

1. The Elgon Women's Marathon
2. The Elgon Women in Business Conference and Exhibition
3. The International Day of Forestry

Hajjat Farida Kibowa, Uganda Women Council, appealed to women to contribute to social-economic transformation by fully involving themselves in the implementation of development programs by government and partners.

"Women are always at the





centre of development from the households, communities to the national Level. Engage in the development process to bring unique outcomes that will benefit you and your community's wellbeing," she said.

She rallied all Women in Uganda to celebrate International Women's Day 2022 by being proactive and productive at the same time. "The 60 Million Trees for Uganda @ 60 is an excellent initiative that we all must participate in if we are to improve our lives"

**by Denis Nsubuga**





Uganda Woman Council with Minister Mutuuzo at Kalangala Headquarters

# Life at Kalangala Streams at the Expense of Girl Education

By Bryan Toshi Bwana

**K**alangala Island also known as Ssesse Islands is made up of 84 independent Islands of which 62 are habitable. Despite the pristine beauty of this marvel of an island, the girl child experiences untold pain. Hasi Nakimuli's case is one too many of such cases on the island. Upon the demise of her husband, the sole breadwinner of the family, Nakimuli can barely take care of her two daughters. A family meeting with relatives resolves that she gives custody of the children, Diana and Margaret, to their paternal aunt, Zalwango, after the latter's proposal.

The hope is, since Zalwango has more ability than the mother, the teenage daughters would have a better life, with access to food, healthcare and education. But unfortunately for them, daily life turns out to be a difficult story. Misery befalls the girls as they learn by the day that to their aunt, home errands are preferable to their education. When a hooligan of a man at her village offers a few millions for a wife, the teenage Diana aged 12 and Margaret at 14, become

the handiest commodities on Zalwango's shelf.

She conspires with her funders to force the girls into an early marriage. While Margaret luckily escapes, 12-year-old Diana becomes a victim. She gets pregnant, and complications gradually lead her to death.

## Value of Education

This situation was visualized in a play staged by Kibanga Primary School in Kalangala District to picture the experience that is almost regular in this part of the country, on the Ssesse Islands of Lake Victoria.

"It is much like normal here. Many girls are married off by their families during puberty. Most of the children are from broken families with one parent or none, some in extended families and living with relatives, who many times force them into early marriages," David Tusuubira, the head teacher of Kibanga Primary School, said.

The Head Teacher revealed that although the school's population of 760 pupils, with 390 boys and 370 girls indicates a great transformation from the past,

there is still a high dropout rate for girls, especially as the children enter into upper primary school, from P.5 to P.7.

**The Head Teacher revealed that although the school's population of 760 pupils, with 390 boys and 370 girls indicates a great transformation from the past, there is still a high dropout rate for girls, especially as the children enter into upper primary ..**

Josephine Namutebi, the Kalangala District Inspector of Schools, said in the fishing communities, girls under 18 years are faced with numerous challenges, at the unscrupulous men in their society.

Unfortunately, she added, many cases of such violence against children are concealed by parents. Girls also rarely come





Minister Mutuuzo on the tour with RDC

line, the population continues to shrink as it goes up the school ladder. The situation was not any different at Kasekulo Primary School. A 2000 liter water tank was donated to the school by NWC and MLGSD to help with the hygiene of the girl child.

Whereas the enrollment in primary one is over 50 and government with partners have extended infrastructure like classroom blocks, Primary P.5, 6 and 7 classes were found with four, three and two pupils respectively.

With 84 islands, the district has only 23 primary schools, three secondary and three tertiary schools. Many children access school via water transport. A government report in 2017 said with a population of 5,800 school-going primary children, on average, only 254 children are able to complete primary seven every year.

### Lifestyle change

Sande Gerald Kaita, chairperson LCIII, Mazinga Sub county, attributed this to mainly the lifestyle of residents. Fishing is the main economic activity at the islands, and it is a known tradition that after selling off their water harvests, fishermen lavishly spend their cash mostly

out to express the challenges they face which range from scholastic and health materials. Namutebi said, "Besides many parents not appreciating the value of these girls being in school, they look at the 'menstrual time' as an opportune moment for their children to leave school. Sometimes we are compelled to give out sanitary pads to the less privileged girls because of their parents are either less interested or very poor to afford these towels." This leads to many children missing school during that time of the month. In fact that is the most sensitive time of their education life because it usually determines the children's interest in school thereafter.

Tusuubira said using his school as a case study, schools in the district face high turn-over of students, since their parents who are mostly fishermen live a nomadic lifestyle. They keep on moving as the fish change their habitat due to weather.

"At any given time, we are teaching new students as many leave. This worries us because in many cases, we cannot track

and know the reason the child left. For some, it can be other challenges other than shifting of the family, yet we cannot offer help," he said.

The district leaders revealed the situation to the Minister of Gender and Culture, Honourable Peace Mutuuzo who was on a fact-finding mission in Kalangala District as part of the activities to mark this year's International Women's Day.

The minister heard that the closure of schools instituted to contain the COVID-19 pandemic resulted into 18 child mothers and 11 formerly school-going



Minister giving out sanitary pads to girls of Kasekulo Primary School



Minister Mutuuzo talking pupils of Kibanga Primary School

interruption from deceitful culprits of defilement.

However, the school is mobilizing support from parents and community to set up a boarding section for girls, with the hope that it will safeguard the girls in upper primary classes against child abuse.

For some responsible parents, as the child enters in higher class, they take them away from the islands to schools in surrounding districts of Masaka, Mukono, Mpigi and Wakiso for fear of sabotage.

Kibanga, the biggest school in the district with 760 pupils has only 12 teachers on government salary, which the head teacher deems a shortage that undermines the quality of education. This problem is exacerbated by the 12 teachers not being able to receive the hard-to-reach allowances that is given to other teachers from the neighboring schools.

Miss Namutebi, the Inspector of Schools, said the young girls can best be handled within school, therefore skilling those currently out of school to COVID-19, is the most appropriate path to improve their lives.

Namutebi further stressed there is need for school-based, district, regional and national co-curricular programs to curtail the school drop-rate.

“When the students are engaged in co-curricular, it helps them to stay in school because competing with children in other communities is not only exciting but also exposes them to different environments,” she said.

in bars before they return to cast their nets in the waters.

He said besides being usual for a family house doubling as a bar, which exposes young children to lifestyle, there is urgent need to change the parents’ mindsets towards understanding the importance of education. He further indicated that most children in Kalangala fail to complete school because they are introduced to fishing, which they find more lucrative than attending school.

“Mass sensitization on education of children is required, because many parents are heard saying children don’t need to go school as long as they learn to fish in the fresh waters. Sadly, due to continuous poor and illegal fishing habits, most parents do not to know that fish is

scarce now, and the world has changed,” Kaita said.

This is at the backdrop of the district having the highest percentage incidence of HIV infection in Uganda. In 2017, United Nations AIDS Commission estimated that 27% of the population are infected, compared to 7.3% nationally.

**Support girls**

Godfrey Musenja, head teacher of Kasekulo Primary School, said upon demise of their parents, some children are left in homes taking over numerous adult responsibilities. He says it is not rare to find children under the care of fellow children.

In a poem, female pupils at Kasekulo highlighted long journeys from homes to school which they trek with fears of



Minister Mutuuzo inquiring from the Marine Force of UPDF



Women during a conference by Uganda Women Council





# Plan International Empowering Girls to Mitigate Climate Change Effects

As we commemorate the International Women's Day this year under the theme; "Gender Equality today for a Sustainable Tomorrow", young women in Kampala and Tororo districts are doing all it takes to remain afloat climate change effects.

Young women's efforts towards leading change on climate

change adaptation, mitigation, and response, to build a more sustainable future for all cannot be under-estimated especially around this time when environmental conversation is at stake.

Women are increasingly being recognized as more vulnerable to climate change impacts than men, as they constitute the

majority of the world's poor and are more dependent on the natural resources that climate change threatens the most.

Under the Smart Up factory project, young women supported by Plan International Uganda are involved in tree planting in Kisoko village in Tororo district, for personal development and for environmental conservation.



Evelyne Apio (L) and Mary Agnes Aketch (R) attending to their tree nursery bed at Kisoko training hub in Tororo district



Mary Agnes bought a sewing machine from selling tree seedlings

Tobby Ojok, Project Manager-SmartUp Factory says the aim of the tree seedlings is to support the youths, especially the young women to be able to mitigate the effect of climate change through tree seedling planting as they earn from it.

He says Plan international supports the groups by setting up a greenhouse where the girls raise the seedlings.

"The seedlings are later sold to the surrounding communities at a fair price and the money got helps the girls to save in village savings groups (VSLA) from which they borrow to start up business," Ojok said.

Evelyne, 24, a mother of two, is one of the young women who was trained to raise tree seedlings. She says that before

the project was introduced, she was majorly depending on her husband for everything.

"This made him not respect me because he knew I had no means of survival. Sometimes even getting the basic needs was always a big problem," she says.

However, after joining the project, things changed. Evelyn now sells seedlings and she saves part of the money with the Village Saving Group (VSLA) which was also started under the Smart up factory project.

After saving enough with the VSLA, Evelyn has been able to start a saloon in Kisoko trading Centre. She is able to support the family with some basic needs and also provided her own personal needs.

Mary Agnes 21, a member of the tree seedling project says that she has managed to set up a plantation of 500 trees.

"Tree planting was not common in this community, but now many are planting trees, and the seedlings are got from our nursery bed something that I hope will increase forest cover in the area," says Mary Agnes. From the tree business, Mary Agnes has managed to open up a small boutique and has also bought a sewing machine. From these two businesses, she supports her siblings and the mother by providing some basic needs.

### >>> Young women using Solar Powered Bakery to make a living

At Kabalagala One Stop Youth center, in the suburbs of Kampala is a group of young women using solar-powered bakery to make a living. The Lytefire solar oven is designed to use direct power from the sun. The Lytefire oven can save five tons of Carbon dioxide per year if used in six-hour and in 210 days. This oven project is a collaboration between Finnish solar energy company dubbed Solar Fire Concentration Ltd and Plan International.

Emma Omoding, the Project Coordinator at SmartUp factory says the solar bakery has enhanced young people's economic freedom, reduced harmful smoke inhalation, and increased awareness of the climate challenge. Emma says the oven taps its energy from local materials such as steel and glass mirrors heat directly by the sun.

Producing food locally also supports economic independence, which improves the economy of the region. Moreover, having access to free solar energy increases the energy autonomy of the region. Aidah, 24 years and one of the young women at the bakery says

that before being introduced to the project, she was making pancakes and samosas and she was using firewood and charcoal.

This, Aidah says was expensive and was polluting the environment at the same time. She had to buy firewood on daily basis. "I would suffer from smoke. Even my products were always unhygienic." says Aidah. Since 2021, when she was introduced to the solar-powered bakery, Aidah says she does not have to use wood or charcoal that were destroying the environment. According to her the bakery is clean and is environmentally friendly. "We were trained in solar science and climate change, the technical functioning of the Lytefire solar oven and effective book-keeping," she says. Since then, she has stopped using all forms that are not environmentally friendly when baking.

"I am happy that I am no longer destroying the environment. This technology should be adopted by everyone who plans to start the bakery business," she says. From the bakery, Aidah has managed to

start a small shop where she sells her baked products. She now takes care of her two children without having to bother her relatives" she emphasized. Susan, 25 years says that since her enrollment with the bakery, her life has changed. She says she used to sell fried cassava on Salama streets in Kampala. "I would use firewood and charcoal but it was expensive and not clean energy." Says Susan. Today she bakes queen cakes using solar energy. "We are allowed to use the oven free of charge hence helping us to save some money. Even the buyers trust our products because they know they are clean and safe. We want to ensure that the environment is safe," she says.



Aidah Nkugwa Salama in Makindye division Kampala baking cakes in a solar powered oven

### >>> Briquette making- part of the solution to garbage overflow in Kampala

In Kampala, about 28,000 tons of waste is collected and delivered to a landfill every month. Often this leads to the impacts of climate-related disasters such as air pollution and poor health.

Urban dwellers generally consume more resources than rural dwellers, and so generate large quantities of solid waste. As part of the climate change adaptation, Plan International Uganda is supporting girls to engage in briquette making. Gladys, 26 says that after dropping out of school, she was forced to loiter the streets of Kampala doing odd jobs. However, in 2022, with the support of Plan International, Gladys started engaging in briquettes making through garbage recycling. This partly supported to decongest her community of the garbage but also to earn her a living "Today I am earning a living out of

it. Being in the slum, garbage was everywhere and I did not know that we would recycle it," she says. To make the briquettes, she uses molasses, plastic sheets, cassava flour, and biomass or decomposed garbage dumped in her slum.

According to Justine Nakiwala, the communications manager for Plan International Uganda, as Uganda celebrates this day, it is important to note that women are not only vulnerable to climate change but, are also effective actors or agents of change in relation to both mitigation and adaptation. Justine emphasizes that women often have a strong body of knowledge and expertise that can be used in climate change mitigation, disaster reduction, and adaptation strategies.

"Women's responsibilities in households and communities, as

stewards of natural and household resources, position them well to contribute to livelihood strategies adapted to changing environmental realities," she said.







# CARITAS UGANDA

## Caritas Norway Transforming Women Through Fish Farming for a Better Tomorrow

The theme of International Women's Day 2022: "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" blends in well with the recognition of women and girls in Uganda through improved livelihoods, food security, nutrition and sustainable Aquaculture. Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway are involved in supporting women in Acholi sub region and West Nile region of Uganda who constitute over 60% of the participants in the "Building skills in Aquaculture for jobs project". In spite of the rising populations, climate change, economic downturns and man – made conflicts, Covid-19 pandemic contributing to the rising threat of food insecurity particularly in the developing world, Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway have stood firm in supporting small holder farmers.

Fish farming (aquaculture) has always been considered as men's work in the above two regions of implementation areas. The project is breaking barriers such as cultural norms, " women do not own land, fish farming/ aquaculture is men's work .In the

project, Women are trained with aquaculture skills, supported to start businesses in the value chain, linked to markets through fish farmers' cooperative

“

**The project is breaking barriers such as cultural norms, “ women do not own land, fish farming/ aquaculture is men's work .In the project, Women are trained with aquaculture skills, supported to start businesses ...**

societies to ensure that their livelihoods, food security and nutrition are improved for a sustainable tomorrow.

The ability of the women to increase food production as a necessary response to avoid decline in food and nutritional security is the priority of Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway. Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway and the Norwegian Aquaculture company, Hauge Aqua through Caritas Gulu Archdiocese and Caritas Arua are partners implementing "Building skills in Aquaculture for jobs project". BSAJ Project is a 54-month strategic partnership between Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway and Hauge Aqua that started in February 2017 in the Catholic Dioceses of Acholi sub region and West Nile region. The project has skilled over 1000 youth (60 % Women) in Fish farming and led to the formation of four active fish farmers' cooperatives in the project areas.

The BSAJ Programme has inbuilt sustainability activities which is fully being implemented and followed, ensuring that adoption and use of the programme beyond the project lifetime, with a number of positive spillover effects and potential for up scaling of the action is evident. Two aquaculture schools have been established and recognized by the ministry of Education & sports (in



The female youth that graduated on 12th Nov. 2021

Gulu and Arua) built by Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway.

Besides BSAJ Programme, Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway is also supporting a vast number of women in the Food Income and Livelihood programme in Northern Uganda. One of the objectives is Farming communities have knowledge, skills and information on climate change adoption. The participants have planted trees and learned modern methods of farming which has led to the conservation of the environment and improved livelihood of women.

Caritas Uganda, Caritas Norway have transformed the women through financial incentives to incorporating more on their supply chains, integrating with technical assistance to increase supply chain resilience and develop procurement processes with a view to nurturing variety amongst suppliers. Women are

empowered with the potential to lead, borrow loans, providing access to know-how to develop their capacity to function competitively by reducing male chauvinism in their communities.

“  
**Caritas  
 Uganda, Caritas  
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 financial  
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 more on their  
 supply chains...**

Among the women trained in aquaculture and have started businesses and using their profits to improve their living conditions is the success story of Nancy Gaspher Aciro Nancy who owns 4 ponds whose sizes are: 10m X 40m for 2 ponds; 15m X 40m and 10m X 30m. Three of the ponds were stocked by the time of profiling with a total of 3330 Tilapia and 3700 Catfish after 70 of Tilapia and 300 of Catfish had been sold off from an earlier stock. Earlier stock of 200 Tilapia and 4000 Catfish was partly obtained from Caritas and in November, 2019. Initially some starter feeds were provided by Caritas, thereafter Gaspher used the skills she acquired in feeds formulation during the training to make her own fish feeds. She’s aiming at constructing and stocking more fish ponds so that she can earn between 30 million UGX and 100 million every season and hoping to buy a BodaBoda for easy transportation of her fish and public transport to increase on her income.



The process the women went through to dig one of the fish ponds





# Austrian Development Cooperation

**R**ose Auma aged 58, is a resident of Pece Division- Gulu City and a single mother following the death of her husband and son during the insurgency by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in 1997. As an eyewitness to the cruel double tragedy, Rose was depressed, and her situation only worsened with the burden of responsibility of her seven children and 13 other orphans left behind by her siblings. This left Rose hopeless and dejected until she came in contact with CARE International in Uganda.

"During the LRA activities, my husband and first-born son were captured from the house and beaten to death before my eyes. I was left with a two-month-old pregnancy and 16 children to take care of since my three older children were already married. While I was still moaning, I couldn't afford basic needs which forced me to work as a housemaid within Gulu where I live today. I would walk about seven kilometres to town in the evening with the kids to find security and shelter away from the rebels and then return in the morning after which I would go out to my housemaid job," she sadly narrates.

## CARE INTEGRATED APPROACH STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



Rose Infront of her three bedroomed house



**Sometimes the money to pay fees for all those children was not enough and most times, I would plead with the teachers to let them stay in school until I managed to finish all payments**

“Sometimes the money to pay fees for all those children was not enough and most times, I would plead with the teachers to let them stay in school until I managed to finish all payments,” she adds.

In 2020, Rose was identified by CARE under the Women and Youth Resilience Project (WAYREP) as a community-based Facilitator (CBF) and later as a Community Gender Activist.

She received several trainings on gender-based violence as a CBF and an Activist which helped transform her to live positively

amidst painful memories and trauma of her past challenges as well as support many others with similar stories within her community.

In January 2021, Rose joined the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) where she was elected as the group’s chairperson after members identified leadership qualities in her. WAYREP participants are encouraged to join VSLA groups for Economic Empowerment which is crucial for psychosocial wellbeing.

Through the VSLA, she started small scale farming as an alternative livelihood for her family and a support mechanism to reduce her vulnerability to more gender-based violence “I had often been ridiculed by my fellow women for being a single mother who failed to get a new husband. However, I did not know how to deal with it until I joined Bed ki Gen VSLA. I underwent training on saving and gender-based violence which has helped me to heal and become a better person,” she smiles.

Through the loans she borrowed from the VSLA, Rose was able to start building a three-bedroomed house that is in the

wee stages of plastering. She rented land in the village to enable her carry out agricultural activities.

“Through continuous agriculture and market sales, I can pay back loans and continue building. I thank God for health, for CARE that supported me psychosocially, and my group members for making me the chairperson. Now I have earned the respect of so many people and I feel good,” she concludes. CARE also provides Psychosocial support (PSS) to GBV survivors, support with referrals, and closely coordinates with service providers to get prompt and quality support.

According to WAYREP’s GBV Coordinator, Gloria Ondo, participants are financially facilitated to access services using the Survivor Fund but are also accompanied to different service points for appropriate services required to aid their recovery process. “We create supportive relationships with survivors, do follow-ups to monitor their recovery progress, continuously provide PSS to increase their resilience which helps to lessen the psychosocial effects thus contributing to their general wellbeing” Reports Gloria

WAYREP is a five-year project funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) implemented by CARE in Uganda and CARE Austria in partnership with two national NGOs. The project targets 44,600 direct beneficiaries, with 75% being women and girls (focus age: 15-30 years) and 250,300 indirect beneficiaries. Participants are selected in collaboration with local partners, refugees, government, persons with special needs and city authorities.



Lily Rose (Left) with the rest of the women in BED Ki Gen VSL



# “Balancing the Gender Scales today for Sustainable Tomorrow” – Uganda’s Perspectives”

Uganda Today March 8th, 2022 joins the rest of the World to commemorate International Women’s Day, an Event held annually to take stoke of the milestones registered in emancipation of women in development.

The year’s theme for International Women’s Day revolves around “Gender equality today for a Sustainable tomorrow” which shines a spotlight on women as partners in social-economic development today and future. This calls for stakeholders in social-economic planning to understand the gender issues in ensuring equitable distribution of roles, resources and support in balancing the scales for social development of the country.

Women make up at least 51% of Uganda’s population; they play a vital role in the country’s socio-economic development yet their position remains a subordinate one. The consequence is a gender imbalance that constraints development. Improving the situation of women has become a very important concern.

The Gender strategy adopted by Uganda Government under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) seeks to achieve an equality by empowering both women and men - and by beginning with an

understanding of women weak position. It is my hope that this “Understanding” can be achieved by sensitizing planners about gender issues and equipping them with gender perspectives to identify inequities, internalize gender parity and integrate these issues in planning for a sustainable tomorrow.

The social common perspectives in Uganda touching on gender can be seen stratified along the cultural construct. I will remind our readers and leaders in focus as a gender and culture expert practitioner. There are common perceptions of our culture in Uganda with a rich heritage of 65 communities. Man is perceived as a household head and breadwinner and women as nurturers and care givers.

Politically, men and women are involved in national politics, while women are more involved locally in activities linked to their domestic roles. In education, family resources are generally directed to boys rather than girls’ education, while girls in most of the 65 indigenous communities are pushed into less challenging academic fields. In the economic, men will and continue to enjoy greater access to lucrative careers and control of financial resources, credit and loans. Land and property ownership are seemingly a prerogative of men.



**Naumo Juliana Akoryo**  
(Director Gender & Community Development(a.i))

In order to balance the scales, we ought to adjust to the present factors of life; a scenario we cannot avoid that challenges every individual gender is death. Regrettably this case is irreversible and it leaves either gender with no recourse.

Whereas we get thwarted in the gender roles in the day to day business of survival at work; in education, technology, economics and social activities, vagaries like war, famine and other calamities can cause gender roles to change. Suffice today’s theme, “Gender equality today for a Sustainable tomorrow”, gender is considered a social construct because it is socially determined and supported by socialist structures that are prove to human error



In order to conform of necessity to our theme of the day, taking gender balancing into play, our principle of planning for societies (Uganda's 65 indigenous communities) as a basis, the division or allocation of resource basket should be equally allotted for sustainable benefits.

In organizing the economy for social transformation particularly at households (family), communities and the market place - the economics, the bottlenecks in gender must be streamlined as they limit both women and men, though common place with more repressive impact on women when disaster prevails.

### On-going concerns

There are numerous vivid attempts by Government at addressing Gender issues in the social sector. However, there grey areas at the Policy and Legal Frameworks and Employment fields which in turn hamper the productivity of the individual at the center of production and

adversely impact on the women.

It is estimated that majority programmes for socio-transformation lack gender sensitivity in all aspects. There is lack of internalized gender decoding and incorporation in the key baseline plans that cater for the gender concepts that impact on sustainable benefits for all.

To achieve greater results in line with our today's theme, the Government of Uganda should apply a gender based integration approach in the cultural societies including: local tailored awareness on gender support to plans and budgets, improved gender focused initiatives, alternative gender sensitive incentives at the households and early warning systems development that address gender related impacts on the social and production sectors of the economy.

### Consideration

At the centre of the trajectory

to achieve the objectives of our day's theme, short term projects cross cutting the whole planning processes in different sectors, while use of gender balancing skills and options, efforts geared at uplifting gender equality to rebuild the broken moral fibre will sure lead to sustainable tomorrow.

Part attempts and ongoing activities to deliver the gender equality cannot be underestimated, however, for more robust trajectory, Government should strive to build our broken cultural conduct by channeling utmost resources towards a more gender sensitive based plan a model in all the production plans.

Development imbalance begins at the homes of the Nations' peoples where gender paradox is entrenched heavily. Fast Aid action deserves utmost attention in the women's roles review and a sticking balance of Gender streaming is pre-eminent.





# Financing of Gender-based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response Interventions to Facilitate Attainment of Uganda's Development Outcomes

## Executive Statement

**G**ender-based violence (GBV) is a gross violation of fundamental human rights and has severe, long-term negative impacts on the physical and psychological wellbeing of the survivors, their families, and the community. GBV is also an economic, social and public health concern and its prevalence has wide implications for the development of a Country.

Government of Uganda has a strong legal and policy framework to support interventions to address GBV. In spite of this, however, the prevalence of all forms of GBV remains unacceptably high. Data from the Uganda Demographic and Health (UDHS) 2016 indicates that 56% of ever-married women and 44% of ever-married men have experienced spousal violence whether physical, sexual or emotional. There has been an escalation in the number of GBV cases during the Covid-19 Pandemic over the past two years most of them related to domestic violence and violence against children including child marriage. In a period of 8 months from March to December 2020, 14,134 cases of defilement were reported to Uganda Police Force. In addition, prevention, mitigation and prosecution and of reported cases remain low. Furthermore, interventions to

address GBV are inadequately financed. The inadequate funding for GBV programming hinders the attainment of the targeted development outcomes and SDGs, which explicitly target the elimination of "all forms of violence against women and girls".

This brief examines the extent of financing for GBV prevention and response interventions in Uganda. It also provides policy recommendations for increasing funding to address GBV with special emphasis on health, judicial services and social services; increasing staffing and capacity building within the criminal justice system; and investing in investigative infrastructure to facilitate timely prosecution of offenders.

## Introduction

One of the aspirations of the Global Agenda 2030 is to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG5)". Target 5.2 is to "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation." For over two decades now, Uganda's emphasis has been on improving the social and governance aspects of gender equality and equity

**In spite of increased global awareness on the need to address GBV, its prevalence is difficult to determine, in light of the large number of cases that go unreported, as well as the limited resources often in place for gathering this type of evidence in emergency contexts.**

which has resulted in the attainment of gender parity in primary school enrolment, one-third (34%) of Members of the 11th Parliament being women, as well as increase in access and ownership of land by women, among others. For the next phase of development, focus is on promoting Women's Economic Empowerment, addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV) GBV and equitable and inclusive development.

The Government of Uganda recognizes GBV as a critical public health, social-economic and human rights concern and has put in place an elaborate policy and legal framework to address it. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 accords "full and equal dignity of the person



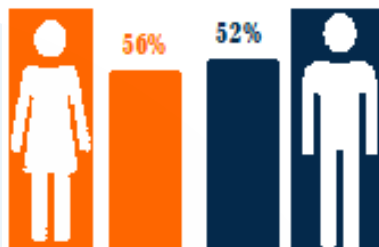
with men” and prohibits “laws, cultures, customs or traditions” that undermine their welfare, dignity, or status (Article 33). Through the National Policy and Action Plan on the Elimination of GBV (2016), Government has committed itself to eliminate GBV. The Third National Development Plan (NDPIII) 2020/21-2024/5, which is the overarching planning framework, targets to reduce GBV from 25 per cent to approximately 13 per cent by 2025. Other policies, plans and legal frameworks include: the Domestic Violence Act (2010); the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act, 2010; the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009; the amended Penal Code Act Cap 120; the Uganda Persons with Disability Act, 2019; the Children (Amendment) Act, 2016; the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development Strategic Plan 2021-2025; and the Guidelines for Management of GBV Shelters, 2013.

Integrating Gender based Violence (GBV) in planning and budgeting is a strategic approach to ensure that there is adequate public awareness, increased resource prioritization and effective service delivery for GBV survivors. It is a requirement in the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs) to allocate funds in their respective Ministerial Policy Statements (MPS) and Budget Framework Papers (BFPs) for promoting gender and equity including addressing GBV.

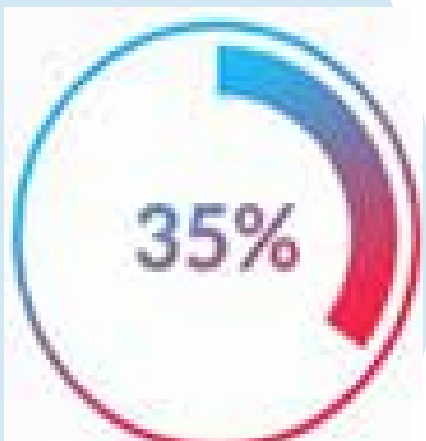
The purpose of this Policy Brief is to inform and guide policy makers and implementers on the current financing for GBV prevention, response and management; highlight gaps in implementation; and make

key recommendations towards elimination of GBV. The policy brief identifies the need to support and ensure that GBV commitments are prioritized in the planning and budgeting processes of the various stakeholders.

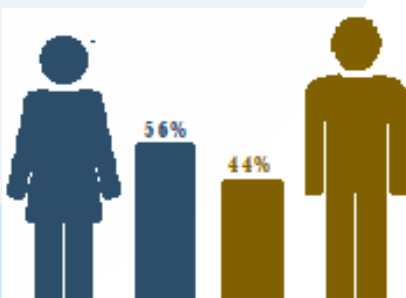
**Magnitude of GBV in Uganda**



Women and men who have ever experienced physical violence since age 15



Reported Sexual violence against girls



Ever-married women and men who have experienced spousal violence, whether physical, sexual or emotional

According to the UDHS (2016) 51% of women and 49% of men neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence.

The National Gender Based Violence Database (NGBVD)

shows that reported GBV cases is mainly attributed to the countrywide lockdown due to the COVID 19 pandemic, which created a lot of anxiety, stress and hardships to most family members and communities. Of the 18,872 people who were victims of Domestic Violence, 3,408 were male adults, 13,145 were female adults, and 1,133 were male juveniles while 1,186 were female juveniles.



Increase in number of Domestic Violence cases reported to police between 2019 and 2020

Health care providers spend about UGX18.3 billion annually to deal with the effects of GBV, Uganda Police UGX19.5 billion, while the local councils spend UGX12.7 billion. (CSBAG 2020) This does not account for the loss of productivity or other long-term impacts. GBV can result in loss of employment and productivity and it drains resources from social services, the justice system, health care agencies, and employers. It is a direct barrier to sustainable development, poverty reduction, and economic prosperity (UNICEF, 2020).

The drivers of GBV in Uganda include poverty, caused by lack of economic resources; low literacy levels; unemployment, lack of child support ; cultural beliefs and norms, lack of respect for human rights; and women’s economic dependency. Cases of sexual violence have increased overtime representing a 3.8% increase for defilement cases and 0.5% increase for



rape in 2019. Families facing limited financial resources are also more likely to place girls in situations of child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), which is widely associated with increased rates of violence.

**On 5th April, 2020, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called attention to what he described as a “horrifying surge in domestic violence” since the start of COVID-19, and advocated for all governments to “put women’s safety first as they respond to the pandemic.**

In settings of crisis like COVID-19, available funds for GBV programming are limited, and GBV is not always prioritized by decision-makers as an essential component of preparedness and response initiatives. Experience from past epidemics has also shown that access to sexual and reproductive health care and other forms of essential assistance for survivors of GBV are likely to be interrupted.

**Extent of Financing and Integration GBV Prevention and Response Intervention in the Planning and Implementation Processes in Uganda**

Extent of Financing  
The economic cost of GBV to the Ugandan is extremely

high. The Government of Uganda, spends up to UGX15 billion (5.8 million USD) annually to address domestic violence. GBV costs the tax payers another UGX37 billion (14.3 million USD) annually on State institutions like the Judiciary, Police and Health Sectors (CEDOVIP & EPRC, 2018). According to the National Policy on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence in Uganda (2016), GBV is a multi-sectoral problem that requires a multi-sectoral approach for implementation at all levels. The Policy highlights three priority areas, that is, prevention of GBV; provision of care and support services to GBV survivors/victims; and ending impunity for GBV. Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs) are therefore required to identify GBV prevention and response interventions and budget for them within their budget ceilings.

However, the 2020 assessment on financing to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) supported by UNWOMEN under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative revealed that funding towards GBV prevention and response interventions for MDAs was on a declining trend across the three years. MDAs allocated UGX 17.6 billion in FY 2018/19, UGX 44.4 billion in FY 2019/20, and UGX 20.8 billion in FY 2020/21. Besides the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the proportion of the budget allocated to GBV for the other (MDAs) and 19 LGs analysed was below 5% (CSBAG, 2020). Further to this, most MDAs with key mandates on GBV have funding gaps, for example, ODPP has a funding gap of UGX 1.35bn cumulatively for FY2018/19-FY2020/21.

Funds allocated towards GBV prevention and response interventions at the Local Government level are still minimal, UGX2.8 billion in 2018/19, UGX 4.6 billion in 2019/20, and UGX 3.6 billion in 2020/21. As a share of the total district budget, the allocation towards GBV prevention and response is less than 3%.

It is notable that whereas most MDAs received funds from the Consolidated Fund the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development received external financing throughout the three years (CSBAG, 2020). The biggest proportion of the MGLSD budget for GBV programmes in 2016 and 2017 i.e. UGX 1.68 billion (\$450,000) was funded through Off-Budget Support. This is a threat to efforts made for continuity and sustainability once funding support is no longer available.

The Conditional Grants to LGs from the Central Government minimizes the discretionary powers of the district to allocate resources to interventions on GBV under the Community Based Services Department. Most Local Governments rely on Local Revenue which is inadequate, making them highly dependent on external financing to handle GBV; Over the three years, UG 4.69 billion was allocated for interventions on gender, prevention and response for violence against women and girls and harmful practices in FY2018/19, UGX 8.3 billion in FY2019/20, and UGX 8.1 billion in FY2020/21 at LG level.



Most of the assessed MDAs and LG budgets do not explicitly recognize GBV and do not clearly allocate funds to address it. There is also no direct budget line for GBV, thus most agencies plan for it under different codes, some under 'Gender', while others agencies like Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Uganda National Roads Authority, Ministry of Works and Transport, Uganda Prison Services, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education and Sports planned for GBV interventions under 'Crosscutting Issues'.

### **Extent of Integration GBV Prevention and Response Intervention in the Planning**

At the national level, GBV prevention and response strategies have been integrated in the NDP III 2020/21-2024/5. However, only 6 of the 17 MDAs assessed had explicit interventions for eliminating GBV. The six included Uganda Prisons Services, Uganda Police Force, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, Uganda National Roads Authority and the Ministry of Education, and Sports. At Local Government level, only 8 out of the 19 LGs assessed had direct interventions for GBV during the 3 years.

There is inadequate technical capacity/knowledge on GBV. Most of the staff engaged attributed their inability to mainstream interventions for GBV, in their budget and plans to lack of requisite knowledge on the subject area. This capacity gap is very pronounced among staff in all Departments other than Community-Based Services Department in Local Governments and Ministries except the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Many of the Family and Child Protection Units in n Police have limited facilities and skills to investigate GBV cases. In addition, the Program-Based Budgeting approach is an area where most staff confessed, they needed further capacity building. Data collection and management is a challenge in most LGs. There is limited access to ICT equipment, lack of facilities to collect and store data, limited capacities to analyze and use data to inform planning and budgeting. For example, Abim District LG lacks ICT equipment to support their Officers in data collection and management. In addition, there are multiple data sources, e.g. Police and the MGLSD GBV Databases among others that need to be harmonized.

There is limited staffing of frontline Officers to implement the planned interventions. For example, the Family and Child Protection Unit of the Uganda Police Force has only 645 Police Officers across the country. Under the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, only 41 percent of staffing positions are filled. Uganda Prisons services is also faced with low staffing of health facilities; only 248 out of 1,673 posts are verified. Abim District LG has only 2 of the 9 required sub-county Community Development Officers. The District lacks a District Gender Officer and has one Senior District Probation and Social Welfare Officer and one Senior Community Development Officer. The situation is similar for Tororo District, which has only 15 Community Development Officers to cover the 31 Sub counties and 10 Town Councils.

Low coverage of critical services in some Local Governments for response to GBV reported cases. An example is in Amudat District which is constrained by

the shortage of Police Posts and lack of a Court of Judicature. GBV survivors have to go to Moroto, to access justice which is complicated by poor road network with harsh terrain, meaning that some survivors are unable to access justice. Whereas sixteen (18) GBV Shelters have been established in Uganda through Development Partners' support, they are still inadequate considering the magnitude of the problem in the Country. GBV Shelters are part of the referral system that provide victims and survivors with temporary refuge, lodging and other services and link victims and survivors to medical, legal, economic and psycho-social services.

Inadequate facilitation of law enforcement institutions, such as the Uganda Police Force, Probation office and Community Development to deal with corruption and build peoples' confidence in utilizing them. These offices lack facilitation for fuel, means of transport such as motorcycles and vehicles to help them transport suspects and complainants. The police lack facilities to support in witness protection, storage and preservation of evidence as well as management of crime scenes. Further to this, in most Local Governments, there is a weak coordination between key actors in the fight against GBV. For example, the coordination between the Probation Office, Police and Community Development Office is weak hence most of the perpetrators of GBV have been able to dodge the long arm of the law.

### **Policy Recommendations**

The drivers of GBV arise from different sections of the society (families, households, communities, schools and institutions, workplaces) and therefore fall under different



sectors although more are in Health, Education, DPP and Social Development. This complexity of factors suggests that a multi-sectoral approach is more effective than single interventions in helping to address financing for prevention and response measures in planning and budgeting associated with GBV. The proposed policy interventions are presented/ outlined below:

### Financing

1) All MDAs and LGs should include a specified budget code to tag all resources on risk mitigation, response and prevention expenses for GBV in their work plans and budgets. This will improve on budgeting and expenditure tracking to allow for consistent reporting by all public spending agencies. The budget tagging code, if introduced can be used to code national budget lines/votes pertaining to GBV. The same system has been adopted for other cross-cutting issues like climate change financing;

2) Directly invest in products, services or infrastructure that mitigates or decreases the likelihood of GBV occurring. For example, investing in infrastructure projects that incorporate gender and equity best practices in the design of Safe Cities. There is a good practice in KCCA with street lighting initiatives

3) GBV prevention and response should be included as key output into the performance contracts of CAOs and other Accounting Officers.

4) Request all policy makers to increase funding of the Local Government budget line of mainstreaming gender and GBV interventions.

### Planning

1) NPA should prioritize GBV and VAWG in all development planning frameworks and allocate specific resources linked to development outcomes.

2) MGLSD in collaboration with the MOPS (CSCU) should design and deliver innovative and affordable capacity building and mentorship programs for mainstreaming interventions for prevention and response to GBV across key Government agencies;

3) EOC should revise the Certificate of Compliance framework to include a specific output and outcome indicators for GBV and Harmful Practices during the assessments

4) Adopt a multi-sectoral approach, which promotes coordination of the different GBV stakeholders and players' interests to be adopted in planning and budgeting for GBV.

### Capacity

1) MGLSD, National Planning Authority, Uganda Bureau of Statistics and Development Partners need to invest in sustained hands-on technical assistance programs for staff in planning and budgeting for GBV prevention and response interventions under program-based budgeting.

2) Government agencies need to invest more in high-quality data collection and analysis to obtain relevant data on prevention and response that will inform the designing and implementation of GBV programs. UBOS should include more GBV indicators in data collection tools in national surveys and studies.

3) Provide for essential staffing in key agencies with

critical mandates in handling GBV as well as harmful practices. Strengthen the capacity of institutions in the Criminal Justice Sector (Police and Courts) to handle cases of GBV, in particular through training, resourcing and facilitation to undertake stronger investigation and prosecution.

4) MGLSD should continue rolling out of GBV Training of Trainers activities to all MDAs and LGs with special focus on the new Cities and Districts. In addition, disseminate work place guidelines for prevention, response and management of GBV at work places.

5) Undertake public awareness on prevention of GBV in communities as well as informal support networks, through Cultural and Traditional Institutions, Religious Institutions, and CSOs.

### Conclusions

GBV has a high social, economic and public health cost to the Ugandan society. Fiscal costs include health-related ones, both in prevention and health care provision as well as costs related to loss of education, low productivity, abuse of rights and loss of lives. Additional costs include those of specific programs that aim to reduce the incidence of the phenomenon and mitigate its impact. Therefore, financing of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response interventions needs to be improved, across all Sectors including Community-Based Services so as to deal with the needs of the victims and support follow up actions for desirable social outcomes.

# National Survey on Violence in Uganda 2021 by UBOS: Insights, Emerging Recommendations and Way Forward

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) embarked on the first ever national survey on violence against women and girls, children and older persons in January 2020. The report was made public in November 2021. This is one of the milestones in 2021 since it adds on the body of knowledge on SGBV in Uganda, provides new evidence and highlights areas for future interventions on prevention and response to the vice.

The survey findings indicate some gains registered which are areas to celebrate:

1. This is the first ever national survey on VAWG, the proposed periodicity of 5 years is a welcome development it will inform policy and programmes. Great appreciation is extended to the entire UBOS Team and the EU-UN Spotlight initiative for supporting the survey.
2. The survey took a whole life approach where all age groups were taken into account instead of focusing on 15-49 age group which has been the case of earlier surveys. The life cycle approach to SGBV is a great development which has made it possible to provide a comprehensive evidence on SGBV among children and

3. The impact of VAWG can no longer be underestimated. The survey highlights increased vulnerability to human rights violations and poverty. The survey report is rich; it has exposed other forms of GBV which require an objective reflection on the GBV laws, policy and plans to take into account their implications to women, girls' lives, family wellbeing and overall national development. Key among these include economic exploitation, online violence (49%), electoral violence (36%), stalking (26%), cyber violence yet Uganda has adopted the digital economy.
4. The findings also call for further assessments, analysis of the findings especially from the depth of patriarchy. For instance the survey findings indicate that women are 'willingness to give" part of their income to their husbands, it may on the other side reflect gaps in women's power to make informed decisions freely due to institutionalized and internalized patriarchy. Therefore SGBV MUST BE APPRECIATED FROM A BROADER PERSPECTIVE.
5. The survey highlights notable gains in particular improvements in the level of reporting (70%), seeking

support thus need to strengthen and improve support services; reduced physical violence against women from 51% in 2016 to 45% in 2021.

**The Survey highlight areas of concerns for the Government of Uganda and all stakeholders; In particular the increasing levels of sexual violence from 22% in 2016 to 36% in 2021, workplace violence (86%), child sexual abuse of 59%, economic violence of women at 47%.**

The Survey highlight areas of concerns for the Government of Uganda and all stakeholders; In particular the increasing levels of sexual violence from 22% in 2016 to 36% in 2021, workplace violence (86%), child sexual abuse of 59%, economic violence of women at 47%. The spaces of violence are also shifting from homes to public spaces especially at workplaces. One of the key lessons to pick was the need for deliberate interventions to tackle SGBV in all



parts of Uganda. Due to several programmes, there is a drastic reduction of GBV in Busoga from 49% in 2016 to 13% in 2021.

The SGBV is a cost to national development. The implementation of the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII) and the Programme Implementation Actions Plans which are reinforcing the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach provide great opportunities for mainstreaming GBV prevention and response. The EU-UN Spotlight initiative provides a great model; which needs to be scaled up and rolled out throughout the Country.

Emphasis on prevention is critical- much emphasis should go to the role of the family and mother in socialization (we

are challenged to bring up a generation that values equality and equity, treats and protects women and girls, nurtures positive masculinity, including transforming our social norms, values and practices), adopt alternative practices which value women and their human rights instead of those that violate women's human rights, deliberate engagement of the Education System. Positive parenting for both girls and boys is key. Adequate resources should be allocated to this effect. Moving Way forward

1. Adopt a multi- media dissemination and engaging all stakeholders on the findings of the survey; additional deeper analysis including a qualitative

reflection of the findings. The 16 Days of Activism provides a great opportunity to mobilizing actions on GBV prevention and response.

2. Strengthen capacity of Government Agencies for Gender Mainstreaming TO DELIVER A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH; address the fragmentation of service delivery; MGLSD to coordinate gender and equity responsive planning and budgeting including GBV prevention and response; recruitment of Assistant Community Development Officers at the Parish Level-, orientation of the Government Officials at national and district level; establish and strengthen facilities and services at the district level for GBV



**Emphasis on prevention is critical- much emphasis should go to the role of the family and mother in socialization...**

response.

3. Mainstreaming of gender and equity issues including GBV under the Parish Development Model including engaging MFPED, MoLG and LGs on their financing.
4. MGLSD, MFPED, EOC to engage the Ministries leading on the implementation of the NDPIII –18 Programme Implementation Action

Plans to prioritize gender and equity including GBV prevention and response in all the planned interventions. Review the Gender Compacts to reflect the priorities as per NDP111 and the PIAPs.

5. Under the justice, finance witness protection and effective participation in access to justice processes
6. A special programmes on Women Economic

Empowerment and ending teenage pregnancy and child marriage are required.

7. Leveraging on the momentum generated by the Generation Equality Agenda, INCREASED NUMBER OF WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING to mobilise additional resources for the delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment.





## UWEP Changing Narrative for Women Entrepreneurs

On 3rd February, 2016, Cabinet sanctioned the establishment of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) as an affirmative revolving fund meant to address the Social-Economic challenges facing vulnerable women across the country. Key Social-Economic challenges being addressed by the Programme include; limited access to affordable credit from formal financial institutions, limited technical knowledge and skills for business development, limited access to markets as well as information regarding business opportunities.

Implementation of the Programme is mainstreamed

into Government structures at the National and Local Government levels. At the district level, the programme operates through the existing Local Government structures. These are responsible for mobilization and sensitization, beneficiary selection, facilitating the preparation, appraisal and approval of projects, monitoring, technical support supervision and recovery of funds. At the national level, the Ministry is responsible for providing technical guidelines, capacity building, financing, and overall coordination of the Programme.

The design and implementation of the Programme is based on the Community Demand-driven

Development (CDD) model. Here, women are provided with interest free loans (revolving funds) of up to UGX. 12.5 Million depending on the nature of the enterprise and the various inputs required. These are provided to women, formed into groups of 5 -15 persons (as amended). The terms of financing are very flexible and among others do not require presentation of any form of collateral (physical assets as security), is interest free for all repayments made within the first 12 months (and only 5% per annum charged for repayments exceeding 1 year) and provides for flexible repayment periods based on the project maturity period, Business Plan and cash flow projections.



## PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

### Programme development objective

The overall goal of the Programme is to empower Ugandan women to improve their income levels and their contribution to economic development.

### Specific objectives of the Programme

1. To strengthen the capacity of women for entrepreneurship development
2. To provide affordable credit and support access to other financial services to enable women establish and grow their business enterprises
3. To facilitate women's access to markets for their products and services
4. To promote access to appropriate technologies for production and value addition
5. To strengthen Programme management and coordination.

### Programme results indicators

The main Programme results are anchored on increased incomes and livelihoods among the targeted beneficiaries, enhanced survival of Women enterprises, Increased participation of Women in Enterprise development, Increased access to affordable credit and other services, Increased access to markets for Women's products and services, Improved adoption of appropriate technologies for production and value addition and Effective delivery of UWEP activities at national and Local Government levels.

### Policy relevance of the Programme

UWEP is anchored within the national, regional and international commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. The Programme is clearly enshrined in the current NRM Manifesto 2021/2026 as indicated on pages 109 and 110. UWEP is listed among the key Programmes interventions to be used for rural transformation. Also, the 2016/2021 NRM manifesto on pages 6 and 56, committed to "Come up with a Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) with a sole aim of promoting a conducive business environment and building institutional and human capacities that will encourage and support the entrepreneurial initiatives of women". A revolving fund of the Programme will contribute to the creation of a sustainable source of funding to offset the perceived risk in lending to under-collateralized women entrepreneurs.

UWEP is also in tandem with regional commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. Key among these commitments is the EAC Gender Policy, the AU Gender Policy, Maputo Protocol that talks about access to health and education, which comes easy with the economic empowerment of women. COMESA also talks about the women economic empowerment fund and all member States are required to establish women funds and report on its implementation on annual basis. Our neighbours Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia all have women funds in line with these international and regional instruments on women economic empowerment and gender equality.

Also, UWEP is responding to international commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. Some of these include; Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979 and SDG-5 which is aimed at achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

Due to the transformative performance of UWEP, other countries have benchmarked Uganda on how to effectively implement similar Programmes in their respective countries. The Gambia and the Republic of South Sudan have recently initiated Women Funds after benchmarking trips to Uganda. This shows how the Programme has improved the image of the country in terms of women's economic empowerment.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF BENEFICIARIES

### Targeted beneficiaries

The primary target beneficiaries of the Programme are women within the age bracket of 18-79 years (as amended). The assumption is that those beyond 79 years will be catered for under the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) Programme. The Programme as much as possible promotes the integration of the following categories of women as beneficiaries:

- Unemployed women.
- Vulnerable Groups e.g. single young mothers, Widows and Gender-based Violence (GBV) survivors.
- Women with Disabilities.
- Women living with HIV/AIDS
- Women heading households.

- Women slum dwellers.
- Women living in hard to reach areas and ethnic minorities.

### Details of demographic characteristics of beneficiaries

Demographic data on UWEP beneficiaries is undertaken by analyzing a demographic data form filled in by the women expressing interest to access the fund. The findings from this analysis reveal that the average age of beneficiaries is 46 Years of age. This target group includes the following vulnerable categories of women: single young mothers, Widows and Gender-based Violence (GBV) survivors, Women with Disabilities, Women living with HIV/AIDS, Women heading households, Women slum dwellers, Women living in hard to reach areas and ethnic minorities.

Whereas 180,914 women have benefited from UWEP to date, some beneficiaries fall in multiple vulnerabilities. For example, one beneficiary may be a Single Parent who dropped out of School and has some form of disability, hence, such a single beneficiary will appear in three different beneficiary categories. Under UWEP, majority of the beneficiaries never had an opportunity to attend formal education, followed by those who dropped out of primary school. The special needs categories include women with disabilities, Gender Based Violence Survivors; those living in slum areas and those living in hard to reach areas. Table 1 below gives an indication of the numbers reached by category to date.

## PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION

Full scale implementation of the Programme started in the FY 2015 / 2016. Here, the main focus was on establishment of systems and structures to create a firm foundation for roll-out to the initial 20 participating Local Governments under Phase-I. In the FY 2016/2017, the Programme was rolled out country wide. By now, we have a foot print in all Local Governments across the country. This section provides an account of key achievements registered since programme inception.

### Programme financing

By the end of the first phase, the Programme had received a total of UGX 107.0b which was 71.6% of the total budget allocation for the initial 5 years. Unfortunately, this release was just 18.3% of the previously projected UGX 585b for the first 5 years. In the second phase, the Programme has received a total of UGX 45.0b which is 73.3% of the total budget allocation for the two years.

### Progress on key programme achievements

Overall, majority of Women are still embracing traditional enterprises; Wholesale and retail trade 40.5% and Agriculture; 33.2%. Interestingly, some women groups have embraced manufacturing and processing; industry; 9.2% and value addition; 1.1%. Whilst on a small scale, such transition is an indication that some groups are breaking gender barriers by venturing into enterprises hitherto perceived to be a preserve of men. A classic example is 'Epikosi Ikliok Women Group' in Katakwi which ventured into metal fabrication

and welding and is transferring these skills to other members of the community. The inability to have wide diversification of enterprises is partly attributed to limited sensitisation provided by Local Governments, varied climatic conditions and cultural barriers. Fortunately, the Ministry has partnered with Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) and the UN-Women to enhance both soft and hard skills of women beneficiaries.

### Status of recovered and revolved funds

The repayment of revolving funds is ongoing across the country. Out of a total UGX 30,125,629,122 expected to be recovered by 31st December, 2021, UGX 21,931,334,762 has been recovered which is 72.8% recovery rate. Note. Out of the gross recoveries made, UGX 10,703,229,580 has been revolved back to fund new groups in the respective Local Governments. The details of recovery rate per Local Government are in the attached Annex.

It is important to note that the recovery rate has been calculated using both repaid amount and amount due. Amount due was obtained directly from the Local Government recovery templates. The following measures were put in place by the Ministry to boost the rate of funds recovery;

- Routine monitoring and technical support supervision to both struggling and well to do groups.
- Invoking of sanctions against poor performing LGs
- Active involvement and participation of women council leaders at various levels including the National Women Council,
- Active involvement and participation of Political



leaders at district and municipality levels,

- Active involvement and participation of RDCs,
- Improved working relationship with Ministry of Local Government,
- Making weekly phone calls to the UWEP FPPs to report on the weekly recoveries in their respective regions.
- Constant reminders to the district FPPs to submit the monthly recovery reports.

### Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme has undertaken a number of measures to enhance programme performance. Among these measures have included the following;

- Monitoring visits to various Districts and Municipalities. During these visits, the Technical Support Unit of UWEP monitor and offer implementation support and guidance to the district and sub-county implementing teams as well as Women Leaders on various aspects of programme implementation.
- District and Regional Programme Review Meetings. These meetings have been conducted to offer an opportunity for stakeholder to reflect and share experiences on Programme implementation. These meeting have been attended by Chief Administrative Officers, District Chairpersons, Resident District Commissioners, Focal Point Persons and Youth Chairpersons among others.
- Routine technical support visits; a number of technical support visits have been organized in various districts and Municipal Councils to track programme performance as well support key implementers on various aspects of programme implementation.



The Ministry team providing technical support in katira s/c, Budaka District.

### Refinancing

The implementation guidelines have a refinancing provision if any group either makes 100% repayments or its performance has been affected by unexpected eventualities. Therefore, refinancing is not automatic, it was considered under the following circumstances;

- Groups engaged in value addition were given priority whenever they requested to be refinanced. This was done because it was in line with Government's drive of import export substitution.
- Excelling groups which had recovered all the funds. Such groups qualified to apply for more funds to either expand

their enterprises or acquire other required machinery to improve product quality.

- When groups experience natural calamities and they are not able to recover from the shock. We requested documented evidence from the sector experts and reports from the respective FPPs



UWEP Technical Staff giving technical support to Sikyemukama Women Dairy Cattle group in Mubende MC



Manager M&E monitoring the performance of Ibanda central cell women decoration, Ibanda Municipality

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### **Sustainability plan**

UWEP has built the basis for establishing a sustainable women entrepreneurs' financing mechanism by building the capacity of financially marginalized members of society and provision of business development services to serve that specific market segment (vulnerable women). Although the project has been in existence for 5 years, UWEP has already been effective in paving the way for a larger effort from the Government of Uganda in supporting the emerging Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) owned by women and demonstrating as a viable model of liquidity that can support the growth of a sustainable SME sector in the country. In addition,

the Programme will break new grounds through innovative approaches in areas of business incubation, value addition, scale up use and adoption of appropriate technology, facilitate access to high value markets and strengthen linkages between different actors across value chains.

### **Partnership with Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI)**

The Programme entered into partnership with UIRI. A total of 132 women groups from districts of Bunyangabu, Oyam, Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kalungu, Serere and Pader were trained. The partnership has enabled women groups to acquire knowledge and skills to improve on the quality and quantity of their products through trainings in value addition, branding and packaging of the products as critical aspect of marketing their products. The partnership has also enabled the beneficiary groups to enhance their entrepreneurship skills, assist and guide the women groups through the processes of product standardization with the Uganda National Bureau of Standards and improve women's capacity in post-harvest handling of their produce.

A total of 132 groups were equipped with knowledge and skills to improve on the quality and quantity of their products (value addition). Key hard skills passed onto these beneficiaries include preparation of body lotions, creams and liquid soap, wine, briquettes, confectionaries with a longer shelf life, groundnut processing, paper bag making, shoe making, wine making, production of ice cream and juice making.

Groups were majorly trained in value addition to their products

and services, branding and packaging to ease products and service marketing.



*UWEP Group participants taken through sales & marketing sessions*



*Members of Syanyonja Women Group displaying their new products after the value addition training- Busia district*



*All the Participants from Oyam after the skills training*

### **UN Women, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

Implementation of a national programme to the magnitude of the Uganda women entrepreneurship programme (UWEP) requires enormous financial and non financial resources. The GoU has committed funds to the programme in the budget which does not translate to the actual financial releases and this creates persistent funding gaps. Support of other partners and organizations is important to the





programme to supplement the funding gaps. The programme developed partnerships with other entities to fill both financial and non-financial needs of the programme to support mentorship and skilling of women entrepreneurs through partnerships with UN Women, and has a running MOU with the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI). There is a growing interest from many other partners within and without government and these should fill the existing gaps in programme implementation. The bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is funding the strengthening of the Programme Management Information System (MIS), robust baseline study, cost analysis of the Programme & the Programme's process evaluation. The process evaluation & baseline reports have so far been externally validated and awaiting the final dissemination.

#### **Partnership with the United Bank for Africa (UBA)**

UBA has a pipeline MoU with the MoGLSD to improve financial inclusion and trade-based skills of UWEP vulnerable women. By the end of the FY, the Solicitor General had cleared the MoU.

#### **Partnership with the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA)**

FIDA signed an MoU with the MoGLSD to promote women's rights within the context of business operations, provide legal aid to vulnerable women in FIDA's districts of operation, lobby, advocate and monitor policy and legislative processes that have a bearing on Women Economic Empowerment. FIDA is also creating massive publicity about the Programme in all its districts of operation.

#### **Partnership with the National Women Council**

The National Women's Council (NWC) is an autonomous body, established by the National Women's Council Act of 1993 (CAP 318) with a sole objective of bringing all women of Uganda together, irrespective of their differences for social, political and economic development. NWC structure which runs from village, parish, subcounty, district up to the national level plays a fundamental role in mobilisation of women for programme uptake, and monitoring the quality of Programme implementation at all levels.

The NWC structures play a key role in the implementation of the programme. Such key roles include; participating in the selection of prospective women group beneficiaries, monitoring the performance of the programme and utilisation of funds, mentoring of groups in

basic soft skills, supporting funds recovery efforts, and report any misuse of funds by groups or technical teams.

In this FY, the NWC monitored programme implementation in the districts of Amolatar, Kaberamaido, Dokolo, Hoima, Masindi and Kibooga. Field visits indicated that;

- Many of the women projects were affected by the Covid-19 containment measures,
- There is need to extend the project repayment period for projects in animal rearing and poultry farming.
- The programme has improved standards of living of beneficiaries.

Council leaders in day to day monitoring of UWEP groups,

- There is need to more male engagement in implementation of the programme.
- Some groups specially tailoring groups in Kiboga district and Amolatar District had won big tenders to supply uniforms in different schools.
- Due to Covid-19 Lockdown most of the groups requested for a re-adjustment of the loan repayments,
- Lower Women Council leaders emphasised the need to be fully involved in monitoring of programme

performance. By this, they can quickly indentify challenges faced by women projects and make relevant suggestions for improvement,

- Need to encourage women with disabilities to apply for programme funds,
- Need for the women councils to create massive awareness on policies for business registration, procurement processes, property rights among others.



- There is need to intensify involvement of Women





## BENEFITS AND LESSONS LEARNT

### Perceived benefits of the programme

The immediate benefits arising out of UWEP include the following:

1. Increased access to affordable credit by women. In this regard, 191,476 women have accessed credit to initiate, manage and expand their enterprises.
2. Financial inclusion of women. To date, 16,542 women groups have group bank accounts that were opened to access UWEP funds. With the routine of having to deal with the bank in terms of transactions, this has exposed many of the rural women to financial systems hence improving their financial literacy.
3. Acquisition of assets. The women that have benefited from the Programme have been able to acquire assets such as domestic animals; 59.7%, mattresses; 54.5%, phones; 51.9%, beds; 28.3%. In addition the Programme has enabled women to acquire assets such as land; 1.1% and houses; 0.8%.
4. Women have reported increased incomes as evidenced by their ability to pay school fees, access to health services and improved nutrition.
5. The Programme has also helped women create opportunities for direct self-employment and over 600,000 dependents have benefited through multiplier effects at household and community level.
6. Enhanced knowledge and skills. The women beneficiaries have acquired skills in various disciplines such as, basic financial management, record keeping, entrepreneurship, procurement, group dynamics and marketing among others, which is aiding mindset change.
7. At a macro-level, the

Programme is making a contribution towards enhancing import substitution and export promotion through financing of projects in grain milling, fruit drying and processing, shear butter processing, wine making, liquid soap making, agricultural feed production, metal fabrication, food processing, tie and dye, manufacturing of leather products such as shoes, and bags among others.

8. The group approach has given Women an opportunity to improve knowledge and skill through mentoring each other. The greater involvement of the Women in mobilization, sensitization, prioritization and planning for their needs, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of Programme activities has created a sense of empowerment and confidence to take charge of their destiny.
9. Contributed to enhancement of leadership capacity and confidence of women. With a Women have developed leadership capacity and confidence through managing their enterprises which was witnessed during technical and support supervision in their respective districts. This was counted a great achievement and women are now well leading their enterprises and their confidence has been enhanced.
10. Reduction of dependence syndrome among women. There has been increased economic independence of women who benefited from the Programme due to increased income levels. Increased income has helped them to make independent decision especially regarding utilization of the same. Majority of the women supported under the Programme being the vulnerable category were majorly depending on their husbands for support on

almost all spheres of life. However, this has greatly changed as women are able to provide for themselves with basic things such as salt, soap, access to medical services especially antenatal care. Others have been able to acquire items such as radios, bicycles, motorcycles, and land among others which were majorly a preserve of men in the community. With increased income and acquisition of some properties as indicated above, women beneficiaries under the programme have been empowered to make some decisions affecting their lives. As one beneficiary in Kasese put it "with my bicycle I can easily take my products to market without having to depend on man's bicycle. I now have mine and I thank God for it." This assertion shows how the programme has greatly liberated women both economically but also in mobility. One can conclude that the programme has greatly contributed to breaking down social barriers that were hindering independence of women while maintaining social standings.

11. Expansion of the Tax Base. The supported projects/enterprises have played a crucial role in contributing to the tax basket at different levels. Most project/enterprises are being taxed by local authorities thus contributing to local revenue collection. This has boosted/supported the operations of local entities. Similarly, other projects especially those involved in value addition and selling their products in bulk accessing high value markets (domestic and external) with formalized businesses are taxed by the central tax body hence contributing to the national treasury.

## Lessons learnt

### Support of the most vulnerable women is critical in economic transformation.

According to Uganda National Household Surveys, women contribute up to 53 % of Uganda's Labour force and 42% taken on as unpaid family workers. In addition to this the exclusion of women from formal financial services, limited access to affordable credit, earning less compared their male counterparts makes them vulnerable compared to other categories in the economy. The above notwithstanding, women contribute up to about 80% of labor force in the informal sector. Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) has always intended to address the above scenarios by supporting these vulnerable women in their groups which was realized to be critical. This has clearly informed all stakeholders that supporting such category of women was the most viable option to go for among the many and was a noble lesson learnt in the last five years.

### Women are trust worthy.

The importance of trust for efficient social and organizational functioning should be highly noted. From the programme findings women have been found to be trustworthy in terms of loan acquisition and repayment despite not having them subjected to provide collateral prior to accessing the credit. Since they are in groups, they share the responsibility of repaying the loan and therefore targeting them translated into better financial performance compared to their male counterparts.

### Group financing is a recommend approach for sustaining benefits of cash transfer programming.

The programme used group financing to reach out to a number of women beneficiaries using limited resources within a short period of time.

### Lack of collateral security should not be a hindrance to accessing credit (startups).

A wealth of evidence confirms that women's command over resources and assets like land is constrained by discriminatory customary law provisions and cultural practices which further fuel gender inequalities. Access to credit services is linked to having collateral like land, and other assets which the women in most cases don't have, and with UWEP, Collateral security was not a requirement which helped many women to access the credit. In future therefore there should be Eradication of discriminatory legal and customary legal provisions, ensuring full and equal property and asset ownership rights for women Tailor measures to increase women's land and asset ownership.

### Investing in women is a sure way towards achieving Uganda Vision 2040 and sustainable development goals 2030.

Gender Equality and Women's empowerment is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. One of the targets under this goal is undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national planning frameworks such vision 2040, NDPIII . UWEP has partly contributed towards this target by availing financial resources though not every women in the country has benefited. As said above the contribution of women to the Ugandan economy is a clear manifestation that an economy investing in women is one of sure ways to achieving vision 2040 and sustainable development goals. This was a lesson learnt and will definitely trickle down to others areas like; ending all forms discrimination and violence against women,

ensuring participation of women in leadership, enabling use of technology, strengthened policies to promote gender equality among others.

### Implementing new government programs is best achieved through existing structures.

New Government Programmes are best implemented through existing structures of government as this is a cheaper option than establishing new structures. Implementing Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme through existing government structures from national to lower local government levels enabled easy coordination of the Programme since all processes of the programme were managed by government officials. For example, using District/Municipality and sub county Technical Planning Committee to approve files meant that all group files are analyzed by sector experts without adding extra funding.

### Adequate and sufficient funding is critical towards achieving women social-economic empowerment.

UWEP has among other Government Programmes supported the economic empowerment of women. Women who accessed the funds under the programme established viable businesses while others were able to expand their enterprises. However, this fund was not available for the high demand expressed by women yearly. A number of women groups have not received funds due to inadequate funds released from the Ministry of Finance. Planning and Economic Development. Therefore with adequate and sufficient funding, more women will be able to access more and this will translate to socio – economic empowerment majority of women in the Country.





# Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in the world today

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. It was launched globally in September 2017 with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union. The Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality and women’s empowerment as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Spotlight Initiative has deployed targeted, large-scale investments in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Pacific and the Caribbean, aimed at achieving significant improvements in the lives of women and girls.

Uganda is one of the eight countries in Africa selected to benefit from the Spotlight Initiative. In Uganda the initiative is being implemented over 4 years, beginning 1 January 2019 and concluding 31 December 2022. The total programme budget is \$42,449,024 over four years. The European Union provided \$22 million as catalytic funding for the first two years of implementation in Uganda, with the United Nations contributing an additional one million dollars. The remaining funds will be mobilized for years three and

four.

## Violence Against Women and Girls in Uganda

Violence and gender inequality are manifested throughout the life cycle and are widely accepted as a normal part of what it is to be a woman or a girl. They are a major obstacle to the fulfillment of women’s and girls’ human rights and a threat to the achievement of Uganda’s National Development Plans and the Sustainable Development Goals.

- 56% of Ugandan women (age 15-49) experience spousal violence and 22% experience sexual violence (2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey);
- 49% of women and 41% of men believe a man is justified to beat his wife for specific reasons (2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey);
- 35% of girls and 17% of boys experiences sexual violence and 59% of females and 68% of males reporting experiencing physical violence during childhood (Violence Against Children Survey (2018)).
- Economic violence, including the denial of women’s and girls’ access to land and inheritance rights, also remains rampant.
- Harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation still prevail in some parts of Uganda. For example, over 15% of ever-married women (aged 20-49 years) were married by the age of 15, and 49% by the

age of 18 (UBOS and ICF International Inc, 2012).

The situation has been compounded by limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services and essential medical services for survivors of violence.

## Interventions in Uganda and progress

The Spotlight Initiative takes a whole of government and whole of society approach. is supporting concrete measures to end violence and harmful practices. Together, we are addressing legislative and policy gaps, strengthening government institutions, promoting gender-equitable attitudes, providing quality services for survivors and their families, and ending impunity for violence against women and children. Interventions are also strengthening systems for collecting and analyzing data on violence against women and children, and empowering women’s movements.

Spotlight is capitalizing on existing government and civil society programmes and interventions in Uganda, as well as piloting new innovations and scaling-up evidence-based models. Collaborative partnerships with government, civil society, religious and cultural institutions, the women’s movement, donors, and the private sector are critical throughout the programme design and implementation.



The initiative is built around six pillars presented below with results from January 2019 and December 2020.

### Enhanced legislative and policy framework

- Cabinet approved the National Child Policy; Parliament passed the Administration of Justice Act, Succession Amendment Act and progress made on Sexual Offences Act; and production of the Multi-Sectoral Prosecutors' Handbook on Gender-Based Violence.
- Effective collective advocacy to support continuity of essential services and prioritization of GBV/VAC/SRHR in COVID-19 response.
- Adoption of the National Guidelines on the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy and Re-entry of Child Mothers in School under the Second Chance program; significant success in addressing mind-set change on social norms that reinforce gender discrimination.
- Establishment of SOPs to curb the high incidence of VAWG and sexual harassment of young women in public spaces, and the development of the Draft Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Policy.

### Strengthened institutions

- Technical support in development of Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and GBV/VAC COVID-19 sub-groups' COVID-19 response plans and budgets.
- Strengthening district-level

institutional mechanisms by integrating GBV/SRHR indicators into the District Local Government Performance Assessment tools, ensuring alignment of assessment indicators to the Third National Development Plan III compliance tools.

- Capacity strengthening in case management in 4 districts and enhanced social welfare structure at sub county level.
- Civil society collective advocacy to engender the fiscal stimulus packaged reached 670,000 viewers and generated 6 million impressions.
- 4 Private Sector companies awarded for best practices in GBV.

### Prevention and social norm change

- With adapted modalities and messages, communities continued to be engaged on favourable gender norms and non-violence. Over 20 million people were reached through different multi-media and radio campaigns; religious leaders reached 1,000,000 people; SASA! community activists reached over 21,000 community members directly; 1,410 para-social workers trained and supported with basic supplies.
- On-going roll-out of Child Friendly School Model in 3 districts, reaching 210 schools and 14,000 students
- Ministry of Education and Sports developed home learning materials for primary and secondary learners; continuity of learning and shift towards

e-learning.

- Establishment of Council of Traditional Leaders of Africa (COTLA) -Uganda Chapter, providing a framework for further better engagement with traditional leaders on harmful practices and on-going roll out of the male engagement strategy through Male Action Groups.
- Inter-Religious Council of Uganda Pastoral letter (policy guidance) on sustained SRH/HIV/GBV programming integrated with COVID-19 risk management.
- The Gender Equality Seal adopted in 13 companies and sexual harassment integrated in their human resource manuals.

### Quality survivor services and ending impunity for VAWG, including SGBV and Harm Practices

- Review of six guidelines relating to SHRH to ensure alignment with the GBV Policy.
- Guidelines and performance tools developed, including adapted to COVID-19 context by Ministry of Health, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Judiciary including a module on prevention and response to GBV.
- Increased access to and service delivery of across SRH and GBV/VAC essential services package.
- National Child Helpline 'Sauti 116' reopened; Inductions for new Social Welfare Officers held.
- National GBV police hotline established.
- Midwives and a Health Assistant enhanced provision of SRH and



maternal health services during COVID.

- 12,000 people received legal aid services; mental health “first aid” provided to all reported cases of SGBV in refugee communities.
- Special court sessions and enhanced staff’s capacity in ODPP to handle GBV cases in a victim-friendly and trauma-informed manner, resulting in conviction rates for SGBV rising from 60% in 2019 to 74% in 2020. 1,221 child survivors cases were fast tracked under these measures.

### Improved data availability and capacities

- Contributed to trend analysis of cases of SGBV in refugee communities during 2020; a joint strategy was developed to address emerging issues.
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) undertook a data quality assessment of information management systems to support harmonization and standardized indicators.
- The collaboration with the School of Women and Gender Studies of Makerere University resulted in the integration of GRB and gender statistics in the School of Gender Studies curriculum.
- UBOS conducted a National Survey on the well-being of women focusing on GBV.
- A phased modality to systems integration by UBOS to enable SGBV/SRH data collection and analysis in line with international standards.
- GBV/SRH indicators were integrated into four modules of the Community Information System to plug the data gap on the 10 to

14-year age group in the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey.

- Community Information System was completed in four districts.
- 4 pre-service and in-service training institutions have revised curricula to integrate VAWG/GBV responses

### Strengthened women’s movement and civil society engagement

- Launch of the African Women Leaders’ Network, Uganda Chapter
- Collective action, monitoring, and advocacy among women’s networks and civil society to support gender mainstreaming and GBV prevention and response in government’s COVID response.
- Joint talk show and media dialogue highlighting the unique perspectives of women in COVID-19, especially vulnerable groups of women and youth
- Constitution of the Civil Society (Non-State Actor) National Reference on ending GBV.

### Multi-Sectoral Partnerships

In Uganda, the Spotlight Initiative is coordinated by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, on behalf of the Government of Uganda, and the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office on behalf of the UN and EU. However, the Spotlight Initiative takes a multi-sectoral, all of government and all of society approach to addressing violence against women and children. It was therefore designed with and is being implemented through

- Five UN agencies –UN Women, UNDP, UNHCR,

UNFPA, and UNICEF – and three associated agencies/entities – IOM, OHCHR, and Pulse Lab

- 20 government ministries, departments, and agencies – including, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministries of Health; Education and Sports; Local Government; Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Trade, Industry and Cooperatives; and Energy and Mineral Development; the Justice Law and Order Sector institutions, National Planning Authority, the Equal Opportunities Commission, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the Uganda Human Rights Commission – as well as six District Local Governments and the KCCA; and
- More than 30 civil society partners representing local, national, and international CSO/NGOs; networks of women representing vulnerable groups; religious and cultural institutions; academia; and the private sector.

### Implementation Districts

The Spotlight Initiative in Uganda is being implemented nationally, with specific programming in seven districts, representing different regions within Uganda: Amudat, Arua, Kampala, Kasese, Kitgum, Kyegegwa, and Tororo. Selection of target districts was done in consultation with Government and civil society partners and considered prevalence rates, outcomes on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and current violence against women and girls programming coverage. The selection criteria sought to avoid duplication with on-going or planned initiatives.



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