REIMAGINING BEING AND BELONGING IN UGANDA:
AN ENABLING FRAMEWORK TO FOSTER OUR SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT

A CONSENSUS STUDY OF
THE UGANDA NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Sciences for Prosperity

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The Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) is an independent, nonpolitical, and nonprofit organization founded in October 2000 to provide evidence-informed policy advice to the government and nation of Uganda.

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FOREWORD

Dear Esteemed Stakeholders,

I wish to thank the Committee on Inclusion and Equity for National Development for this timely report. Two Fellows of the Academy, Prof. John Muyonga and Dr. Sabrina Kitaka, served as co-Chairs of the Committee.

The third in a series of consensus studies, this report builds upon the foundation of two other studies. The first study in 2020 focused on domestic financing for national development. The second one, conducted in 2021, brought to life the issue of trust as the primary component of building effective governance and partnership systems in Uganda. This study, undertaken in 2022, ties the three studies together under the concept of belonging.

As the Committee received expert testimony from civil society organizations, government entities, academia, and business leaders, one aspect became clear: those stakeholders had done a lot of work on inclusion, equity, and diversity. After the Committee considered expert testimony and existing literature on those issues, it decided to focus on belonging. Though embedded in the literature, this issue seemed elusive and difficult to practice. The Academy, through the Committee, could add value to the ongoing national and global dialogues on inclusive and equitable development by shining a light on belonging.

I invite you to explore this study and consider how best to operationalize the Committee's recommendations in your context. The framework set out in this study should enable you to make an investment case for inclusion, equity, diversity, and belonging in your context. At the very least, this study should inspire us to uplift each other, appreciate our interconnectedness, and interrupt exclusionary practices in our society.

For God and My Country,

Peter N. Mugyenyi, FUNAS, FAAS, FTWAS
PRESIDENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) would like to take this opportunity to recognize the immense contributions from across Uganda and the globe in making this study possible. First, we would like to acknowledge the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, which has generously provided the funding to make this work possible. Second, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the UNAS Council, which has continued to provide steady and consistent leadership that allows UNAS to operate with confidence and dynamism. Lastly, we would like to thank the members of the Committee on Inclusion and Equity for National Development, who undertook this consensus study, shared their expertise, and ultimately took ownership of this report's message. All UNAS publications benefit from the strategic oversight of the Academy's Council: 2019–2022:

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PREFACE

The Uganda National Academy of Sciences' (UNAS's) focus on mindset shifts for country ownership of national development agendas has progressed since its initial report in 2014. The Academy's series of consensus study reports—covering such matters as country ownership, urbanization, education, health, domestic financing, and building trust in national governance and partnership systems—articulates a vision for Uganda's development. To achieve that vision, the reports also provide evidence-informed actionable recommendations to stakeholders in business, government, civil society, and international development. By going beyond intellectual articulation and the flair of politicized debate, the series offers unbiased recommendations to enable a progressive shift in how national development issues are presented, deliberated, prioritized, and addressed.

UNAS defines *a national development agenda* as a vision of shared economic prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being, achieved by creating an enabling framework that empowers and builds the capacity of individuals, communities, and institutions to pursue the agenda's priorities and goals. National development, then, concerns itself with poverty eradication and the empowerment of citizens to seize opportunities for prosperity and increase their freedom (Sen, 2001; UNAS, 2014).

Not unlike the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, the national development agenda of UNAS aims to protect the country and its people by focusing on climate change, lessening poverty, and improving the lives of all who inhabit Uganda through an equitable approach. According to the Academy's consensus study on country ownership (UNAS, 2014), a fully owned national development agenda addresses the needs of every citizen and requires personal responsibility, confidence among citizens, and a sense of every citizen having a personal stake in achieving the agenda.

Country ownership is defined as leadership and participation, at all levels and in every sector of society, toward achieving a unified goal, where individuals have a stake in and a shared responsibility for delivering the common development agenda. It relies on cultivating a long-term, developmental mindset at all levels of society. The continent's political leaders are responsible for facilitating an enabling environment in which this developmental mindset can grow from the roots of community resilience (Nkurayija, 2020; UNAS, 2021). At an event hosted by the Center for Global Development in 2010, Dr. Freddie Ssengooba, associate professor of health economics and health systems management at Makerere University, advocated for a shift to country-owned responses to promote better health outcomes and sustainability, stating that country "ownership comes when success is hard to sustain!" (Center for Global Development, 2010).

The Academy's report on governance and partnership systems (UNAS, 2021) highlighted the intrinsic value of trust in charting a development path, formulating strategies, and implementing policies in a genuinely inclusive manner. One pervasive idea emerges from an analysis of the Academy's consensus reports: communities must be the focus of any development agenda. Involvement in planning, implementing, and assessing development priorities transforms these communities from beneficiaries of development programs to active agents in their development. However, past and existing social, economic, and political structures have perpetuated biases and imbalances, which have impeded the equitable and inclusive involvement that is necessary for authentic and sustainable transformations to occur. Applying these ideas in Uganda's development context involves hard choices and concerted effort to embed discussions of distributive justice into domestic political and policy debates central to the national development agenda. Following the exposure of the coronavirus pandemic, the Academy focused this study on equity and inclusion, which complements its existing body of work as it fulfills its mandate to provide unbiased, apolitical, evidence-informed advice to the nation.

DEFINITIONS

***Being*:** The nature or existence of a person; the state of existing.

***Belonging*:** An individual's profound attachment to a place, concept, construct, and community; a natural human need to be an accepted member of a group.

***Community*:** A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.

***Diversity*:** The uniqueness of every individual. Involving people from various social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, ages, religions, and other characteristics promotes growth and learning.

***Equality*:** Providing the same quantity and quality of goods and services to all members of a group or population.

***Equity*:** Addressing the gaps that prevent people from having equal opportunities and outcomes in a group or population.

***Inclusion*:** Ensuring participation and empowerment of all peoples in formulating, implementing, and evaluating development programs; the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Inclusive Development: An intentional process of extinguishing exclusionary attitudes, policies, and practices to provide platforms for previously excluded people to voice and address their needs.

***Inclusive Growth*:** Economic growth that creates opportunities for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity fairly across society, creating equal opportunities.

"Inclusive Development is the concept that every person, regardless of their identity, is instrumental in transforming their societies. Development processes that are inclusive yield better outcomes for the communities that embark upon them."

—USAID (2022)

"That a country has a strong civil society is, I believe, particularly necessary for good development."

—Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director, UNAIDS

"Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome."

—Milken Institute (2020)

"In Africa there is a concept known as "ubuntu"—the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievement of others.

—Nelson Mandela

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM STATEMENT, AND COMMITTEE CONTEXT

Background: Inclusion and Equity as National, Continental, and Global Issues

In Uganda, Africa, and the world, inclusion and equity remain pervasive concepts in development. Indeed, inclusion and equity lie at the heart of Uganda's National Development Plan III (NDP III), the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Nations across the world, including Uganda, have adapted global agendas to fit their contexts to promote inclusive and equitable development, with varying degrees of success. While Uganda has registered laudable development policy and program successes in many areas, the evidence in this report demonstrates that inclusion and equity have remained elusive in our national context.

Uganda has ratified numerous regional, continental, and global treaties and participated in conventions that underscore the significance of equity and inclusion to sustainable development. Such international treaties and agreements include the

- African Union Gender Policy;
- Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa;
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- African Union Agenda 2063; and the
- United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Additionally, Uganda has participated in such conventions as the

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women,

- International Conference on Population and Development,
- Beijing Platform for Action, and
- Convention on the Rights of the Child.

At the national level, Uganda has an intricate legal system with statutory instruments that complement and contextualize international global treaties. These include such statutes as the Employment Act (2006), Children (Amendment) Act (2016), Equal Opportunities Act (2007), National Council for Older Persons Act (2013), and the Refugees Act (2006).

Although Uganda has invested considerable technical, financial, human, and other resources into operationalizing these documents, a vast chasm separates policies and implementation. For example, Uganda has reduced income poverty but has not prevented it because of inequality. While the proportion of people defined as "poor" has declined, the proportion of people who remain vulnerable to falling below the poverty line has increased (Golooba-Mutebi & Hickey, 2013). Despite increasing economic growth, rising income inequality and inequitable access to services persist (ODI, 2009), undermining Uganda's National Development Plan III (2020–2025).

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Union's Agenda 2063, and Uganda's Third National Development Plan (NDP III) clarify one issue: development does not only involve economic growth and poverty reduction, but also involves social inclusion, equitable access to essential goods and services, care for the environment, and the promotion of good governance (Musahara, 2016).

Problem Statement: Historicity and the Case for Belonging

> "I am influenced more than ever before by the conviction that social equality is the only basis of human happiness."
>
> —Nelson Mandela

All communities have absolute and perceived inequalities both in comparison with other communities and within their communities.

Communities allocate scarce resources to their priorities through their governance systems. And yet, with the growth of globalization, some communal problems get solved through partnerships with actors from diverse geographical, philosophical, spiritual, economic, political, social, and cultural contexts. Uganda serves as the home of diverse peoples and cultures, representing different ethnicities, tribes, languages, religions, practices, abilities, capacities, and modes of self-expression.

Even with this level of diversity, these seemingly disparate groups and characteristics coexist under a sociopolitical construct: Uganda. That construct, a legacy of British colonial rule, concentrated political and economic power in an elite force of colonial administrators. British colonial systems excluded Africans from decision-making processes (Mutibwa, 1992; Sejjaaka, 2002), as colonists' interests were based on the priorities of their leaders in London. Exclusion manifested itself in visceral ways, including in the way colonial administrators and, by extension, Indian traders lived in posh residential areas (UNAS, 2017). These differences ensured that the British maintained their dominion by ascribing varying privileges along racial lines (Thompson, 2003). Among the colonized Africans, Buganda received preferential treatment and a level of self-governance not granted to other provinces (Thompson, 2003; Sejjaaka, 2002). Because Buganda formulated some of its own priorities, the region prospered, with a quality of infrastructure, education, and health systems that other regions could only imagine (Sejjaaka, 2002). This colonial setup provides some of the historical roots of a stratified and unequal Uganda.

It comes as no surprise, then, that structures inherited from colonial times at independence continued to perpetuate historical imbalances, biases, and exclusionary practices. The conflict, insecurity, and economic mismanagement that characterized much of Uganda through the late 1980s sabotaged its euphoric postindependence development plans (Mutibwa, 1992; Sejjaaka, 2002). Leaders of successive governments promised peace, development, and prosperity for all regions in Uganda (Mutibwa, 1992), but inequality and exclusionary tendencies endured.

While this section has thus far focused on factors that deepened historical divisions amongst the peoples of Uganda, the nation has experienced periods of unity in which its people shared a sense of belonging. Postindependence euphoria, calls for national unity after each

regime change, and national development programs have demonstrated the empowering potential of belonging (Namirembe et al., 2020; Tabaro, 2021; Tripp, 2010). For example, during Idi Amin's regime, individuals, empowered by efforts to resist imperialism and protect a Ugandan national identity, sacrificed their resources and personal safety for the public good (Peterson, 2021; Rollow, 1974). When Ugandan athletes and musicians have won accolades in continental and international competitions, Ugandans from different tribes and classes have celebrated their achievements (Esuruku, 2013). Widespread ownership of such successes has inspired pride in national identity. These instances represent manifestations of belonging.

Ugandans united to fight the existential threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the late 1980s and early 1990s. HIV/AIDS negatively impacted every family, community, tribe, district, region, institution, sector, and class (de Waal, 2003; WHO, 2001). In transcending social, cultural, economic, and political boundaries (Tumushabe, 2006), HIV/AIDS united Ugandans. Leaders and individuals across the nation contributed what they could to combat HIV/AIDS. For example, the Government of Uganda set up the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) as the coordinator of an all-government response to the disease. UAC, strategically embedded within the Office of the President, sent a clear message that pandemic response had to become an all-sector, all-citizen priority. Such influential figures as Philly Bongole Lutaaya made their HIV statuses public and, through their talents, mobilized communities to combat the disease (Tumushabe, 2006).

As argued in UNAS (2014), communities must constitute the foundation of any African development agenda. Such a focus engenders country ownership of a national development agenda at all levels of society. However, when imbalances in power, money, and information impede meaningful access to critical economic, social, and political drivers of development, people become disempowered. Disempowerment manifests itself in exclusion and inequity, leading to vicious cycles of chronic poverty (ODI, 2009). Ultimately, disempowerment impacts communal ownership of national development—disempowered citizens reject notions of togetherness and express a lack of belonging. In contrast, fostering belonging interrupts exclusionary practices and promotes civic engagement in activities that accelerate national development.

Belonging has formed the basis of African societies. Being (as an individual) and belonging (to a community) depend upon each other (Onebunne & Alike, 2019) in such a way that they permeate all aspects of life. Individuals derive meaning from an interdependent existence in which communal activities benefit both the community and the individual. Individuals both contribute to the well-being of their community and receive social services (e.g., health and education). They also have an obligation and right to contribute to the economy (e.g., through employment and taxation). Finally, they can freely engage in political activities, expecting their voices to receive appropriate attention. These facets form an enabling framework for sustainable development. A feeling of belonging on a national level can be described as having "psychological affiliation with or commitment to the country" (Kolesovs, 2021). This deeply rooted feeling of attachment enables an individual to identify with their national goals and therefore drives contribution.

An enabling framework empowers citizens, emerging as the context within which belonging emerges in practice. Trust-building within community structures motivates citizens to support and invest in development processes. Likewise, engendering trust through and within the context of collective endeavors creates a sense of belonging, enhancing a sense of self-agency.

Anything that erodes belonging—exclusionary policies and practices in particular—threatens the community and individual. A nation that tolerates exclusion in all its manifestations engages in self-sabotage. In intentionally crafting inclusive and equitable development programs, Uganda has an unprecedented opportunity to imagine and actualize a sense of belonging across its diverse peoples and cultures. National unity, clarity of development purpose, and cohesive boldness in reaching agreed-upon goals will constitute the outcome of such an approach.

Context for the Committee on Inclusion and Equity for National Development

The Committee views belonging as a key ingredient to sustaining long-term national development. The double burden of exclusion and

inequity promotes individuals' disassociation with Uganda as a nation. They can exist (i.e., experience being) within Uganda without having a sense of belonging to Uganda. Absent a sense of national belonging lower-level associations (e.g., by income level or tribe) lead to disunity and conflict, which then derail any national-level development agenda. Ugandan leaders, communities, and citizens have opportunities to extinguish threats to belonging, and—as demonstrated by the Committee's recommendations—can consciously implement inclusive and equitable policies to engender belonging in our unique national context. Thus, being and belonging in Uganda can meaningfully fuse, enabling our nation to actualize its development potential sustainably.

To undertake a study that addresses belonging across all sectors in Uganda would require time and funding beyond the Academy's current capacity. As such, the Committee has examined evidence from multidimensional aspects of Ugandan life—employment, education, health, migration, urbanization, law, communication, performing arts, nutrition, politics, and philosophy—to propose pathways for promoting belonging

The COVID-19 pandemic, Ebola outbreak, climate change, unplanned urbanization, inflation, and other stressors have unmasked some of the existing biases across different social groups in Uganda. These groups include the periurban population, the elderly, refugees, women, children, and immigrants, presenting an opportunity for this Committee to interrogate the combined issues of inclusion and equity. In doing so, the Committee will offer evidence-informed advice regarding practical ways to promote a sense of belonging for all stakeholders in Uganda's development. To the extent possible, the Committee has taken a transdisciplinary approach to formulate its recommendations.

Accordingly, the Committee presents overarching recommendations in this section, with sector-specific recommendations in their corresponding sections of this report.

Overarching Recommendations

1. The Government of Uganda, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, should fund and support the collecting, analysis, and reporting of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data that raises awareness of gaps and challenges; profiles innovative approaches; and supports monitoring, evaluation, and learning regarding equity and inclusion. Specifically, these entities should ensure that intersectionality is considered, as this deepens the quality and usefulness of the data for decision-making. Emphasis should also be placed on high-quality and usable data.
2. The Government of Uganda should create a development agenda that engenders inclusion, enabling the consideration of multidimensional approaches to empowerment, inclusion, and equity in all spheres, providing the space for meaningful participation and engagement of all segments of the population, and provisioning for equitable power-sharing among all members of the populations.

    a. Policy development should be informed by evidence, including analyzing the potential impact of policy choices along all equity lines.

    b. The adverse effects of pandemics and other national emergencies should be recognized, especially how they impact the lives and livelihoods of various segments of the population. Policy choices and recovery plans should create new and innovative pathways that enhance meaningful and equitable participation in constructing and implementing these plans.

3. The Government of Uganda should ensure that the responsible entities and agencies—private and civil society organizations—are accountable for implementing equity and inclusion interventions and enhance belonging and trust, especially amongst vulnerable populations.

4. The government should ensure equitable distribution of infrastructure development and social services to benefit all sections of the population (irrespective of geographic location, gender, age, and socioeconomic status). These include public goods, such as water, electricity, internet, transport, and communication.

CLIMATE CHANGE, URBANIZATION, AND EMPLOYMENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR BELONGING

Before presenting evidence from different sectors, the Committee considers three areas of opportunities for belonging in Uganda: climate change, urbanization, and employment. These areas can present as challenges, which the Committee recognizes. From a hopeful and practical perspective, however, they also present Uganda with opportunities to address exclusion and inequities. The Committee considers them the anchors of an enabling framework for belonging in Uganda. These three issues affect all facets of the Ugandan community and (especially employment) will reemerge in other sections of the report.

Climate Change

Anthropogenic climate change has vast social, political, economic, and environmental implications for the global community, with the potential for increasing inequitable distribution of the world's resources and further entrenching preexisting global disparities. Increases in vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, climate-induced disasters, temperature extremes, climate displacement, food insecurity, and much more are all potential consequences of these unprecedented changes to the global environment.

The World Bank found East Africa to be a region especially vulnerable to climate change, which may be related to violent social conflicts, high population density, political instability, limited health infrastructure, low institutional capacity, and limited resilience and adaptation strategies (Ide et al., 2014; World Bank, 2013). Sub-Saharan countries are experiencing a larger share of the burden of climate change than higher-income countries, despite the fact that higher-income countries have disproportionately contributed to precipitating climate change (Nyiwul, 2021).

Thus, climate change in Uganda is an equity issue. In order to build infrastructure capacity and increase climate resilience in vulnerable populations, social inequalities must decrease, and community participation must be prioritized when developing sustainable climate mitigation strategies (Islam & Winkel, 2017; Nyiwul, 2021). This approach necessitates investments in community capacity building and information dissemination mechanisms when developing, communicating, and implementing policies aimed at introducing climate adaptation strategies in Uganda (Ampaire et al., 2017).

Climate change has been described by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as a threat multiplier, indicating that preexisting economic insecurity and regional conflicts could be exacerbated by diminishing resources resulting from reductions in water, food, and energy yields (Mugeere et al., 2021). Uganda, which has already begun to experience shifts in rainfall and temperature patterns (Nsubuga & Rautenbach, 2018), may experience these effects even more potently because of its heavy reliance on agriculture and ecotourism for the livelihoods and economic security of its population (Hisali et al., 2011; McKinney & Wright, 2021). Crop failures, land degradation, pest infestations, reductions in water availability, and reduced biodiversity have all been identified as potential negative climate change effects expected to impact Uganda because of its geographic location and high levels of poverty (Bwango et al., 2000; Orindi & Eriksen, 2005). Increases in weather variability and resulting changes to annual temperature and moisture levels all have the potential to increase soil erosion, soil aridity, and vegetation damage, as well as crop pests and diseases (Hisali et al., 2011). In turn, this can impact crop production and yields severely and influence food security within the region (Nsubaga & Rautenbach, 2018).

Farmers in Uganda are further disadvantaged in accessing climate mitigation strategies in the realm of agriculture by a lack of knowledge-sharing, poverty, illiteracy, technological constraints, and limited government support (Twecan et al., 2022). Food insecure households in Uganda and other areas in sub-Saharan Africa also often heavily rely on rain-fed subsistence agriculture, a system with low adaptive capacity (i.e., vulnerable to such changes as annual precipitation rates or resource constraints) (Okonya et al., 2013; Twinomuhangi et al.,

2021). Therefore, in these areas, decreased crop yield and agricultural commodities have vast implications for food security, as well as the prevalence of stunting and malnutrition (Lloyd et al., 2011; Wichern, 2019). Furthermore, environmental changes and urban expansion—and associated climate extremes and habitat degradation—could affect the biodiversity of natural resources, as well as the sustainability of nature-based tourism in the these areas (Coldrey & Turpie, 2020).

Beyond food production and tourism, climate change has the potential to impact other areas of people's daily lives, including access to electricity. Given that biomass availability and precipitation are important components of Uganda's energy sector, which relies heavily on biomass and hydropower, climatic changes could further reduce the potential to provide electricity to certain regions in Uganda (Nsubaga & Rautenbach, 2018). It is thus imperative to promote energy equity through inclusive energy infrastructure development and accessible service delivery, paying particular attention to equity implications when commodifying natural resources.

Furthermore, climate change is associated with the increased severity and prevalence of many deleterious health effects, including the increased geographic range of vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue, and yellow fever, as well as diseases related to deteriorating sanitation conditions, such as cholera and typhoid (Nsubaga & Rautenbach, 2018). Rising temperatures and decreased air quality caused by air pollution are also associated with increased severity of many chronic, noncommunicable diseases, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases (Berrang-Ford et al., 2012). Likewise, mental health is intricately linked with climate stressors in sub-Saharan Africa, as degradation of social and economic structures, increased severity of natural disasters, dwindling access to resources, and rampant food insecurity all contribute to psychological impacts and trauma in many regions (Atwoli et al., 2022; Trudell et al., 2021). Furthermore, it is estimated that 34 percent of global disability-adjusted life years in sub-Saharan Africa are attributed to climate change impacts (Opoku et al., 2021).

Socially vulnerable groups, including youth, the elderly, women, and members of minority or indigenous ethnic groups, may be especially impacted by climate change because of decreased adaptive

capacity, access to resources, and social capital (Islam & Winkel, 2017). Female-headed households may be more vulnerable than male-headed households because of decreased access to resources and economic opportunities that allow for adaptive capacity (Balikoowa et al., 2018; Mugeere et al., 2021). Recognizing these issues, Ugandan policies have articulated the need for gender mainstreaming and for emphasizing the participation of vulnerable groups, especially women and children, when developing climate adaptation and mitigation strategies (Nyasimi et al., 2018).

Youth-informed interventions are especially important in countries such as Uganda, where large population growth has led to a very young national demographic that is already struggling with population displacement and limited occupation opportunities (Mugeere et al., 2021). All of these factors have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which further limits livelihood opportunities for many young people in Uganda, particularly women, those working in the informal economy, and others with low social capital and mobility (Mugeere et al., 2021).

Batwa pygmy communities in rural Uganda also have high sensitivity to climate change because of their low socioeconomic status, continued population displacement, social and political marginalization, and loss of traditional livelihoods, all of which can be further affected by climate-related events such as an increase in the distribution of poor air and water quality, as well as vector-borne and zoonotic diseases (Berrang-Ford et al., 2012). Poverty and climate change thus create a negative feedback loop, where increases in one reinforce structural disparities in the other (Mugeere et al., 2021). Preexisting inequalities may be aggravated by climate change, which are reinforced by deleterious social effects and economic shocks resulting from the current pandemic, increasing the urgency of developing mitigation strategies targeting the most vulnerable populations.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

1. The Government of Uganda, through the Office of the Prime Minister; the Ministry of Water and Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries; and the National

Environment and Management Authority, should make equity and inclusion an explicit objective of Uganda's climate action plan. Existing strategies (e.g., the Ministry of Water and Environment's REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan) should be fully implemented to promote the welfare of indigenous communities.

2. As government agencies, development partners, and civil society organizations develop policies and programs on climate adaptation, they should prioritize the lived experiences of the most geographically and socially marginalized communities (e.g., by surveying them), and ensure they are addressing the potential impacts of climate change on other sectors.

Urbanization

Urbanization remains intricately linked to climate change and climate adaptation strategies. To seek job opportunities and receive increased access to resources and services, more and more people are crowding into urban areas, with more than half the world's population now living in cities (UN, 2016b). One salient factor may be climatic changes leading to an increase in rural–urban migration and in the number of environmental refugees—those who are displaced because climate deterioration has diminished food and water resources in their native areas (Henderson et al., 2017; Barrios et al., 2006). Beyond the aforementioned environmental changes that may affect agricultural production, this rural–urban migration may further diminish agricultural capacity as rural dwellers abandon farming activities to move into urban areas, thus leading to food scarcity and increasing the prevalence of malnutrition in many areas (Leal Filho et al., 2021).

Additionally, the climate variability and shocks, poverty, social conflicts, and economic instability experienced by other rural residents also drive internal youth migration, leading to "youth bulges" in the urban population, with the potential to further impact economic development and increase competition for limited employment opportunities in sub-Saharan African cities (Amare et al., 2021; Urdal & Hoelscher, 2009). These youth bulges are a result of the youth population increasing at a faster rate than the adult population in a country, which is especially salient in sub-Saharan Africa, where the overall population, especially

youth, is growing at an unprecedented speed (Sommers, 2010). One estimate states that approximately 60 percent of the sub-Saharan African population is under the age of 25 (Hussein & Suttie, 2018). Youth migration to cities may also increase urban congestion and put a strain on already limited resources, including public services, housing, energy, sanitation, health infrastructure, and education; as discussed, climate change may decrease the availability of these resources (Amare et al., 2021).

Rapid-paced urbanization, not only of youth, which is taking place in Uganda and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, can pose many risks to already vulnerable populations. In particular, sub-Saharan Africa not only has the highest urban growth rate in the world but also the highest slum growth rate and the highest proportion of slum dwellers in the world (UN Habitat, 2006). Poor urban land planning and management, a lack of public infrastructure, and political conflicts have led to a high prevalence of urban dwellers in East Africa residing in informal settlements or slums, increasing their vulnerability and exposure to adverse climate change impacts, such as climate-induced disasters and food and water scarcity (UN Habitat, 2008). One assessment estimates that 25 percent of Uganda's total population live in urban settings, and 60 percent of the urban-residing population live in informal settlements or slums (Knizek et al., 2021). In Kampala specifically, it is estimated that informal settlements may make up around 21 percent of the city's total area and house up to 39 percent of its population (Dobson et al., 2015).

The urban poor in the sub-Saharan region, especially those living in slums and informal settlements, may be even more vulnerable to temperature and precipitation extremes due to poor access to or poorly designed urban infrastructure and services, ecosystem degradation, and weak institutional systems (Twinomuhangi et al., 2021). Living in poorly planned urban areas with little access to water sanitation systems, health care, and sturdy housing may also increase urban residents' risk of exposure to climate-induced disasters, such as flooding or tropical storms (Dobson et al., 2015; Saghir & Santoro, 2018). Accelerated urban population growth increases energy demand and carbon emissions in cities and urban areas, which further contributes to climate change (Nyangena et al., 2019). Climate change may further reduce availability

and increase the cost of food, water, and energy in urban centers, which will be exacerbated by urban migration triggered by rural climate impacts (Twinomuhangi et al., 2021). Furthermore, living in urban areas may have deleterious effects on health resulting from constrained resources, heat stress, and increased concentration and exposure to air pollutants, as well as severe localized flooding resulting from improper waste management and changing weather patterns (Douglas et al., 2008; Oleson et al., 2015; Twinomuhangi, 2021). Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated social and economic disparities in similar ways to climate change, making climate adaptation and resilience strategies much harder to implement in low-resource contexts, especially in urban areas (Zhang et al., 2021).

However, urbanization presents some opportunities. Urbanization has been linked historically with economic growth and greater access to public services and jobs. For instance, the informal economy is important in many African countries, contributing up to 72 percent of employment. Focusing climate resiliency strategies and inclusive urban expansion on those within the informal economy may contribute to the development of a robust, green economy within Uganda (Smit & Musango, 2015). This could be accomplished by engaging those who work within the informal sector in building green, low-carbon economic infrastructures, which could provide opportunities for increasing social equity, reducing poverty, and encouraging environmentally sustainable development (Smit & Musango, 2015).

Additionally, developing strategies to ensure the health and well-being of those in heavily urbanized areas and informal settlements must also be a national priority to promote this sustainable development. In April of 2020, 15 new cities were approved by Parliament (Haas, 2021). The creation of these cities will aid in slowing the concentrated pace of urbanization in Kampala, decongesting the city and giving disadvantaged populations more of a chance to escape the potentially damaging effects of urbanization. Furthermore, the National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda is a network of urban federations focused on increasing the involvement of residents of low-income and informal urban settlements in planning and developing low-carbon, climate-resilient cities (Dobson et al., 2015).

The energy and innovation that come with a youthful demographic have the potential to encourage positive social changes and the implementation of revitalized urban infrastructure. These aspects could foster inclusive and equitable national development. However, as discussed in the previous section on risks of urbanization, proper planning is key to ensure fair and equitable access to these economic opportunities are available to all.

Implementing climate mitigation and resilience mechanisms presents equitable and inclusive national development opportunities. Many African countries have begun to build capacity in sectors related to mitigation and adaptation strategies by increasing their consumption of renewable energy sources, improving water conservation and management, and implementing climate-smart agriculture—all of which will hopefully mitigate some of the adverse effects of climate change and build greater climate resiliency in both urban and rural areas (Nyiwul, 2021). Given that the energy infrastructure in the sub-Saharan African region is still developing, countries in this region have a unique opportunity to transition early to low-carbon, sustainable alternatives, putting them ahead of higher-income countries that are heavily invested in an energy infrastructure driven by petroleum products that emit greenhouse gasses. The oil and gas sector within Uganda is also rapidly expanding, with implications for both increased industrialization and increased access to energy resources; however, this must be approached with caution to ensure continued equity and sustainable development.

The rapid pace of urbanization in Uganda presents a combination of challenges. For example, it fuels unemployment, stresses sanitation systems, and depletes housing. Rapid urbanization, combined with the stressors arising from anthropogenic climate change, will exacerbate the struggles of impoverished groups and continue the cycle of inequity in which they exist. As the climate crisis worsens, it will become more challenging for those living sustainable lifestyles in rural settings to maintain this approach, leaving them no choice but to seek out resources—particularly food, water, and employment—in urban settings.

In this context, it is necessary to invest in climate resilience and urban expansion strategies focused on increasing community capacity and implementing participatory adaptation mechanisms, recognizing

that communities that bear the biggest burden in these circumstances are those who already experience the greatest divide from privileged populations. The foundation that Uganda lays now for a strategic approach to inclusive urban governance, promoting social belonging, and equitable climate adaptation, will play a significant role in predicting the well-being and cohesiveness of future Ugandans.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

3. The Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development, in line with existing policies, should make equity and inclusion a prominent aspect of Uganda's urbanization strategy, policy, and implementation plan.
4. All urban authorities should improve infrastructure in urban areas, with an emphasis on urban planning and implementation of guidelines within cities (wheelchair ramps, sound signals on traffic lights, disability-friendly and age-friendly public transportation, resources for the hearing/visually impaired and elderly population, biometric machines, national ID cards for the physically disabled, housing, public institutions, public conveniences, education facilities, and accessibility of health facilities).
5. The Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development should build capacity of leaders in urban authorities to implement transparent and participative policy-planning and execution processes to address inequities within urbanization.

Human Capital Development, Employment, and Unemployment

Periods of population growth should ideally translate into periods with the potential for increased overall growth, including access to economic, social, and political opportunities. However, as Figures 5 and 6 show, achieving overall growth does not naturally imply that such opportunities will be inclusive nor equitably distributed. Achieving overall growth is necessary but not sufficient for making growth inclusive (Adedeji, 2013). Inclusion and equity are important because as with the

law of marginal returns, increased inequality may shorten the duration of growth, particularly if access to quality health care and education services is limited or unequally distributed. Growth without equitable access to the health and skills (education) necessary for participating in income-generation activities, in the long run, will not be inclusive (Adeji, 2013).

It is important to bridge gaps in income inequality to ensure that communities have equal opportunities to access and can contribute to national economic, social, and political growth, thereby giving communities dignity and pride in the development agenda. Failing to address inequality or failing to course-correct detrimental development policies not only shortens the length of sustained growth, but may detrimentally distort incentives and thereby undermine growth, even hurting the poor, as evidenced in the Arab Spring (Stevens, 2016).

Uganda's human development index (HDI) value for 2019 was 0.544, which puts the country in the category of low human development, positioning it at 159 out of 189 countries. Between 1990 and 2019, Uganda's HDI value increased by 70 percent, from 0.320 to 0.544. Specifically, life expectancy at birth increased by 17.5 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.4 years, and expected years of schooling increased by 5.7 years. Uganda's gross national income per capita increased by about 138.5 percent between 1990 and 2019.

According to the World Bank, Uganda underinvests in the future productivity of its citizens. A child born in Uganda today will only be 38 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health. Uganda is ranked among the countries in the lowest quartile of the HCI distribution, with an index slightly lower than the average for the sub-Saharan Africa region and below what would be predicted by its income level. Uganda's low ranking in the HCI is mainly due to the country's low education outcomes. A child born today in Uganda is expected to complete only 7 years of education by age 18, compared with a regional average of 8.1 years of education. Because of the low levels of learning achievement in Uganda, this is only equivalent to 4.5 years of learning, with 2.5 years considered as "lost" due to poor quality of education (as shown by the quality-adjusted years of schooling component of the HCI). Uganda's

score on this component is the lowest amongst the comparator countries and below the SSA average (World Bank, 2019d)

Agenda 2030 recognizes that economic growth alone does not lead to poverty eradication or sustainable development. Poverty eradication is only possible through stable and well-paid jobs. With 77 percent of its population under 25 years of age (UBOS, 2020), youth employment and unemployment constitute a major consideration for Uganda's development. NDP III, SDG 8, and Agenda 2063 place a premium on full productive employment. Employment creates a sense of purpose and provides a source of livelihood. Citizens desire to meet their obligations and exercise their right to contribute to the economy through meaningful employment, which will contribute to the national tax base and subsequently support the creation of communities they aspire to work and live in. Decent work creates a pathway for inclusion by enabling people to contribute to their communities (Barford et al., 2021; Carreras et al., 2021). It empowers them economically by providing earnings, an environment for developing skills, and social connections (Koomson et al., 2022). Uganda has promoted employment in value addition across different sectors, including fisheries, forestry, metal works, cotton, and farming, with varying success (Guloba et al., 2021). The greatest employment opportunities are in agriculture—particularly value addition and agribusiness (Guloba et al., 2021).

Approximately 700,000 young people reach working age every year in Uganda. This number will rise to an average of 1 million between 2030 and 2040, which is already creating a mismatch between labor demand and supply. While Uganda's youth are renowned for being highly enterprising, fewer than 4 percent of Ugandans are employers. Fifty-two percent employ themselves, and 43 percent are unpaid family workers. About 77 percent of the population aged 15–64 work. Unemployment lies at 3.2 percent for the adult population and 5.3 percent for youth. The jobs are vary in quality: Only one in five workers are in waged employment, although outside of agriculture, the share is about half in waged work. Most Ugandans (two-thirds) still work for themselves or their families in agriculture. Among youth, three in five work in unpaid occupations, contributing to household enterprises, which are mostly farms.

Additionally, Uganda has one of the highest fertility rates in the world, at 5.91 children per mother. The combination of youthfulness and high fertility translates to rapid growth in the working-age population. This population grew 3.92 percent per annum between 2011 and 2017, faster than gross domestic product growth in 3 of the 6 years from 2012 to 2017 (World Bank, accessed October 23, 2022). It is estimated that an additional 13 million workers will enter the job market by 2030. This, and Uganda's high dependency rate of 1.42 dependents per employed person, mean Uganda has to raise labor productivity while increasing the number of jobs created to match the per capita income growth of other economies with lower rates of dependency.

In spite of these challenging dynamics, Uganda may take advantage of the "demographic dividend for economic growth," as fertility rates decrease and more jobs are created with higher labor productivity for young workers. Secondly, Uganda has a small window in which to trigger labor-intensive economic transformation, based on tradeable goods and services before oil production begins. Success in creating more waged jobs for young Ugandans would generate a growth dividend, whereas failure could lead to frustration among youth and challenge social stability.

TABLE 1 Jobs Strategy for Inclusive Growth

Selected Indicators	NLFS 2016/17	ALFS 2017/18	ALFS 2018/19
Population			
Total population (number '000)	37,730	37.970	39,756
Working age population (number '000)	18,843	19.333	20,219
Proportion of working age population to total population (percent)	49.9	50.9	50.9
Working population			
Size of working population (number '000)	15.290	16,073	16,339
Working population as a proportion of working age population (Percent)	81.1	83.1	80.5
Number of working age population in purely subsistence agriculture, forestry and fishing	6,253	5,967	5,885
Proportion of working age population in purely subsistence agriculture. forestry and fishing	33.2	31.0	29.1
Components of work			
Number			
Employment	8,973	10,023	10,201
Subsistence Agriculture work	6.253	5,987	
Other Forms of Work	63	64	252
Total	15,289	16,073	16,339
Percent			
Employment	58.7	62.4	62.4
Subsistence Agriculture work Other Forms of Work	40.9	37.2	36.0
Total	0.4	0.4	1.5
Status at work	100	100	100

Paid employment	19.5	22.1	18.8
Employer	1.9	1.9	3.5
Own account worker	72.9	65.7	64.7
Contributing family worker	5.4	9.7	8.6
Others	0.4	0.6	4.3
Total	100	100	100
Industry			
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	68.3	65.6	63.5
Trade	9.5	11.4	12.1
Manufacturing	4,7	5.9	5.8
Education	3.6	3.2	3.6
Construction	2.2	2.7	3.0
Transport and storage	2.4	2.5	3.3
Others	9.3	6.7	8.7
Total	100	100	100
Occupation in the main work			
Professionals	3.6	2.9	3.8

SOURCE: Data from World Bank (2020c).

TABLE 2 Working Age, Working, Employed, and Subsistence-Agriculuture Only Populations (ages 14–64), 2019–2020)

	Working Age	Working Population		Population in Employment		Subsistence Agriculture Only	
	No. ('000)	No. ('000)	%	No. ('000)	%	No. ('000)	%
Sex							
Male	10,236	7,991	78.1	4,835	54.7	3,125	39.1
Female	11,136	7,913	71.1	3,447	35.1	4,442	56.1
Residence							
Rural	15,189	11,768	77.5	5,342	39.7	6,388	54.3
Urban	6,183	4,136	66.9	2,940	56.8	1,179	28.5
Subregions							
Kampala	1,089	642	59	630	71.6	11	1.7
Central1	2,902	2,130	73.4	1,490	60.2	628	29.5
Central2	2,234	1,759	78.7	1,225	62	529	30.1
Busoga	1,910	1,552	81.3	618	35.8	930	59.9
Bukedi	1,171	907	77.5	360	35.1	546	60.1
Elgon	1,102	770	69.9	320	33.1	448	58.3
Teso	1,096	885	80.7	428	43.3	453	51.2
Karamoja	514	342	66.7	239	54.4	103	30.1
Lango	1,297	905	69.7	184	16.7	717	79.2
Acholi	922	521	56.5	143	19.8	378	72.5
West Nile	1,583	1,272	80.4	758	53.4	505	39.7
Bunyoro	1,315	1,050	79.8	381	32.3	669	63.7
Tooro	1,600	1,196	74.7	484	33.7	711	59.4
Ankole	1,781	1,356	76.1	723	46.3	622	45.9
Kigezi	854	617	72.2	299	40.3	317	51.4
Education Attainment							
No formal education	2,263	1,756	77.6	868	44.1	885	44.9
Some primary	8,577	6,533	76.2	2,780	36	3,741	48.5
Completed primary	2,800	2,155	77	1,119	45	1,029	41.3

Some secondary	3,911	2,665	68.1	1,434	43.9	1,222	37.4
Completed secondary	1,775	1,350	76	915	58.8	426	27.4
Postsecondary and above	1,674	1,283	76.7	1,089	76.1	184	12.8
Age groups							
14–17	4,034	2,105	52.2	297	9.3	1,797	85.4
18–30	7,831	5,637	72	2,927	42.9	2,678	47.5
31–64	9,507	8,162	85.9	5,059	58.6	3,092	37.9
15–24	7,534	4,647	61.7	1,570	25.3	3,041	65.4
15–35	12,851	9,020	70.2	4,387	39.6	4,588	50.9
National	21,372	15,904	74.4	8,285	44.5	7,566	47.6

SOURCE: Data from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (https://www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/22).

TABLE 3 Key Labor Market Indicators of Working Population (ages 14–64) by Sex and Residence

Selected Labor Market Indicators	**2012/13**			**2016/17**				
	Male	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Total**
Working age population (000)	7,850	8,652	16,502	8,965	10,139	13,803	5,301	19,104
Working population (000)	6,827	7,069	13,896	7,397	7,656	11,395	3,658	15,053
Subsistence agriculture (000)	2,517	3,493	6,009	2,310	3,604	5,373	541	5,915
Percentage in subsistence agriculture only (%)	36.9	49.4	43.2	31.2	47.1	47.2	14.8	39.3

SOURCE: Data from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (https://www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/22).

TABLE 4 Externalized Migrant Workers by Sex, 2016–2020

Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	2,035	2,126	6,196	7,758	3,577
Female	504	2,991	14,808	17,605	5,449
Total	2,539	5,117	21,004	25,363	9,026

SOURCE: Data from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (https://www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/22).

TABLE 5 Number of Pensions by Category and Sex, 2019–2020

	2019				2020			
Pension Category	Female	Male	Total	Average Monthly Pension "Billion"	Female	Male	Total	Average Monthly Pension "Billion"
Teachers	5,347	14,987	20,334	7.7	6,701	17,918	24,619	9.4
Traditional Civil Servants	6,990	25,184	32,174	12.6	8,527	29,241	37.768	14.6
Grand Total	**12,337**	**40,171**	**52,508**	**20.3**	**15,228**	**47,159**	**62,387**	**24**

SOURCE: Uganda Bureau of Statistics website https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/statistics/Number_of_Pensioners_by_Category_and_Sex_in_2019_to_2020.xlsx.

TABLE 6 Size of the Civl Service 2015–2020

Groups	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% change
Traditional civil service (inc. support staff)	22,455	22,965	21,734	**22,145**	22,312	22,642	2
Teaching service	164,995	159,690	159,670	**159,866**	169,920	170,791	1
Police and Prisons	49,221	53,078	53,293	**52,870**	50,555	56,281	11
Public Universities	6,379	6,453	5,835	**6,754**	6,937	7,102	2
Local Governments	57,322	66,265	68,221	**70,743**	70,349	72,817	4
Total	**300,372**	**308,451**	**308,753**	**312,379**	**320,073**	**329,633**	**3**

SOURCE: Ministry of Public Service website, accessed October 2022.

While these data are sobering, unemployment continues to increase, providing v. a vivid manifestation of inequity and exclusion in Uganda. The International Labor Organization (ILO) outlines four pillars of decent work that Uganda use to address the unemployment disaster:

1. Job creation—No one should be barred from their desired work by a lack of employment opportunities.
2. Rights at work, including minimum wage—Workers' rights include the right to just and favorable conditions, days off, 8-hour workdays, nondiscrimination, and living wages for workers and their families, among other rights.
3. Social protection—All workers should have safe working conditions, adequate free time and rest, and access to benefits like health care, pension, and parental leave, among many protections.
4. Social dialogue—Workers should be able to exercise workplace democracy and negotiate their workplace conditions through unions, as well as national and international labor and development policies, ILO, accessed October 23, 2022.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the impact of COVID-19 is not gender neutral because it affects men and women differently; "therefore, we must not be gender blind in our response to the pandemic, or else women will carry a disproportionately higher economic cost than men" (Durant & Coke-Hamilton, 2020). It is widely known that "women earn less, save less; hold less secure jobs, and are more likely to be employed in the informal sector" (UN, 2020). In many countries, women's presence in the labor market is often in the form of temporary or informal employment. Studies show that 740 million women globally work in the informal economy, and in developing countries like Uganda, informal work covers 70 percent of women's employment. Informal jobs are more likely to face extinction during economic crises (UN, 2020); thus, informal workers are more vulnerable to economic shocks brought by crises (Zarilli & Aydiner-Avsar, 2020). The combination of this with other factors make women more vulnerable to the crisis of economic inequality exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to CARE International (2020), COVID-19 increased women's and girls' unpaid care burden. Gender division of labor assigns females more home chores than it does males. This burden is rooted in prevailing social norms that place the burden of family care responsibilities on women and girls. Globally, women "[shoulder] an estimated three times more the amount of unpaid care and domestic work than men" (Parsitau, 2021). As will be mentioned in the section on education, school closure in Uganda increased the burden of caring for children on women. *The Parents' Boost Guide* designed by the Ministry of Education and Sports demanded that parents tutor their children, help them understand learning-packet material, and be available to listen to radio and television teaching programs aired for learning purposes. These roles added to women's domestic workload (CARE International, 2020).

In addition, the nature of occupations common among women exposed them to unique hardships during the pandemic. For instance, female market vendors who had to sleep in markets (as mandated to avoid taking any acquired infections home) had an added burden of caring for young babies in the market. As another important example, around the world, women make up 70 percent of the health care workforce, and more women are engaged in support jobs at health centers than men (UN, 2020). In other words, many women have served at the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many were exposed to increased stress from fear of getting infected and infecting their family members.

The UN (2020) policy guide advises governments and the general population to ensure progress in safeguarding gender equality, and see that social and economic interventions for the effects of the pandemic do not reverse the gain realized in recent decades. UNCTAD cautions against making the mistakes made during the "aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis," when "measures were provided to large infrastructure projects that mainly employed men, while jobs were cut in teaching, nursing and public services, all female-intensive sectors" (Durant & Coke-Hamilton, 2020, UNCTAD2020, p. 31). This time, women should be equally represented in all response planning and decision-making; paid and unpaid work should be given equal focus (UN, 2020). Support measures should go beyond workers with formal employment to include informal, part-time, and seasonal workers—the majority of whom are

women (Zarilli & Aydiner-Avsar, 2020). Furthermore, the narrative should not focus on women and girls as mere victims and vulnerable groups but should also regard them as leaders and problem solvers in communities (UN, 2020). In fact, "given both their vulnerability and frontline roles during the pandemic, women must be at the center of the COVID-19 recovery reconstruction" (Parsitau 2021).

For decades, the need to relieve women from unpaid domestic work could be achieved by changing social and gender norms around the home care economy. There was also the need to implement flexible working hours for women and to give them better pay (Parsitau, 2021). Indeed, the current flexibility in work arrangements due to the pandemic could provide a way to create new models of shared household responsibilities (Zarilli & Aydiner-Avsar, 2020). Likewise, the pandemic can be considered an opportunity to implement a change of systems within the framework of equity and inclusion. Success in managing the aftereffects of the pandemic will be achieved by including everyone equally. Women, men, boys, and girls should take part in creating and shaping the new social and economic order and increase accountability, efficiency, and sustainability.

The working population in Uganda appears to be underperforming in terms of its potential ability to contribute to national development. According to the 2019 Uganda Board of Statistics Statistical Abstract, Uganda's working-age population was estimated to be 19,104,000, of which 78.8 percent were working, with 43.2 percent (approximately 6,500,000 Ugandans) of the working population engaged in subsistence agriculture (UBOS, 2019).

> "To borrow a well-worn cliché, the education system produces job seekers instead of job creators—and they are not very good. Unchecked, the working-age population, which grew at around four percent per annum between 2011 and 2017, will bulge into job seekers, creating more pressure."
>
> —*Monitor*, 2020

> "Most of Uganda's labor force remains employed in low productivity activities, particularly in the subsistence agricultural sector. Most productive, rapidly expanding economic sectors are often more capital intensive than labor-intensive and employ only a small proportion of the workforce. Urban citizens are mostly used in the informal sector (underemployed in low-quality jobs). The concern here is the growth rate of Uganda's labor force, at 4% annually. Uganda can add 10 million potential workers into the labor market by 2020, adding to the challenge of creating goods jobs and achieving equitable growth."
>
> —Rachel Sebudde, Uganda World Bank Senior Economist

Even within formal organizations, ensuring equity and inclusion remains a challenge (Ely & Thomas, 2020). This inequity creates a culture of skewed incentives that affect productivity, including a lack of transparency, lack of psychological safety, low morale, reduced productivity, risk to the brand, and the loss of the opportunity for learning and individual growth. These aspects can be observed across both the public and the private workforce in Uganda, which is declining in quality because of reducing morale and incentives. Ugandan employers have increased training opportunities to increase employee engagement and performance. However, such training has yet to result in the desired results (Changha et al., 2020; Sendawula et al., 2018). Without other actions to demonstrate that employers value and respect their employees, training does little to promote belonging (Ely &Thomas, 2020).

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

6. The Committee reechoes the International Labor Organization Recommendation 204 on the transition from informal to formal employment, which states the goal of increasing the quality of all forms of employment and enabling government investments to strengthen decent rural employment opportunities at all stages of the value chain, while adequately enabling maximum gains and opportunities for goods and services produced in the

informal sector.

7. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, along with the private sector and civil society actors, should be concerted in their actions to create an enabling environment for youth and women to secure their livelihoods. That enabling environment includes developing policies; harnessing technologies; advancing innovation; guaranteeing safe and secure environments; and providing access to productive resources, technical, vocational, education, and further training (e.g., financial and digital literacy); providing public goods; and creating decent and safe jobs.
8. The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development should strengthen platforms through which communities and civil society actors can enhance intergenerational and cross-gender cohesion and partnership within their communities.

SELECTED UGANDAN REFORMS AND POLICIES FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION

To build on the cursory overview of belonging in the preceding sections, the Committee now focuses on examples of policies formulated by the Ugandan government to address inequity and exclusion. A close examination of these policies reveals that, although they aspired, in principle, to promote equity and inclusion, they also inhibited national development by furthering historical systems of oppression and bias. Their mixed results (Golooba-Mutebi & Hickey, 2010; Hickey, 2013; Wiegratz, 2010) provide valuable insights to guide future policy formulation and implementation.

Insights from the Agriculture Sector

Policy interventions in Africa have consistently recognized the importance of agriculture to continental and national development. Despite the introduction of multiple agricultural development programs, agriculture has yet to actualize its potential as a driver of development in Uganda (Rwamigisa et al., 2018; Ssennoga et al., 2019; Warinda et al., 2020). The challenges facing agricultural development in Africa and Uganda include limited to poor access to credit, poor access to agricultural extension services, poorly implemented government programs, insecurity, unpredictable weather patterns, land ownership, and poor access to quality inputs (Bamwesigye et al., 2020; Mwaura & Muwanika, 2018; Rwamigisa et al., 2018; Shiferaw et al., 2015). These challenges trace back to the market liberalization policies pursued across Africa in the late 1980s (Mawejje et al., 2013), which promoted state-led development and exacerbated market failures. The failures of liberalization resulted in growing pressures for governments and international agencies not only to do more for agriculture, but to do it differently and to do it fast. (Kirsten et al., 2009).

For example, reforms in Uganda's coffee sector provide a lens through which to consider Uganda's policies based on an inclusive

neoliberalism approach to development. The reforms, which started in the late 1980s and continued through the mid-1990s, consisted of strategy and policy changes in how Uganda produced, marketed, and regulated the coffee sector seasons (Baffes, 2007). The Ugandan government, which had controlled the coffee sector since before independence, gradually liquidated its assets and ceded its control in 1992 to the Coffee Marketing Board, which was replaced by the Uganda Coffee Development Authority (Akiyama et al., 2001; Baffes, 2007; Okidi & Guloba, 2006). Farmers' cooperative unions, which had functioned as state-influenced entities that promoted the government's dictates, also became largely irrelevant (Wanyama et al., 2009; Pollet, 2009). The state had to exit the sector since the neoliberal approach to development, primarily backed by the Bretton Woods Institutions in the form of structural adjustment programs, sought to extinguish perceived inefficiencies of state monopolies (Wanyama et al., 2009), and to establish competition and market efficiencies to improve economic returns for both the farmers and the nation (Kuteesa et al., 2010; Okidi & Guloba, 2006).

Indeed, before these reforms, coffee farmers received less than 15 percent of the market rates for coffee (Baffes, 2007), which only decreased during long years of conflict. The farmers incurred state-imposed financial and legal controls (Wanyama et al., 2009) and seldom profited from producing coffee, despite guaranteed minimum rates for their goods (Bussolo et al., 2007). Under the reforms, smallholder farmers got market prices for their produce during peak market seasons (Baffes, 2007; Henstridge & Kasekende, 2001). New actors also entered the coffee sector, which increased competition and production (Kiiza et al., 2006). With these results, policy changes seemed to work (Mawejje & Odhiambo, 2021; Wedig & Wiegratz, 2018) and correct historical imbalances, notably since smallholder farmers and other actors received more economic returns from participating in this lucrative sector. They also had positive spillover effects on the rest of Uganda's agricultural sector and sustained poverty reduction (Bussolo et al., 2007)

However, when global prices of coffee started to fall between 1997 and 2001 (Baffes, 2007; Bussolo et al., 2007), smallholder farmers and new private actors experienced a steady drop in their earnings. Production declined without the previous minimum price set by the state

and with low returns from selling coffee (Krivonos, 2004). Exposure to price fluctuations in global markets harmed the very communities that the reforms (and their attendant policies) sought to uplift from poverty, making them vulnerable anew (Hill, 2010; Wiegratz, 2010). With this new economic uncertainty, smallholder farmers chose not to make any new investments in coffee (Baffes, 2007; Boussolo et al., 2007; Hill, 2010).

Moreover, the farmers had neither avenues to receive timely price information nor the ability to plan for global shocks (Krivonos, 2004; Wiegratz, 2010). Even when global prices increased, production remained low, as the farmers could not tolerate the perceived risk levels in the coffee sector (Baffes, 2007; Hill, 2010). Besides the uncertainty arising from global price volatility, farmers were exposed to powerful intermediaries and other traders, who bought coffee from the farmers at arbitrary rates lower than market rates (Wedig & Wiegratz, 2018; Wiegratz, 2010). These power and information asymmetries revived a horrid past characterized by inequity and exclusion. The government's reforms, then, ended up achieving the opposite of their intended purpose, engaging in a form of national self-sabotage.

Even though the discussion in this section presents a bleak picture of reforms in a particular sector, Follet (2009), Wanyama et al. (2009), and Wedig and Wiegratz (2018) provide a possible pathway to creating cohesion and a sense of belonging within farming communities. They rely on evidence from research on the resurgence of cooperative unions in Uganda's agricultural sector. These new and emerging unions function as independent platforms through which their members (especially smallholder farmers in rural areas) assert their rights collectively, receive protection from powerful intermediaries, and bargain for competitive prices. The members agree on a plan and priority actions for improving their welfare through agricultural investments and a sense of collective insurance from market forces beyond their control. Members of a cooperative benefit from implicit and explicit interdependence, commonality of purpose, proportional distribution of profits, social services in which the cooperative invests, and protection from market oppressors. In this way, members have the motivation to cohere around a sustainable idea and the spirit of their cooperative, which forms the basis of belonging to achieve communal development goals.

The Karamoja Cattle Corridor

The livestock subsector contributes about 8 percent of Uganda's gross domestic product (GDP). Pastoralists hold the majority of the cattle in Uganda and produce a great percentage of the country's milk and beef. Despite their significant contribution to the GDP, pastoralist communities are among the poorest Ugandans, with high rates of infant and maternal mortality, low levels of literacy, and limited political participation. Karamoja has historically been viewed as a violent, underdeveloped, peripheral area since the colonial era (IARAN, 2017). In addition, they are often regarded poorly by both government and their fellow citizens, given that pastoralism is considered by many Ugandans to be a backward or declining livelihood with a limited future and headed toward a more or less inevitable transition to ranching, farming, or other alternative livelihoods (USAID, 2011).

A corridor can be defined as a geographic point of entry between any two tribal or ethnic groups (Akabwai, 2021). Corridors have existed for centuries and allow for the successful sharing of water, pasture, salt licks, and other resources. When peace prevails, these corridors often serve as places where the neighboring communities can come together to share pasture and water, gather fruits, perform rituals, and engage in trade. Regarding pastoral livelihoods, these are vital passages where the livestock of one community can safely transit after having been granted grazing rights on the neighbors' side of the border (Akabwai, 2021). However, cooperation in the cattle corridor is only possible if peace prevails. It is therefore critical that the government enacts policies and practices that promote inclusive communities and that community leaders and local politicians be at the forefront of cross-border peace-building activities. These efforts will promote resource sharing and support communities in building resilience in times of calamity—for example, in periods of severe drought.

Despite its economic contributions, the pastoralism sector in Uganda continues to face several challenges, including demographic change, land rights, and the gazetting of land for protected areas and mineral exploration, as well as landscape conversion and fencing for areas under development. Uganda's rapidly growing population has expanded the land under cultivation, disrupting pastoralists' traditional

access to pasture and water—and, increasingly, bringing them into conflict with farmers. As a result, pastoralists have sometimes moved from conflict to conflict. Land disputes have overwhelmed the already weak and overburdened court system, which many citizens perceive to be corrupt (USAID, 2011). If not addressed, these challenges will perpetuate conflict and hinder initiatives of the government and development partners to implement development programs in the region. Therefore, local traditional leaders and administration representatives, as well as civil society, have a collective role to play in developing a consultation framework that brings together conflict-affected territories so as to improve mediation and mutual understanding. This will not only promote peace but also reduce the burden on the court system.

Pastoralists endure difficult living conditions. However, the situation in Karamoja is far more challenging in terms of culture, livelihoods, security, national policy, climate change, and conflict. The inhabitants of Karamoja, known collectively and generically as the "Karamojong," are made up primarily of three ethnicities: the Dodoso, Jie, and Karimojong, the latter of which subdivides into a number of sections, including the Bokora, Matheniko, and Pian. The arid and drought-prone environment of much of Karamoja has made food security and survival difficult and challenging for these groups (USAID, 2011). Over the years, drought has led to weathering and drying of crops in the Karamoja cattle corridor, resulting in poor yields, leading to a shortage of food at the household level: people will have little or nothing to eat and their bodies will be weak, which will limit their participation in income-generating activities, thus contributing to a vicious cycle of food insecurity and poverty. Moreover, early action and response from the government and development actors is important in strengthening the resilience of the region in such times. The question then is how all the above challenges can be addressed collectively to promote equitable and inclusive development in Karamoja.

According to USAID (2011), the Ugandan government launched a series of disarmament campaigns in 1984, 1987, and 2001, and efforts since 2006 are ongoing in response to the violent raiding in Karamoja and its neighboring districts. Even though the disarmament campaigns were initially voluntary, they later on evolved into forcible disarmament, during which armed violence and raiding escalated in many places before

subsiding. This period was also associated with widespread human rights violations, livestock destruction, and food insecurity (Human Rights Watch, 2007; Muhereza, 2019). Meanwhile, increasing numbers of weapons seem to be crossing the border from South Sudan, increasing criminality and cattle raiding (IARAN, 2017); indeed, possession of guns is one of the biggest threats to peace and development in Uganda. The members of Parliament from the Karamoja, Acholi, Teso, Lango, and Bugisu subregions report an unprecedented resurgence of cattle rustling due to the rise in the number of guns and open markets for their sale (Murami, 2022). In a joint press conference held on Thursday, 31 March 2022, at Parliament, the lawmakers dismissed a statement from the spokesperson for the Uganda People's Defence Forces that claimed that the region of Karamoja is now calm. As long as the local communities still possess guns, peace and development will remain elusive. Past campaigns have shown that a weapon-free Karamoja cattle corridor is possible through step-by-step disarmament; however, more needs to be done to implement campaigns based on mutual trust and mutual benefit. These actions require strong political will and mindset shifts, including a strategic focus on behavioral change.

In 2009, to deal with the problems of Karamoja in a more integrated fashion, President Museveni appointed his wife, Janet Museveni, as state minister for Karamoja. Under the Karamoja Action Plan for Food Security for 2010–2015, the government aimed to improve water availability, increase crop and livestock production, restore degraded natural resources, improve storage facilities, promote markets, and build the capacities of indigenous stakeholders. However, according to former local officials and church leaders, the government must overcome a legacy of severe mistrust. In addition to the abuses of the military, the people of Karamoja feel that the government has made repeated promises of reform and assistance without fulfilling them (USAID, 2011). It is, therefore, critical to note that trust is the foundation upon which the legitimacy of democratic institutions rests (OECD, 2021). The erosion of trust challenges the government's capacity to implement policies to carry out reforms, especially in situations that require behavioral and attitudinal change. Therefore, the government must explore various ways to build and strengthen trust to successfully implement reforms in the Karamoja cattle corridor.

Uganda adopted and has aligned its national development goals to Agenda 2030, which calls for action to address inequalities and inequities in opportunity, wealth, and power (UN, 2015). Many development interventions have been undertaken by government and development partners in Karamoja in the aftermath of the government proclamation of a successful forceful disarmament in July 2010 (Muhereza, 2019). Livelihood conditions in postdisarmament Karamoja today are much better than they were 10 years ago. For example, Moroto and Nakapiripirit district towns are accessible by tarmac road from Soroti; in addition, Abim and Amudat have been connected to the national electricity grid. The local economy has grown, is still growing, and is expected to continue to improve (Levine, 2016; Marshak et al., 2017; Stites et al., 2017; Vondal et al., 2019). Nonetheless, little seems to have changed in terms of the overall recovery of the livelihoods of the ordinary Karimojong. In the 2016/17 Uganda National Household Survey, Karamoja had the highest poverty incidence in Uganda, with 61 percent of its people considered income poor, compared to a national average of 27 percent. As we appreciate the equity gaps in the Karamoja region, there is a need for the government, development partners, beneficiary communities, and civil society to explore policy options consistently and collaboratively, in order to achieve sustainable development. Leaders need to make the hard choices to meet the varying and unique levels of need to ensure that the Karamoja region is at the same pace of development as compared with other regions.

Waiswa et al. (2019) acknowledge the greater government recognition of pastoralism in Uganda. Although misunderstandings persist about the nature and rationale of the pastoral production system, some pastoralists are becoming members of parliament (MPs) and ministers, and powerful in business. At the same time, there is an emergence of a pastoral civil society movement. This provides an avenue for these actors to engage in policy formulation and advocacy for continued recognition of pastoralism as a way of life and the right of pastoralists to benefit from natural and local resources.

In December 2018, the local governments of Karamoja issued a joint statement calling for investments in water infrastructure and other such investments as veterinary services to enable increased livestock production as part of the efforts to address the problem of persistent

food insecurity in the region. One of the main recommendations of this statement reads: "development plans in Karamoja should ensure that the pastoral way of life of the Karamojong people is maintained for sustainable livelihoods development" (IWGIA, 2019).

Until recently, government policies have, in general, been in favor of pastoralism. Current laws and provisions about land, property rights, conservation laws, and mining laws guarantee the rights of pastoralists. In 2013, for instance, the National Land Policy articulated the government's commitment to protecting the land resources of pastoralists. It also ensured that pastoral lands held, owned, and controlled by pastoral communities got registered under customary tenure (IWGIA, 2019).

Despite government efforts to promote peace and sustainable development in the Karamoja cattle corridor, its position on pastoralism, which is the main economic activity that still remains unclear. Today, pastoralism in its various forms and as a main source of income is in steady decline (Caravani, 2019; Lind et al., 2020; Randall, 2015), with mostly transhumant pastoralism and small-scale agropastoralism prevailing (Lind et al., 2020). The Government of Uganda is sending very mixed messages regarding pastoralism in Karamoja (Datzberg, 2022). On paper, policies create an enabling environment and appear to support pastoralists (Byakagaba et al., 2018; MAAIF, 2018). In practice, however, the Government of Uganda communicates strategies to abolish pastoralism and promote sedentary agriculture as a source of sustainable livelihood in Karamoja (*Daily Monitor*, 2019).

In addition, various nongovernmental actors, including religious and humanitarian organizations, have encouraged sedentarization of the Karamojong. Recently this trend has changed among some but not all development actors (Waiswa et al., 2019), in view of the many ecological, economic, social, and cultural losses caused by depastoralization (Caravani, 2019). Representatives of pastoralist groups and experts in the field (FAO, 2018; Krätli, 2019; Oxfam International, 2008) see pastoralism (not just in Karamoja) as the most sustainable, if not realistic, strategy for survival for societies in the East African region struggling with the consequences of climate change. The Government of Uganda's view of pastoralism as an archaic and outdated livelihood is perceived by many in Karamoja to be a condescending and unrealistic posture that discourages cooperation. If not handled well and targeted

toward areas clearly suitable for agriculture, efforts by the Government of Uganda to promote a shift from pastoralism to agriculture, however reasonable as an alternative development strategy over the long term, may in fact increase tensions (IWGIA, 2019; USAID, 2011).

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

9. Through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, the government should establish partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations to enhance the delivery of agricultural extension and technical services.
10. Through the Ministry of Karamoja Affairs and relevant stakeholders, the government should commission a comprehensive study to develop and implement a peace plan for the Karamoja cattle region. Past efforts to ensure peace in this region should provide the context for such a study.

Insights from the Water–Energy–Food Nexus

Uganda is confronted with the challenge of managing resources effectively to better achieve sustainable outcomes, such as those emphasized by the global community in the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015). Water, energy, and food are among the most vital resources for people's well-being. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, water, energy, and food security are very much linked to one another; therefore, actions in one area subsequently affect one or both areas. The water–energy–food (WEF) nexus approach aims to identify trade-offs and synergies of water, energy, and food systems; internalize social and environmental impacts; and guide development of cross-sectoral policies. However, while the WEF nexus offers a promising conceptual approach, methods for evaluating WEF interlinkages systematically or for supporting development of socially and politically relevant resource policies remain limited (Albrecht et al., 2018)

Scarcity of water and energy are severe in many parts of the world, and it is estimated that 1.6 billion people are already "under severe water stress"; 1.2 billion face "medium water stress," while 1.1 billion lack

access to modern energy service (Lele et al., 2013). The WEF nexus recognizes water, energy, and food systems as both interconnected and interdependent (Bazilian et al., 2011; Foran, 2015; Wolfe et al., 2016). It is generally accepted that understanding the interconnectedness of the three resources contributes to sustainable development (Durodola et al., 2020), given that demand for one resource influences demand for another, and increase in the cost of one or two affects the production of the others (Gulati et al., 2013).

Increasing Access to Water

The fresh water resources of Uganda are considered to be an important strategic resource, crucial for sustaining life, advancing development, and maintaining the environment (Kiggundu 2017). Access to clean and safe water and better sanitation facilities and practices are fundamentals of a healthy population. They directly impact quality of life and productivity of the people. Water plays a very significant role in national socioeconomic development and poverty eradication, since it is vital for power generation, agriculture, waste discharge, industrial water supply, and more. The main goal of the water sector in Uganda should therefore be to manage and develop the water resources in an integrated and sustainable manner, so as to secure and provide water of adequate quantity and quality for all social and economic needs for the present and future generations, with the full participation of all stakeholders.

The unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 in December 2019 called for interventions to address and improve behavioral practices (Chan et al., 2020; Jahangiry et al., 2020), one of which is handwashing (Sempewo et al., 2021). However, implementing this practice is challenging for people in remote areas where water is not readily available or where water supply is not guaranteed. The COVID-19 pandemic increased the need for water and created a dilemma for areas where physical and economic access to water was already a problem. Moreover, clean water supply remains a challenge in rural areas in Uganda (Naiga et al., 2015). This problem is a result of limited resources and skilled personnel, mismanagement, and poor accountability of public funds (Calow et al., 2010). In urban areas, proper hygiene can be compromised when residents pay high prices for water (Naiga et

al., 2015), forcing them to restrict water use and facilitating the spread of viruses and bacteria that cause life-threatening diseases like cholera. Public emergencies can arise when outbreaks of these diseases are not detected early. In addition, limited quantities of water can negatively affect food availability, especially in water-stressed areas of Uganda such as Karamoja, thereby worsening the food security status.

According to the Borgen Project, 8 million Ugandans lack access to safe water, and 19 percent have access to only unsafe water (ponds, streams, and hand-dug wells are their sources of drinking water), while 32 percent have to travel long distances to access safe water. Lack of safe water and water for food production remains a major impediment to equitable development. According to Naiga et al. (2015), while rural safe water coverage has slightly improved, the operation and maintenance of water sources pose great challenges to long-term access to safe water. Durodola et al. (2020) argue that Uganda needs to embrace climate-resilient technologies—for example, harvesting rainwater so as to overcome water scarcity and food insecurity. While water harvesting in rural areas is encouraged as a means of improving safe water access and sustainability, poor households with grass-thatched houses are unable to harvest appreciable volumes of rainwater. In addition, iron sheet–roofed rural houses are small on average, with limited iron sheet coverage, which would harvest insufficient rainwater for an average household of six people (Asiimwe & Naiga, 2015).

The Uganda National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC), the largest water entity, was formed by decree No. 34 in 1972 to serve the urban areas, including Kampala, Entebbe, and Jinja. Over time, the corporation widened its geographical reach, and other towns in Uganda have been added subsequently to benefit from the water services. Despite NWSC's extensive geographical reach, many regions in Uganda still face severe water stress. For example, research shows that in Rakai district, only 36 percent of the population in the district has access to safe water (MWE, 2020). Shallow wells are the most common source of water, followed by deep bore holes—water from these ground sources is saline (Kamya et al., 2021) and is not safe for human consumption.

According to Asiimwe and Naiga (2015), the NWSC implements a uniform tariff structure for each consumer category in order to ensure equity in supply and pricing. However, water tariffs are still high for

the rural and urban poor, which further hinders affordability. Moreover, water access and distribution show gender configurations, especially in rural areas, because of patriarchal systems that assign roles to gender, with daily chores such as fetching water and firewood being the responsibility of women and girls. This gender configuration not only constrains women and girls, as the bulk of their valuable time is spent traveling long distances and lining up in queues in search of water, but also impacts their health and well-being in the long run. Women's loss of valuable productive time in search of water undermines their engagement in other activities, some of which would increase their productivity and income-generation potential. Despite the rhetoric about addressing this dynamic and the existence of the regulatory framework to facilitate women's participation within demand-driven water governance, female participation has remained low (Naiga et al., 2015; Prokopy, 2004). For example, an analysis of 50 water-user committees in the Isingiro and Kigarama districts of western Uganda reveals that women's participation in water-user committees both in terms of quality (positions) and quantity (numbers) is far below the stipulated 50 percent (Naiga & Penker, 2014).

The government initiated reforms in the water sector in 1997, to ensure that water services are provided and managed with increased efficiency and cost effectiveness (Kiggundu, 2017). Efforts to improve water and sanitation have taken place in the context of broad institutional and economic reforms, including a shift from project-based planning to a sector-wide approach to planning; a shift in construction to management by the private sector, in some cases; a shift in the role of government from service provider to policy maker; and decentralized service delivery, particularly of rural water supplies and sanitation (Kiggundu, 2017). These changes followed the recognition of the disadvantages of implementing development activities through discrete projects, as well as problems associated with coordinating a sector that is still heavily dependent on external support (Robinson, 2002).

Interventions for water scarcity include the Water for People Project, which provides water services in Kamwenge and Luuka districts. The project uses water as a business model to ensure sustainability (Water for People, Uganda, accessed October 23, 2022). Additionally, there is the Uganda Filter Project, whose water projects are mostly implemented

in refugee camps, among other initiatives. Since September 2019, the Ministry of Water and Environment has undertaken several programs aimed at improving livelihoods through water for production. These programs were designed to promote the development and utilization of water resources for productive use in crop irrigation, livestock, aquaculture, rural industries, and other commercial uses. Significant effort has been put in the construction and rehabilitation of earth dams and valley tanks across the country, especially along the cattle corridor, to increase water storage. To minimize dependency on rain-fed agriculture, irrigation schemes have been reconstructed or rehabilitated, all aiming at increasing water coverage for crop production, livestock, and human consumption (MWE, 2019). However, this project has faced a number of challenges, which has reduced anticipated benefits, the biggest being climate change, which necessitates more water for production, in the face of limited resources. For example, according to the National Irrigation Policy, the Ugandan irrigation potential is 3.03 million hectares, but substantial investment in irrigation is required to meet this potential.

Safe water for all without discrimination is a human right, officially recognized by the United Nations in 2010 (WHO, 2019). Achieving equitable access to water for consumption and production requires a holistic approach. First, it needs to integrate solutions for access to water for both consumption and production. While popular demand, and the attention of the authorities, is usually stronger for water for consumption than for production, integrating these solutions for access needs will ensure sustainability. In addition, the government and private sector should devise a range of policy options to address the different dimensions of equitable access—including geographical disparities, specific barriers faced by vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women and girls, and affordability concerns.

Increasing Access to Energy

Energy plays a crucial role in the development and sustainability of a country's economy, as it drives all other sectors of the economy, including food, health, the environment, and water, among others. In addition, the future economic growth of a nation is said to be guaranteed

when there is a continuous energy supply that is ecofriendly, sustainable, affordable, and accessible (Fashina et al., 2019). Current and anticipated trends of energy poverty are alarming and show that increasing access to energy is critical to achieving equitable and inclusive development. A wide range of technologies is available not only to scale up energy, but also to foster the use of clean energy. However, in many developing countries such as Uganda, the main obstacle to uptake is the lack of financing models that make energy accessible and affordable to low-income consumers (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, access to electricity is at 43 percent, compared with the global access rate of 87 percent. Electricity reaches only about half of people in this region, while energy for clean cooking reaches only one-third: roughly 600 million people lack electricity, and 890 million cook with traditional fuels (IEA, 2018). Moreover, the access rate in rural Africa is at 25 percent (World Bank, 2018).

Access to energy services is crucial to meet basic household needs, deliver and access public services, and generate income. The success and productivity of the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) depend on the quality and quantity of the available energy in the least developed countries (Fashina et al., 2019). Therefore, an increase in the accessibility of affordable and clean energy in most parts of Africa is vital to the political and socioeconomic growth of the continent.

The endorsement of the energy policy (power subsector reform program) by the Government of Uganda in 2002 made provision for the introduction of diversification in the nation's energy mix (Mawejje et al., 2013). The reform program aimed at providing a sufficient, consistent, and cost-effective power supply to meet the country's demand, promoting the efficient operation of the power sector and scaling up rural and suburban access to maximize the impact on poverty reduction. One of the key policy principles (Clause 3.3[8]) is stakeholder participation and the poor, which encourages the participation of communities in renewable energy projects and indicates that these should take into account the needs of the poor. Furthermore, as a policy objective, the document sought to mainstream gender and poverty issues in renewable energy development strategies to improve the socioeconomic well-being of women and the poor in general. It is important also to note that

the policy establishes the Rural and Urban-Poor Electrification Access Programme (Clause 4.2), which seeks to improve already existing procedures within the regions where the cost of connection needs to be subsidized, and acknowledges that bringing electricity to rural and urban-poor population requires special packages to make connection and services affordable. This has led to the implementation of major structural changes in the energy sector.

Additionally the Government of Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan also includes energy as an integral part of its plan because the recurrent recommendation to link poverty alleviation and energy (Sumar, 2015). This is planned to be attained through grid extension, public- and private-sector involvement, minigrids, and stand-alone electrification systems for rural/urban areas (Fashina et al., 2019).

The government has made significant achievements on the objectives set out in the Energy Policy (2002), including increased electricity generation capacity from 317 MW (2002) to 1,182 MW (May 2019), resulting in a supply/demand surplus; increased electricity access from 5 percent (2002) to 28 percent (2019); reduction in electricity losses from over 35 percent (2002) to 17.4 percent (2017); dominance of renewable energy in the national energy mix; enabling environment for private-sector investments; increased energy sector contribution to the national GDP; and increased efficiency initiatives in the biomass subsector, among others (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, 2019). However, a policy review by Tumusiime et al. (2019) indicates that the expected results of this policy have remained elusive. Whereas the policy aimed to achieve 61 percent of total energy consumption from modern renewable energy, it is not clear how this goal was to be achieved. The policy did not provide energy thresholds for the different renewable energy options, which led to overfocusing on hydroelectric power development at the expense of other alternatives like biogas, solar, and wind energy. According to Sumar (2015), hydropower remains the nation's dominant source for electric energy production, with a potential of over 4100 MW. Moreover, while the Uganda policy states the number of biogas plants to be installed by the end of policy period, China's renewable energy policy specifies the amount of biogas in million cubic meters that should be realized (Wanga et al., 2010). Defining a policy strategy for biogas rather than just stating the number of biogas plants

to be installed is appropriate, as the policy maker is being mindful of the efficiency of energy recovery. Further still, whereas the policy strategy to allocate funds for research and development was established, no administrative guidelines for implementing this measure were published (Tumusiime et al., 2019). Therefore, securing the future of energy for sustainable development will require (1) expanding the portfolio for renewable energy development to consider other alternatives equally; (2) setting and defining explicitly energy thresholds for every promising renewable energy option, and (3) prioritizing research and development in both policy formulation and implementation. Further still, Okello et al. (2013) recommended the use of improved bioenergy technologies, as well as reducing the harmful environmental impacts, if sustainable biomass energy production is to be guaranteed.

In addition, according to the *Draft National Energy Policy*, the Government of Uganda aims to increase the stock and quality of strategic infrastructure to accelerate the country's competitiveness through the construction of power generation, oil and gas infrastructure, and extension of the electricity grid (Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, 2019). To that effect, the sector has been implementing various projects to increase power generation, transmission, and distribution—increasing the installed generation capacity to 1,252.4 MW with peak demand at 723.76 MW by the end of December 2019 (MoFPED 2020). In trying to increase access to electricity, the energy sector aims to add 300,000 new connections annually to the grid through the free connection policy. In the first half of fiscal year (FY) 2019, 90,136 households were connected. Additionally, a total of 1,858.68km of medium- and low-voltage lines were constructed and added to the grid in the first half of FY 2019 (MFPED, 2020).

Although such projects have laid a firm ground for equity and inclusion, disparities in access to and affordability of clean energy continue to persist. This raises not only questions of sustainability but also the need to ensure that even that individuals from the rural or poorest parts of the country are included, so that, for instance, a child-headed household in rural Karamoja can access safe water, and a widow living in the mountains can access electric energy.

Diversification of the energy mix of Uganda can help improve the present power situation in the country, meeting a significant portion of

its energy needs by increasing investment in other available renewable energy resources, thus reducing the vulnerabilities of its hydro resources. If the solar and wind potential, for instance, is proven to be sufficient for commercial on-grid generation, then these technologies can become an important large-scale diversification option for the country (Fashina et al., 2019).

Since energy is an element vital for economic growth, industrialization, rapid urbanization, and improving the standard of living, there is an imperative need for the government to enhance the potential use of Uganda's enormous renewable energy resources. The country may then be able to avoid stumbling into energy supply crisis in the nearest future. In order for the Government of Uganda to meet its commitment to achieving the energy needs of its people and promoting renewable energy in the national energy mix, a number of barriers will have to be addressed. These barriers include, among others, (1) inadequate knowledge regarding the use, importance, of and environmental benefits from renewable energy; (2) the requirement for huge initial capital investments that discourage private-sector involvement; (3) a lack of technically skilled human resources, which increases operational costs; and (4) inadequate attention to research and development.

Increasing Food Security

Food security continues to feature prominently in the global development agenda because of the persistence of food insecurity in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries. It is estimated that between 702 and 828 million people were affected by hunger in 2021, a number that has grown by about 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Low- to middle-income countries, which compose the largest portion of the global population, account for more than half the food-insecure people in the world (FAO, 2022).

According to the World Food Programme, Uganda produces more food than it consumes, yet poverty still limits people's access to nutritious food, especially in the north and east of the country. Uganda's fast-growing population, expected to reach 100 million by 2050, and the

presence of the world's third-largest refugee population, poses further challenges to the country's ability to achieve SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) (WFP, 2022). Food insecurity is a critical problem affecting about 6.3 percent of the households in Uganda, with about 21 percent of the remaining households on the brink of becoming food insecure because of poverty, inequality, and drought-related extreme weather events. Until recently, studies have shown that the semiarid areas of Uganda experience food insecurity more than other parts of the country. But a study by Yiiki et al. (2017) showed that 80 percent of wetland areas are prone to food insecurity as well. In July 2022, the number of people facing extreme hunger in Uganda reached 2.87 million because of two consecutive seasons of below-average crop production in bimodal areas and Karamoja (WFP, 2022). While much focus has been put on rural household food insecurity, food insecurity in urban areas is potentially on the rise, particularly among women of reproductive age, following the increase of urbanization and the formation of urban slums. Qualitative findings indicate that food insecurity is indeed a problem among women in the slums, reporting that major causes include unemployment, high food prices, poverty, and increasing household sizes (Nantale et al., 2017). These findings suggest the need to invest in the economic empowerment of women with an emphasis on those living in deprived communities.

Despite the efforts of government and development partners to promote food security in Uganda, food insecurity remains a major problem, and it's exacerbated by water scarcity, especially in water-stressed regions (Mukuve & Fenner, 2015). In addition, Ugandan smallholder farmers lack farming skills, handling techniques and access to services such as credit and insurance. Storage facilities are often inadequate to protect harvested crops from pests, moisture and mould, which results in losses of up to 30 percent. In the northern and eastern regions, and particularly in Karamoja, rain scarcity can exacerbate food insecurity, forcing families to sell off their assets, take their children out of school, or resort to environmentally harming practices to secure food (WFP, 2022).

In an attempt to solve issues of food insecurity and malnutrition in Uganda, many organizations have focused on immediate need and given aid in the form of food assistance (Jessup-Varnum, 2018). For

example, in the first quarter of 2018 alone, the World Food Programme distributed 11,700 metric tons of food assistance to Uganda and helped 1 million people (WFP, 2018). While this is helpful in the short term, it is not a sustainable long-term solution to the issue of food insecurity in the country. In 1997, the Ugandan government proposed the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). One aspect of the PEAP is the modernization of agriculture. This plan, put in place in 2001, was the Government of Uganda's attempt to eradicate poverty, and subsequently food insecurity, through agricultural improvements and interventions. The government recognized that the poorest Ugandans lived in rural areas and relied on subsistence agriculture, which would be improved through agriculture modernization, for their livelihoods. However, this plan largely failed because it focused entirely on the market and attempted to solve issues of rural poverty by transforming farmers into commercial people. The plan failed not only because the farmers lacked the capital to modernize but also because they were not consulted during the design process. Therefore, the government must involve program beneficiaries in policy design to create ownership and increase the chances of successful implementation.

Given the multifaceted nature of food insecurity, it is important that the government develops integrated food security strategies to address the four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. Given that women in most of rural Uganda assume the responsibility of food provision for the family, it is critical to promote women's access to and control of productive resources, and to promote opportunities to train women in agroprocessing at the household level, in order to increase value of agricultural products. This will provide them with income to buy nutritious foods for their families. It is also important to promote the adoption of high-yield nutritious, disease- and drought-resistant crops and to strengthen the capacity of agricultural extension workers to implement household-level agricultural interventions, including integrating nutrition into pre- and in-service training curricula for agricultural extension service providers. But most importantly, there is a need for government to invest more in water for production through the establishment of small-scale irrigation schemes in the water-stressed areas of Uganda.

Considering water, energy, and food as an entity has been found to help combat insecurities related to the three resources, ultimately securing regional development (Nhamo et al., 2018). By considering how water, energy, and food systems operate and interact, the nexus approach aims to maximize synergies (mutually beneficial outcomes) and minimize trade-offs (which may potentially include nonoptimal outcomes), improve resource-use efficiency, and internalize social and environmental impacts, particularly across a range of contexts and scales (Kurian, 2017). This in turn strengthens cross-sectoral integration and improves management outcomes to enhance water, energy, and food security (Wolfe et al., 2016).

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

11. The Ministry of Water and Environment, in partnership with development partners and community-based organizations, should ensure availability of water for food production through the establishment of boreholes and valley dams in water-stressed areas.
12. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, in partnership with community-based organizations, should invest in more affordable, safe, and accessible energy sources to close the equity gap.
13. The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should ensure that the land acquisition fund is implemented fairly to promote equity and inclusion in resettlement and compensation of resource-constrained land occupants.

Insights from Postconflict Reconstruction

Soon after attaining independence (in October 1962), starting in January 1986, Uganda plunged into decades of violent conflict, military rule, and coups. The policies enacted after the 1980–1986 guerilla war and the 20-year civil war in Northern Uganda provide examples of approaches to inclusion and equity that failed to achieve their stated goals (Oryema, 2017; Maher & Poulter, 2017). The measures put in place to reconcile peace, justice, and social reconstruction in northern

Uganda include the Internal Displaced People's Policy; the Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan; the Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme; and the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) and its subsequent iterations (NUSUF I–III), which sought to correct historical inequities in the region, especially after the region's civil war (Oryema, 2017; Maher & Poulter, 2017). Others—for example, the Area Based Intergraded Development Programme—prioritized the most vulnerable people in such communities as the elderly, HIV/AIDS victims, widows, child-headed households, and survivors of the abductions by the Lord's Resistance Army. Most of the interventions, however, focused on rebuilding the physical infrastructure and only allocated meager portions to rebuilding people's lives (Esuruku, 2011).

In October 2007, the government put in place the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) to guide the reconstruction process, including alleviating poverty, consolidating peace, and improving welfare for the people in the region (GOU, PRDP 2007). The plan required stakeholders, including government agencies and development partners, to prioritize people's needs in terms of development and recovery. As a result of the plan, residents reported improved security, but with time their priorities changed from safety to acquiring livelihood, health, and education for their children. The plan realized successes, but it has been deficient in instituting social justice through nondiscriminatory and equitable mechanisms. NUSAF's priority groups were the most vulnerable, but the policy also became a footstool for politicians to front their agendas (Esuruku, 2011; Hickey, 2011). Unlike the first phase, NUSAF II and III realized positive results in the development of the region, benefiting 42 percent of the 5.9 million poor people in the Project area, which covered 67 districts. NUSAF III fronted a community procurement approach, whereby the communities actively participated in procurement activities at the local level. The approach was cost effective, ensured transparency and efficiency in terms of community empowerment, and created a sense of responsibility and ownership (Kisaka, 2021).

Although the transition to peace and postconflict reconstruction has realized several advantages, some problems arose, including a focus on women as victims, which in the process ignored the vulnerability of men. With the increased independence of women, men felt left out

and resorted to asserting power over the women, leading to increased domestic violence. "The PRDP has not made specific reference to the different situations for women, men and children and more specifically the magnitude of female vulnerability, loss of masculine status and frustrations of displacement" (Esuruku, 2011, p.37).

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

14. Postconflict reconstruction policies should focus on giving vulnerable populations ownership and control over their survival.

Insights from the Education Sector

Uganda's Vision 2040, its national development plans, and SDG 4 (Quality Education) emphasize education as a driver of development. The Government of Uganda instituted universal primary education (UPE) in 1997 and universal secondary education (USE) in 2007. These two shifts doubled children's access to education regardless of socioeconomic status, addressed gender inequities in education, and showcased Uganda as a paragon of transformative development in Africa (Datzberger, 2018; Kan & Klasen, 2021; Wasswa-Matovu, 2009). Girls went to school, which delayed teenage marriage and decreased teenage pregnancy rates (Makate & Makate, 2018; Masuda & Yamauchi, 2018; Mbabazi et al., 2021). Decreased pregnancy rates (from 31 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2006) and increased female literacy rates empowered girls to make informed decisions about their health and employment (Mbabazi et al., 2021).

Both UPE and USE policies, supported by the Persons with Disability Act of 2006, emphasized children with disabilities and special needs as beneficiaries of universal education, integrating them into existing schools and constructing special schools for them (Bannink et al., 2016; Bose & Heymann, 2020; SIDA, 2015). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) instituted policies to ensure that students with special needs received relevant accommodations during their academic careers. For example, in an attempt to address inequality, the

Uganda National Examinations Board allocated extra time for students with special needs to complete their examinations (NCD, 2019).

Similarly, the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act of 2001 guarantees the admission of 64 students with disabilities into institutions of higher learning on an annual basis. These students receive government scholarships to cover tuition, other academic fees, living allowances, and (recently) assistive devices. Besides the legal framework and action plans for inclusion for persons with disabilities, Uganda instituted the National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy in 2004. This policy aims to ensure child protection and that orphans, vulnerable children, and their families have access to education, health, and other essential services.

These legislative, policy, and implementation successes notwithstanding, Uganda's education policies and practices have yet to demonstrate transformative impact. We now outline some impediments to achieving inclusive and equitable education.

Contextual factors in Uganda (e.g., local knowledge systems and financing) that could derail the implementation of global education policies did not receive adequate consideration (Muhangi, 2019; Ohajunwa, 2022; Tromp & Datzberger, 2021). For instance, even though input from stakeholders at the grassroots level has been shown to promote uptake of policies (Charema, 2010), Uganda's education policies were not informed by local knowledge at the community level. The participation of stakeholders, including parents, children, teachers, and local leaders, supports collaboration in culturally relevant ways (Datzberger, 2018; Ohajunwa, 2022). An emphasis on culture improves the likelihood of policy relevance and uptake, as communities perceive self-affirmation and meaning in policies they cocreate with the relevant authorities (Charema, 2010; Datzberger, 2018; Ohajunwa, 2022). Without this local content from policy-making to implementation and evaluation, any policy to promote inclusive education can be derailed by prevailing local attitudes and stigma (e.g., attitudes around disability and learning differences) (Jackson et al., 2019; Ohajunwa, 2022).

Other contextual factors—geographical, financing, and power structures—reveal further inequities. Despite increased access to schooling because of UPE and USE, enrollment varies by region and socioeconomic status. The level of wealth in the community drives the

quality of education. Enrollment rates in rural areas and postconflict regions demonstrate a striking imbalance in access to education. For instance, in 2015, secondary school enrollment in rural Karamoja reached 5 percent, yet urban Kampala reported 50 percent in the same period (World Bank, 2020a). In areas where enrollment increased almost twofold, overcrowding, abysmal scholastic resources, and infrastructure constraints made learning nearly impossible (Muhangi, 2019; Wasswa-Matovu, 2009; Weatherholt et al., 2019). In such situations, teaching and learning hardly occurred, resulting in a decline in numeracy and literacy levels (Crouch & Kibombo, 2015; Wasswa-Matovu, 2009; Uwezo, 2019). Children with no preprimary education had no foundation to support more sophisticated learning in primary school, which led them to withdraw from school or repeat classes (Weatherholt et al., 2019). In these examples, we notice a lack of efficiency and quality, which undermines the government's inclusive education agenda.

In parts of the country where traditional patriarchal systems of power dominate all family and community decisions, girls undertake most household chores at the expense of schooling (Ninsiima et al., 2018; Wasswa-Matovu, 2009; World Bank, 2020a).

Furthermore, although teenage pregnancy rates decreased from 31 to 25 percent between 2000 and 2006 because of UPE (Mbabazi et al., 2021), teenage pregnancy persists and has increased to almost 50 percent in some parts of Uganda (Ninsiima et al., 2018). Frequently, girls still get married before completing their primary or secondary education (Mbabazi et al., 2021; Wodon et al., 2016), adversely impacting their ability to make decisions for themselves and their children. Marrying before finishing school also decreases their chances to improve their earning ability, undermining the government's goal to boost employment through education. About 25 percent of girls drop out of school because of pregnancy, with higher dropouts happening in eastern Uganda at 37.3 percent and in the West Nile region at 32.3 percent (MoES, 2015). And when sexual education has been added to curricula, it reinforces preexisting patriarchal sociocultural norms (Ninsiima et al., 2018; Ochen et al., 2019).

School closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have been the largest in history, with more than 1.5 billion students' education disrupted globally (UNESCO, 2020b). In Uganda, even before the pandemic, girls

dropped out of school due to sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, and early marriages (MoES 2012; Odaga, 2020). The pandemic only exacerbated the situation. Because of school closures, children had to study from home. With girls undertaking a disproportionate number of domestic chores compared with their male counterparts, many girls had little to no time to study (CARE International, 2020; Ssali, 2020). Many girls in rural areas suffered sexual exploitation (World Vision, 2020).

The emergency of COVID-19 has increased the urgency to use e-learning and other means to replace traditional face-to-face classroom delivery systems. The MoES advised institutions to establish online and distance education and devised a learning framework guide to assist teachers and support parents as they teach their children at home (MoES, 2020a). Learning technologies adapted during the pandemic included print material, radio, television, video, audio, telephone, computers, and the internet. They facilitated the continuity of learning through the pandemic, overcoming the geographical hurdles of accessing conventional classroom education (Tumwesigye, 2020). However, the need for access to technology widened the educational gap between privileged and poor children. Online learning aggravated the inequalities between rural and urban populations (Ssali, 2020), an unintended consequence of a potentially inclusive education policy.

The pandemic brought into sharp focus other preexisting inequities in education. For example, the privatization of the Ugandan education sector had already created a divided system of well-resourced urban schools and deprived rural schools (Namusobya et al., 2015). Regardless of affirmative action to increase access to education for girls, privatization still skewed access to boys in higher education (Kasozi, 2009; Mugisha, 2010). Kasozi (2009) also highlights the fact that privileged students received most of the government higher-education scholarships, which are limited. Thus, the pandemic-induced promise of information technology to increase access to education for all could not become a long-term solution to seemingly entrenched inequities in education (Tumwesigye, 2020).

Private education facilities are more expensive and exclusive, widening the chasm and driving inequity. There is less regulation around reporting on performance. Privatization in the primary and secondary levels of schooling led to private and highly-ranked universities being

populated only by those who had early access to private education, perpetuating the cycle of inequity in quality education. Moreover, students are not the only population that experiences inequity driven by the factors above. Teachers and staff are underpaid and paid inconsistently. There also exists a difference in the amount teachers are paid based on the subject they teach. Such a disparity, an example of exclusionary tendencies, can promote turnover and demotivate employees.

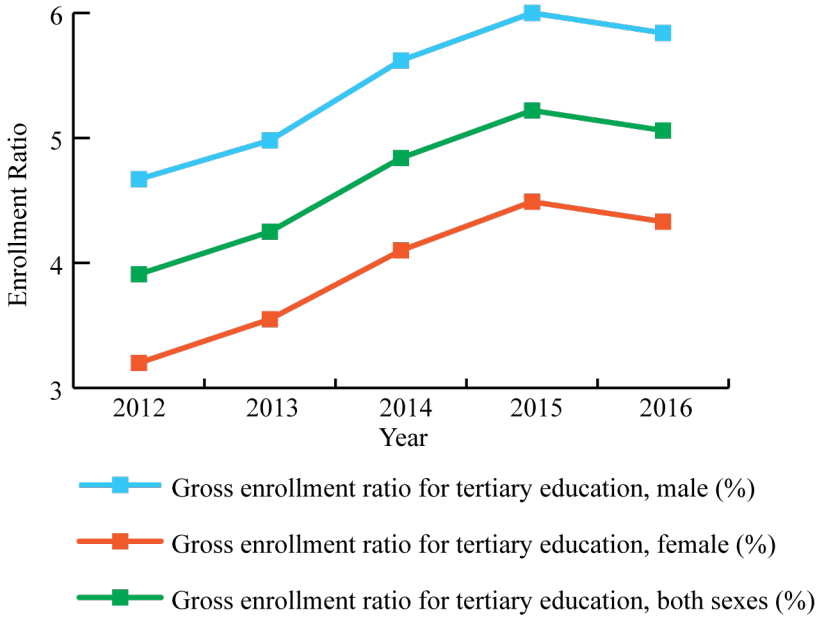

FIGURE 1 Gross enrollment ratio in tertiary education by gender, Uganda, 2012 –2016.
SOURCE: Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (http://sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org).

A study of the household schooling costs and equity effects of the USE policy in Uganda used data from the Uganda National Panel Survey to analyze the differential impacts of the policy across subpopulations in Uganda and found that the policy has had no significant effect across differently advantaged population groups (Omoeva & Gale, 2016). Amid

the findings, though, a few limitations in the dataset were noted. Variables related to current school attendance were not captured sufficiently. So while the study demonstrated an increase in the enrollment of children with disabilities in schools, current data demonstrate that 9 percent of children with disabilities attend primary school in Uganda, and of those, only 6 percent continue to secondary school, despite the government's insistence on education for all disabled children (ACPF, 2011; UNICEF, 2014), and assistive devices for these students is inequitable. Overall, secondary schools have inadequate infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and struggle to retain experienced teachers (see Figure 2) (Akyeampong et al., 2018).

Additionally, these inequities feed on patterns of exclusion. Even with Uganda's robust legal and policy framework regarding disabled people, disabled students still experience exclusionary practices (Emong & Eron, 2016; Maki et al., 2021). Not only do they have mobility challenges in reaching educational institutions, they also face discrimination in application processes and fail to integrate within student bodies (Alupo et al., 2018; Emong & Eron, 2016). Their teachers, overwhelmed by immense workloads and lack of specialized training to cater to them, find themselves unable to teach them effectively (Nantongo, 2019). Even though teachers and families serve as the primary implementers of the government's inclusive education policies, they do not participate in policy formulation. Deprived of local understandings (as opposed to Western knowledge) and lived experiences of those stakeholders, the policies ultimately fail (Bannink et al., 2020; Masquillier et al., 2021; Nantongo, 2019).

Indeed, policies that disregard community attitudes and practices about social inclusion fail to resonate with families, increase tension between communities and the government, and further alienate the intended beneficiaries (Ejuu et al., 2022; Masquillier et al., 2021). Even when some teachers receive specialized training, those that do not receive it conclude that they cannot welcome disabled and special needs students into their classrooms (Nantongo, 2019), heightening exclusion. Bannink et al. (2020) made a prescient assertion in this regard: "We propose to address the gaps of the postcolonial education system that has taken teachers' and families' away from the concept of '*obuntu bulamu*' and focus interventions on re-creating this togetherness and

value the strength of concepts of belonging and caring for each other" (pp. 357–358). When these policies fail, the affected people, already marginalized due to their disabilities, end up unemployed, dispossessed (Griffiths et al., 2020; Ojok, 2013), and stuck in poverty (Nyombi & Kibandama, 2015). Once again, we see policies that seek to promote inclusion fail because of a lack of contextual relevance.

Figure 2 highlights the proportion of teachers with minimum required qualifications by education type and gender. The proportion begins to drop off drastically in 2016.

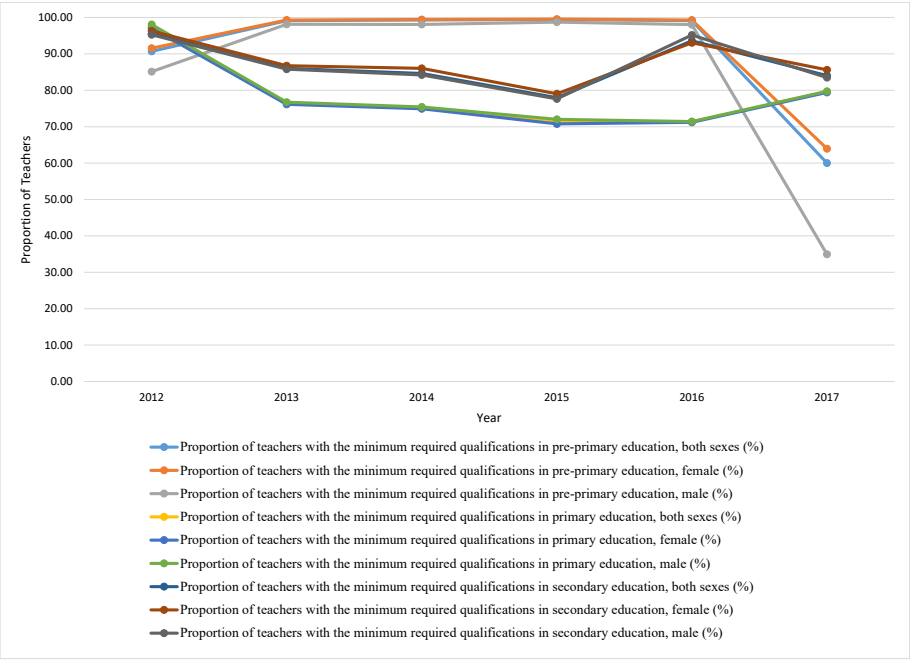

FIGURE 2 Proportion of teachers in Uganda with minimum qualifications by education type and gender 2012–2017).
SOURCE: Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (http://sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org).

Interventions in Education

Technical Vocational Education and Training

To address some of these issues, the government introduced the Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training and the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policies at postprimary level to produce graduates ready for the labor market (MoES, 2019; Okumu & Bbaale, 2019). The TVET policy focuses on "relevant skills development for true national independence, development, enhanced productivity, and economic growth" (MoES, 2019, p. 3). The TVET policy touts skills-oriented education instead of theoretical disciplines as prerequisites for transforming Uganda's labor market. Although 90 percent of secondary school teachers have the required formal qualifications to teach, they do not have continuous training to improve instruction, and some lack expertise in the subjects they teach (World Bank, 2020a). Such a statistic makes the TVET a viable option. Unlike the current general education system, the TVET policy emphasizes a flexible workplace-oriented (practical) delivery of knowledge and skills. It shifts TVET management from the government to public–private partnerships for efficiency and effectiveness (MoES, 2019).

The expected results of this policy have remained elusive at best and demoralizing at worst. Poor planning, inadequate financing, corruption, loose regulation, and lack of accountability within participating institutions have thwarted the policy's implementation (Okumu & Bbaale, 2019; Okware & Ngaka, 2017). Denigrating TVET students as lower-caliber persons compared with their colleagues in traditional formal education has decreased TVET students' sense of self-worth and led to low uptake of TVET (Okware & Ngaka, 2017; Tukundane & Zeelen, 2015). The implementers of TVET did not intentionally link their course offerings to what employers needed, leading to unemployed TVET graduates (Moses et al., 2017; Okumu & Bbaale, 2019). Already stigmatized, these skilled, yet unemployed youth lose a sense of purpose and meaning from the posttraining employment they expected.

Supporting Women in Science and Technology

Promoting the inclusion of women in science and technology opened an avenue to overcoming gender inequities. Uganda took major strides toward supporting women in science and technology. For example, the Makerere University council approved a gender affirmative-action policy to increase the enrollment of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The policy, which called for the reservation for women of 40 percent of student places in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines, aligned with Uganda's Vision 2040, Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) III, and SDGs 5 and 8.

In addition, the Women Scientists' Career Development Program provides career-related support to women researchers. The program advances women's careers in science through mentorship, networking, training workshops, and conferences (Byakika, 2017). Women in Technology Uganda (WITU) empowers young women to become innovative technologists and entrepreneurs that influence the economy. The initiative seeks to narrow the gender gap by increasing the number of women in technology through training, and by encouraging and inspiring women through networking and mentorship. Through this initiative, more girls are inspired to take science courses. WITU has also trained young women through the Elevate Program. Several beneficiaries of the program have started businesses and become successful entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, in October 2021, the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD), an UNESCO program, opened a national chapter in Uganda, hosted at Makerere University. OWSD is the first international organization of its kind, was founded in 1987, and is based at the World Academy of Sciences in Italy. The program unites women scientists from the developing and developed world, promoting their representation in science and technological leadership. The organization provides research training, career development, and networking opportunities for women scientists in the developing world at different stages in their careers. Support for women scientists in Uganda helps them bypass challenges, including those in the work environment, where the women constantly need to prove themselves that they are capable as men, and the false perceptions

of women scientists suitability (the African Academy of Sciences recognizes these challenges, as described in Mukhwana et al. [2020]). OWSD, WITU, and Women Scientists' Career Development Program, among other initiatives, contribute to not only equality but also equity and inclusion by providing platforms where women grow together, build networks, fight poverty, be innovative, and build confidence in their capabilities.

Despite these advances, women scientists continue to face systemic and attitudinal barriers to their advancement. They struggle to balance work and family demands (Prozesky & Mouton, 2019), negatively impacting their career progression. Forced to choose between family and careers, some women scientists abandon their dreams (Byakika, 2017). Social environment, gender discrimination, and girls' low self-assessment serve as powerful barriers that prevent their entry into STEM fields (Mukhwana et al., 2020). Moreover, women scientists do not participate in making national policies that concern their entry and careers in STEM, which leads to a mismatch between women's perceived needs and their realities (Nneka, 2019).

In order for women to reach their full potential in secondary education, they must be supported from the beginning. This includes ensuring that the girls of Uganda get to school safely. Schools should be moved closer to communities so that girls walk a shorter distance. There is also an opportunity for a long-term strategy around hostels so that girls will only have to travel from their school to the hostel between school days, keeping them protected. Providing strong examples of how education has benefited women and communities is vitally important, not only for the individual girls themselves, but to influence the culture around promoting girls receiving an education. Using storytelling to resonate with communities should be considered in addition to more tangible programs. These programs could include awarding scholarships for girls in primary schools and interventions to make access and retention easier for girls, similar to how the government has made programs at universities easier to access for women.

Other Access Issues

In addition to a lack of equity for women in receiving all levels of education in Uganda, other access issues should be addressed. On the privatization of the education sector, efforts around regulating the cost of attendance, number of students in each class, and salaries for teachers and staff, as well as ensuring accurate reporting of results and school performance, should all be made a priority. Geographical access is also a key driver of inequity across the education sector. Increasing the number of schools in rural communities would reduce the distance students' walking distances and thus increase their chances of attending and arriving safely. It must also be considered that even if there are enough schools in proximity to communities, these schools must also contain adequate infrastructure to support students, including staffing and learning materials.

Although it recognizes the intersectionality between education and access to clean water and power, the strategic plan recommends expediting efforts to support Ugandan learners. The theme of access expands into technology for students in Uganda as well. Both short- and long-term strategies could be taken to increase technological access. The first would be increasing the affordability of phones and computers while extending solar power reach into rural areas. Rural digitization overall is a longer-term infrastructure effort but should be incorporated now as a key initiative.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

15. The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should reconsider the budget allocated to the education sector; first, it must be increased, and second, it must be made more flexible and fluid. Education should be seen as a critical social service and indispensable for the government, as all other development depends on the success of this social service.
16. The Ministry of Education and Sports should regularly inspect schools to maintain minimum professional standards. They should follow the Ministry's policy frameworks and guidelines

while ensuring teachers receive the requisite financial and scholastic support.

17. The government should invest in increasing infrastructure to support e-learning.
18. In consultation with communities, the Ministry of Education and Sports should consider reframing universal access to education in terms of the quality of education students receive.

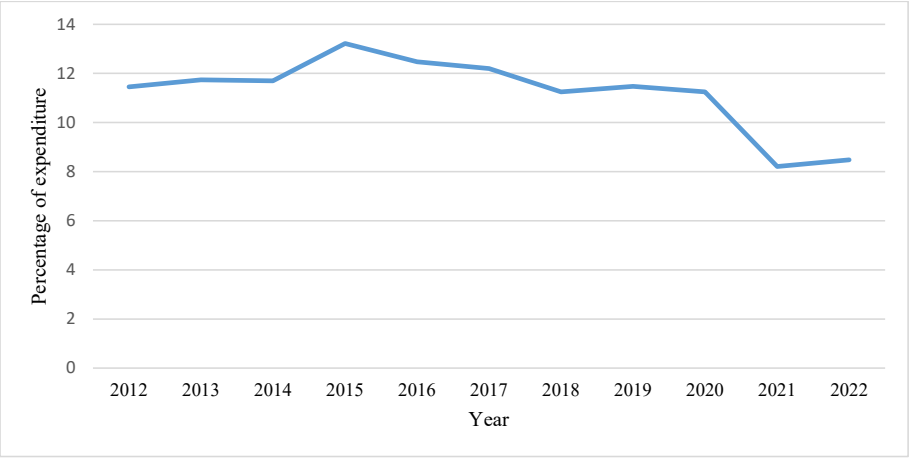

FIGURE 3 Expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure, 2012–2022.
SOURCE: Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (http://sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org).

Insights from the Health Sector

To address disparities in equity in the health care sector effectively, the concept of "health care is free" must first be dissected. Although health care financing is available in Uganda, in 2020–2021, only 5.1 percent of the total government expenditure was allocated to the health care sector (UNICEF, 2020). This is missing the mark of the promise made as part of the Abuja Declaration in 2001, which declared that all participating African nations will pledge 15 percent of their annual budget to improving the health care sector (WHO, 2011). Within the current model of health financing itself, the allocation of funds is inequitable and overall fragmented. Ugandans experience poor quality

of service and gaps in needed medicines. Facilities that deliver care are oftentimes lacking the physical and human resources infrastructure to meet the needs of the communities they are intended to serve. All of these threats to full health care exist despite public health services being "free" in Uganda (Orem & Zikusooka, 2010).

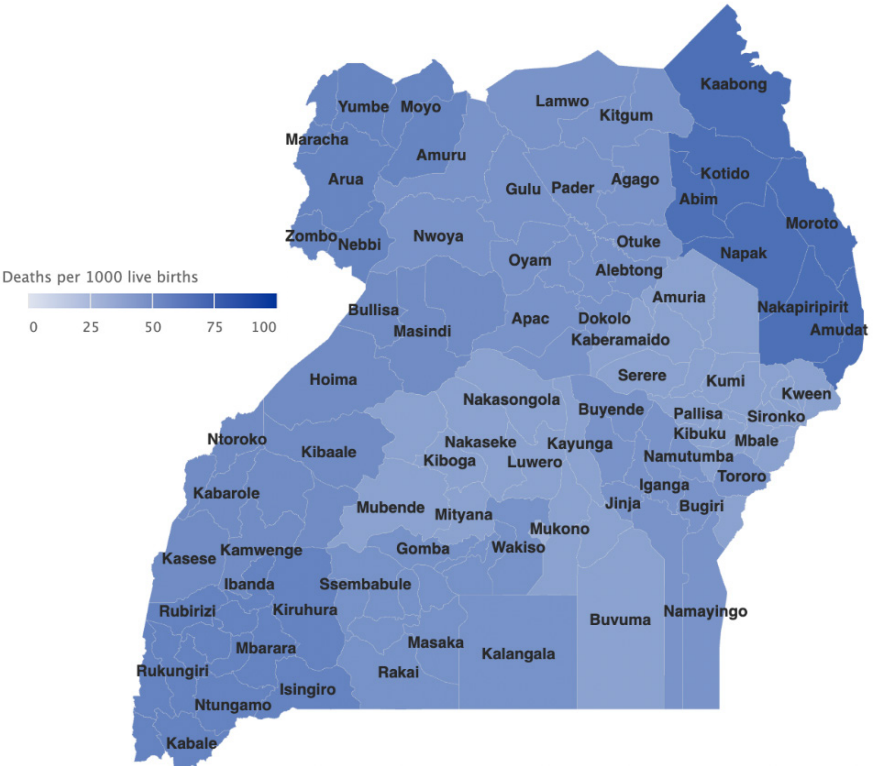

FIGURE 4 Mortality rate of children under age 5, by district, 2016. SOURCE: EQUIST by UNICEF (https://equist.info/#/dashboard/profile).

Despite working within budgetary constraints, Uganda's health sector has experienced successes in its recent history. Progress has been made around disability inclusion, including the dissemination of wheelchairs, disability awareness, and the renovation of health facilities to be accessible for all modalities. Maternal, neonatal, and child health services have also been improved. Percentages of postnatal care

attendance, antenatal care, and supervised deliveries have increased. Maternal and child mortality rates have decreased (see Figures 4 and 5). To discuss improvement in the context of the health sector, it would be remiss to leave out the uptick in vaccination percentages, particularly around measles and DPT3 (diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus vaccine in 3 doses). Treatment for HIV patients followed this positive trend as well (WHO, 2019).

Figure 5 highlights the rate of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by wealth quartile from an equity lens. When comparing the poorest to the richest quintile, the data informs that had the level of wealth been the same between the two groups, ~80 deaths per 100,000 live births could have been avoided.

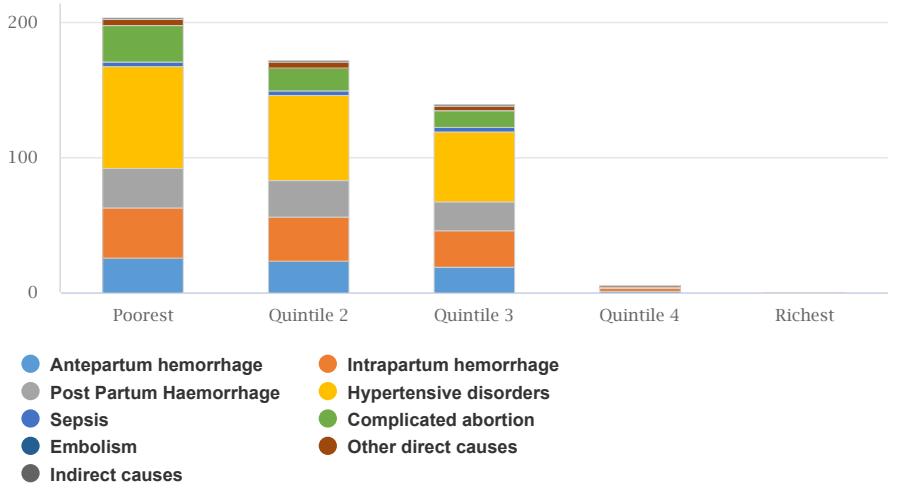

FIGURE 5 Maternal Mortality in Uganda, 2016
SOURCE: EQUIST by UNICEF (https://equist.info/#/dashboard/frontier).

Within the health sector, equity has been defined as the "absence of systematic disparities in health (or in the major determinants of health) between groups with different levels of underlying social advantage/disadvantage, that is, wealth, power, or prestige" (Braveman & Gruskin,

2003, p. 254). In contrast, inequality in health is the discriminatory distribution of several determinants of health, including health care (Orem & Zikusooka, 2010). The Ministry of Health has a general mandate to ensure the health and well-being of all citizens. As in other sectors, there is "ample" legislation towards this end, and, more still, towards equitable health service provision. For example, the Second National Health Policy (2010–2020) obligates various health service providers to offer health services to persons with disabilities. Such service providers include those at national, regional, and district referral hospitals.

Additionally, the government formulated the Health Sector Development Plan (HSDP) (FY 2015–2019), the second in a series of six 5-year plans aimed at achieving Uganda Vision 2040 of a healthy and productive population contributing to socioeconomic growth and national development. The primary goal of the HSDP was to facilitate the movement toward universal health coverage, considering the essential health and related services needed to promote health and productivity among people. Universal health coverage makes it possible to ensure that all people receive the necessary and quality health services they need without suffering financial hardships. Improving health and alleviating impoverishment do not always align, and policies that alleviate medically related financial burdens have minimal impacts on health (Shrime et al., 2016).

In March 2021, the Parliament of Uganda introduced a health insurance bill: the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), outlining the structure of Uganda's first social health policy. The government of Uganda proposed the bill in 2012 (ESRA, 2015). The approach tackles underlying issues continuously hindering equitable access to health services in Uganda, such as high poverty levels. Socioeconomic drivers of poverty in Uganda include lack of financial access to health services, poor health, and the high disease burden of the poor. The policy intends to minimize the financial barriers to health services. The development of the NHIS took place in three phases: from 1995 to 1999, 2000 to 2005, and 2006 to 2011 (Basaza et al., 2013).

Before introducing the bill, a study assessed the potential impact of the NHIS on access to services and the provision of services. Orem & Zikusooka (2010) found that the extent to which NHIS would

improve equity in access to health care would depend on the level and distribution of resources by geographical regions and rural and urban areas. The Ministry of Health conducted an exploratory feasibility study to assess the potential for establishing social health insurance in Uganda and found limited knowledge regarding social health insurance policies and administration (Basaza et al., 2013). Another study conducted in a resource-limited setting assessed the impact of other governmental and charitable policies for surgical oncology to improve health care access and found that out of the nine policies and platforms evaluated, only two could provide simultaneous health and financial benefits efficiently and equitably. This finding suggests that policies that alleviate medically related financial burdens have shown minimal health impacts (Shrime et al., 2016).

In some African countries, the policy has been successful over time because of the incorporation of stakeholder feedback. In August 2003, the NHIS was established successfully in Ghana, promoting access to equitable and quality health care for all citizens, irrespective of the individual's socioeconomic status (Chistmals & Kizito, 2020). In Kenya, a retrospective policy analysis of the development of an NHIS policy was undertaken; Abuya et al. (2015) found that the Scheme faced opposition because of inadequate communication strategies. The policy was not well articulated, which created a gap in the flow of factual information to different players. Lack of transparency and good governance hindered the active engagement of key players (Abuya et al., 2015). Lessons from other countries can inform implementation in the Ugandan context.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

19. The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should review the health sector budget, with an emphasis on increasing it and making it more dynamic to meet the needs for preventive, curative, and access-based interventions.
20. The Ministries of Health and the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should make equity and inclusion an explicit goal in implementing universal health coverage in Uganda.

21. In conjunction with development partners, the Ministry of Health should address the critical infrastructure and human resource needs within government-operated health centers. Existing plans to upgrade facilities, augment pay, and ensure the availability of essential health services should receive priority.

Capacity-Building of Health Personnel for Disability Inclusion

This program was executed through support supervision in 30 districts where regional referral and district hospitals were visited to ensure they adhered to national disability prevention and management guidelines. Physiotherapists at Mulago Hospital were given 1 week of training in manual therapy by an expert from South Africa. The Ministry of Health held continuing medical education for physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and orthopedic technicians in wheelchair assessment and maintenance. Research indicates improvements in the struggle for equity around issues of disability (Pappas 2020).

The Ministry of Health developed and disseminated the National Wheelchair Standards and Guidelines in Sembabule, Kiryandongo, Mityana, Hoima, and Mukono. Additionally, the ministry received and distributed 300 wheelchairs to the regional referral workshops. They distributed wheelchairs to the identified beneficiaries in Kanungu, Sheema, and Tororo districts to ensure that the wheelchairs supplied were not detrimental to the users' lives. This approach also improved local production and reduced the dependency on imported wheelchairs (NUDIPU, 2018). The above report portrays that the Ministry allocated UGX 53.403 billion to Butabika hospital for FYs 2014–2017 to support renovations and services delivery to persons with mental health challenges (NUDIPU, 2018).

The Ministry of Health also conducted awareness on mental health in regional referral hospitals and mental health units of Moroto, Jinja, Mbarara, Mubende, Lira, Hoima, Masaka, 2 Soroti, Mbale, 2 Gulu, and 2 Kabale. Outreach programs were also conducted in Nkokonjeru, Nansana, Kitetika, Kawempe Katalemwa, and Kitebi-Wakiso to raise awareness on mental health issues in FY 2017.

To improve the prevention and management of disabilities, the Ministry of Health renovated regional referral and other hospitals to be receptive and responsive to accident victims (emergency and ambulatory services). The particular hospitals renovated and equipped included Arua, Iganga, Jinja Regional Referral Hospital (RRH), Kayunga, Kiryandongo, Mbale RRH, Mbarara RRH, Mubende RRH, Mulago National Referral Hospital, Ruharo, and Yumbe Hospitals, among others (NUDIPU, 2018).

In addition, literature has documented the development of specialized clinics at national and regional referral hospitals (NUDIPU, 2018). Moreover, health indicators that speak to disability were included in health management systems in 2018. The Ministry of Health supported the development of ear nose & throat (ENT) services, eye services, orthopedic and occupational therapy units for the prevention and management of disability in Uganda. Training was offered to improve the effectiveness of these health units. For example, 798 health care professionals were trained to identify and treat clubfoot (NUDIPU, 2018).

Equity and Inclusion in Maternal and Child Health

Maternal health refers to the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period (WHO, 2022). In Africa, women are 47 times more likely to die from preventable complications during childbirth than they are in developed countries. In developing countries, approximately 800 women die during childbirth daily, and it is estimated that 17,000 children under the age of 5 will also die from treatable conditions (WHO, 2014). Research shows that globally, maternal mortality declined by 38 percent between 2000 and 2007. That is, from 342 deaths to 211 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to the UN interagency estimate. Between 2000 and 2017, sub-Saharan Africa achieved a notable reduction of 39 percent in maternal mortality (WHO et al., 2020). According to these trends, there has been significant progress since 2000, but despite the achievements, "over 800 women are dying each day from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. And for every woman who dies, approximately 20 others suffer serious injuries, infections or disabilities" (WHO et al., 2019, p. 12).

In Uganda, about 300 children and 20 mothers die from preventable causes daily (UBOS, 2016). The causes include complications to the mother and child in labor, during delivery, and in the first 6 weeks of delivery. These include hemorrhage, preexisting medical conditions aggravated by pregnancy, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, and complications with the baby. Other causes include malaria, pneumonia, sepsis, HIV/AIDS, among others (Awor et al., 2020). Obstetric complications require prompt access to quality obstetric care, life-saving drugs, and qualified human resources (WHO et al., 2019).

The Global Burden of Disease study (2016) found that maternal and neonatal health contributes to about 22 percent of years of life lost in Uganda (Okungu et al., 2019). Years of life lost considers the age at which deaths occur by giving greater weight to deaths at a younger age and lower weight to deaths at an older age (WHO, 2006). Like many other low-income countries, Uganda is still grappling with inadequate health resources, including human resources, medicines, equipment, and diagnostics, as well as weak governance and limited funding (Awor et al., 2020).

However, in Uganda, the HSDP 2015/16–2019/20 prioritizes improvements in maternal and child health indicators and recognizes poor policy implementation, among other factors, as the main contributor to the high mortalities (Okungu et al., 2019). SDG 3 targets to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 and to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 by 2030. Uganda Vision 2040 targets to reduce the infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births from 54 in 2010 to 4 by 2040, and the maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births from 438 in 2010 to 15 by 2040. A 2017 USAID report showed that previous efforts to improve the survival rates of mothers, newborns, and children under the age of 5 had saved 2.5 million children and 200,000 mothers since 2008 (USAID, 2017). This evidence demonstrates the promise that further interventions may realize continued success.

TABLE 7 Human Resources for Health Posts Approved, by Year and Public Health facility, 2016 –2020

Health Facility	2016/17			2017/18			2019/20		
	Approved Posts	**Posts Filled**	**Percent Filled**	**Approved Posts**	**Posts Filled**	**Percent Filled**	**Approved Posts**	**Posts Filled**	**Percent Filled**
Ministry of Health Headquarters	821	771	94	634	884	139	634	282	44
Referral hospitals									
Mulago National Referral Hospital	2,335	2,072	89	2,621	2079	79	2,621	2,103	80
Butabika National Referral Hospital	429	407	95	418	421	101	533	393	74
Mulago SW National Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	887	299	34
Kiruddu National Referral Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	829	244	29
CUFH Naguru National Referral Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	349	292	84
Kawempe National Referral Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	316	52	16
Regional Referral Hospitals	5,430	4,353	80	5,262	4020	76	5,028	3,781	75

MOH's National Institutions									
Uganda Virus Research Institute	227	82	36	227	82	36	211	87	41
Uganda Blood Transfusion services	246	322	131	246	322	131	413	239	58
Uganda Cancer Institute	272	147	54	272	147	54	262	128	49
Uganda Heart Institute	190	118	62	190	118	62	191	109	57
Subtotal - National level	**9,950**	**8,272**	**83**	**9,870**	**6,203**	**63**	**12,274**	**8,009**	**65**
General Hospitals	8,550	5,816	68	8,550	6,456	76	8,360	6,501	78
District Health Officer's Offices	931	1012	109	1024	798	78	1,485	1025	69
Health Centre IV	8,208	6,896	84	8,592	7,454	87	8,736	7,679	88
Health Centre III	18,107	14,501	80	18,829	15,063	80	18,962	15,495	82
Health Centre II	15,210	8,116	53	15,408	8,534	55	15,516	8,598	55
Municipal Health Services	216	216	100	-	-	-	304	199	65
Town Council Health Services	624	200	32	-	-	-	357	182	51
Seconded to PNFP Hospitals	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	375	

Subtotal – District level	**51,846**	**36,757**	**71**	**52,403**	**38,305**	**73**	**53,720**	**40,054**	**75**
Grand Total	**61,796**	**45,029**	**73**	**62,273**	**44,508**	**71**	**65,994**	**48,063**	**73**

SOURCE: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (https://www.ubos.org/explore-statistics/25).

Existing Community-Based Interventions to Address Maternal and Infant Mortality

Research and global guidance promote the provision of waiting homes in hard-to-reach areas, and many countries in Africa and other settings have implemented the idea and established related policies. "While maternity waiting homes for high-risk pregnant women in remote areas are recommended in national and global health policies, they are almost non-existent in Uganda and other low-income settings" (Awor et al., 2020, p.7). The goal of NHP III is "to attain a good standard of health for all people in Uganda in order to promote healthy and productive lives," and objective number (XV) of NHP III is to "ensure that communities, households and individuals are empowered to play their role and take responsibility for their own health and well being and to participate actively in the management of their local health services." (MoH, 2010)

Communities have been key to finding solutions to the pressing health challenges and fulfilling the goal of NHP II. It is fundamental to understand that maternal mortality is mainly attributed to "three delays," as articulated by Barnes-Josiah et al. (1998): (1) delay in deciding to seek care (family-related), (2) delay in reaching a health facility in time (infrastructure/transport–related), and (3) delay in receiving adequate treatment (health facility–related). In response to this challenge, some communities have devised ways of helping mothers surpass the problem of delay in reaching the health facility. A 2020 study highlighted three of the leading community-based solutions, described below, that contribute to improving maternal and child health in Uganda. These were identified through a crowd-sourcing call in 2017, in which different individuals and community organizations shared their community-based solutions to improve maternal and child health (Awor et al., 2020).

Case 1: Hostel At Bwindi Community Hospital

In 2008, a mother's community hostel was established at Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) to address the second delay (infrastructure/transport–related). Because of the mountainous terrain and isolated houses, women walk about 8 hours to get to the facility center. To address this delay, the hostel provides a maternity waiting home for

the month prior to delivery for mothers from hard-to-reach areas. The facility serves the general population of surrounding areas, including the Batwa people. Women pay a one-time payment of USD 1.5 for their stay. BCH receives financial support from other structures, such as sexual and reproductive health services and the Community-Based Health Insurance Scheme.

Case 2: Imaging The World Africa (ITWA)

In 2010, an ultrasound program was introduced in one health facility in eastern Uganda; by 2016 the program had expanded to 11 additional facilities. Imaging The World Africa (ITWA) is a Ugandan-registered nongovernmental organization (NGO) that focuses on incorporating low-cost ultrasound services into remote health care facilities; these facilities do not routinely provide this service, lack the standard infrastructure required, and have a shortage of radiologists. ITWA integrates technology, training, and community participation to bring medical proficiency and high-quality imaging services to the population. ITWA trains the nurses and midwives at remote health centers to perform basic ultrasound scans. They developed a software that compresses and transmits full ultrasound images using the internet to an offsite team of participating radiologists, both in Uganda and abroad, who interpret the images in real-time, provide a diagnosis, and resend the results back to the transmitting center. The service requires the availability of a laptop, cell phone, internet connection, and ultrasound machine at the point of care.

Case 3: Action for Women and Awakening in Rural Development (AWARE-UGANDA)

Established in 1989 by a group of local women in the Kaabong district, AWARE is an NGO with the aim of advancing the social, cultural, and economic status of women in the region. It operates in the Kaabong, Kotido, and Abim districts in the Karamoja region in northeast Uganda, providing supportive conditions for women to engage in small-business enterprises and agricultural practices. Among the services is establishment of a maternity waiting house. Pregnant women are brought closer to Kaabong hospital, improving access to maternal and child health care services. In Karamoja, girls are viewed as a source

of wealth, in the form of cows: a girl will be married off to a suitor regardless of any other consideration as long as he has cows (Muhanguzi et al., 2017). Therefore, AWARE works with men to address negative gender dynamics and to change beliefs around the value of women.

Male Involvement in Maternal and Child Health

Male involvement in health enhances maternal and child health outcomes (Gopal et al., 2020). However, the rate at which husbands get involved in their wives' care is still low. Additionally, it is rare for men to take children to the hospital unless their wives are sick (Kululanga et al., 2012). They also do not accompany their wives for antenatal or family planning services or delivery (Muheirwe & Nuhu, 2019). Since the early 1990s, the International Conference on Population and Development, World Conference for Women, and the 48th UN Commission on the Status of Women have highlighted the role of men in reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health (Gopal et al., 2020). In Uganda, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development commits that male engagement and involvement will be a priority strategy in interventions for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly in the reduction of maternal mortality, fertility rates, HIV/AIDS, and violence against women (MGLSD, 2017). Muheirwe and Nuhu (2019) suggest that the low participation of men in maternal and child health should be improved by focusing on comprehensive and participatory measures in which maternal and child health programs for men at health facilities not only focus on health sensitization campaigns but also integrate community education so as to change the existing sociocultural attitudes and perceptions.

Policies that affect the male agenda include the Uganda Gender Policy of 2007, the National Policy for Elimination of Gender-Based Violence, and the National Infant and Young Child Feeding program. The need for male participation in the issues of enhancing women's lives has been recognized from top offices to the grassroots. For example, in the Parliament of Uganda, male legislators have actively advocated for laws and policies that question gender inequalities (including gender-based violence). In 2010, male legislators promoted the passing of both the Domestic Violence Act and the Prohibition of Female Genital

Mutilation Act (MGLSD, 2017). A newer policy, male action groups (MAGs), was initiated by the government in which men at the grassroots are deployed to teach their peers about family planning and reproductive and maternal health services, among other topics. The policies increase men's participation and highlight the power dynamics between men and women (Gopal et al., 2020).

The MAGs policy has been implemented in several places in Uganda, including Moroto, Napak, Nakapirpirit, Kaabong, Amudat, Kotido, and other districts, where young men and boys join the action groups to educate community members about healthier and equitable behaviors for men and women, and raise awareness on positive fatherhood. Each member takes on the responsibility of sensitizing peers in the prevention of gender-based violence and supports their partners to access antenatal care, among other duties (Kajungu, 2017). Such community agendas that involve grassroots community members increase confidence, capabilities, and accountability, as well as their sense of responsibility over their lives and the lives of others. Community involvement in implementation has positive equity and inclusion implications. The "male involvement" agenda thus needs to be emphasized and supported, monitored, and evaluated as key to improving maternal and child health.

Based on the evidence in his section, the Committee recommends the following:

22. The government, the private sector, and civil society should enact policies and interventions that tackle the issue of safeguarding against gender-based violence in all its manifestations. These interventions should build on existing child protection programs and initiatives that eliminate gender-based violence.

Young Mothers and Maternal and Child Health

UNFPA (2021) observes that Uganda's maternal mortality ratio stands at 336 deaths per 100,000 live births, and among these, 17.2 percent of the deaths have occurred among mothers between 15 and 19 years. UBOS (2018) states that almost a quarter of Ugandan women have given birth by 18. Furthermore, in 2021, Uganda recorded 290,219

teenage pregnancies from January to September, with the year's total projected to surpass the 354,000 teen pregnancies of 2020 and 358,000 of 2019 (UNFPA, 2021).

Teenage pregnancy and parenting are critical issues, as young mothers' physical bodies are an obstetric risk. A sociological view observes that the obstetric risk is attributed to adverse social and economic factors rather than age (Kirchengast, 2016). Studies have shown that young mothers have different needs from older mothers. Indeed, early motherhood is not only a challenging physical experience for a young body but also a socially exclusionary one when mothers are judged (Govender et al., 2020). Therefore, pooling together services for both older mothers and young ones creates an equity gap.

A study in Budondo Subcounty in Uganda demonstrated adolescent mothers' unique needs. The study participants were mothers 10–19 years old carrying their first pregnancy or their first baby 0–12 months old (Nabugoomu et al., 2018). The researchers found that the young mothers participate in their own livelihoods, owning small businesses like selling snacks and handcrafts such as baskets, mats, and ropes to support themselves and their children. They cultivate food crops and rear animals with their parents. Their needs include money to support their small businesses and support for basic needs, including food, clothing, shelter, transport to the hospital, modern medicine, and medical care. More specifically, many also have a wish to go back to school. At the health centers, they face adverse experiences, including lack of translation of health information, lack of home follow-ups, and lack of a space separate from that of older mothers in which they can receive services specific to young mothers (Nabugoomu et al., 2018). The study also stipulates that besides the environmental and economic needs, young mothers need love and support from their parents, the baby's paternal grandparents, and the community.

The World Health Organization (WHO) described six building blocks of an ideal health care system: service delivery, adequate workforce, information systems, accessibility to medicines, health sector financing, leadership, and governance (WHO, 2010). Whereas the WHO initiatives improve the efficiency of health care, for equity and inclusion to come into play, other aspects need to be considered. For example, sensitization of young mothers' parents to love, care

for, and trust their pregnant children; sensitization of communities; and sensitization of school administrators, who sometimes stop girls from going back to school. In addition, there is also a need to revise some of the existing governmental interventions; for example, "the available government program of Operation Wealth Creation (formerly NAADS—National Agricultural Advisory Services) discriminated against young mothers through prioritizing and giving free seeds and animals for rearing to adults with established homes" (Nabugoomu et al., 2020, p.10). Therefore, it is important to listen to the voices of the young mothers and their guardians in their singularity. Listening will adequately inform appropriate interventions that meet their respective needs.

Regarding the social view of obstetric risk, sociocultural contribution to maternal and neonatal mortality also needs urgent attention. For example, culturally, when a girl has sex or gets married, their parents may consider the couple as being the responsibility of the in-laws. In terms of maintaining and respecting culture, if a couple gets pregnant, their parents may deny them adequate shelter because they are now considered taboo. Because the girl has had sex, she is not allowed to be close to or touch her parents because of cultural norms. For example, in the Baganda culture, there is a disease referred to as *obuko* (edema of the limbs, shaking palsy, and foolishness), which has several causes, including "when a young girl staying with her parents has intercourse and then sleeps in her parent's house or uses their basin." The disease is said to have no cure, so prevention is exercised (Bennett & Mugalula-Mukiibi, 1967). Such conditions that would have been otherwise preventable lead to compromised health for young mothers and newborns. "They [young mothers] sleep under very poor conditions on nylon [sugar-empty] bags and papyrus mats, and they usually sleep in the small huts of their brothers or in the 'sitting room' where it is cold because the parents take it that they are now in-laws" (Nabugoomu, 2018).

Therefore, in equity and inclusion discourses, it is a priority to look at the care of young mothers differently and to pay equal attention to risks caused by sociocultural views. Most studies mainly focus on the medical and physical complications of early childbearing and as a result, young mothers' psychological challenges stay in the background. As

Govender et al. (2020) recommend, the care of young mothers requires a multidisciplinary approach to ensure the betterment of their physical, psychosocial, and socioeconomic needs. This holistic approach promises to ensure equity and inclusion in maternal and child health.

According to *The Independent* (Habati, 2022), Uganda has been running a policy that does not allow pregnant girls in school for several years. "The effects of COVID-19 pandemic left over 354,736 school girls impregnated in 2020 and by June 2021 at least 196,499 teenage girls had become pregnant" (Habati, 2022). It is true that in January 2022, the Ministry of Education and Sports sent a directive for all primary and secondary schools to allow all students, whether pregnant or breastfeeding, to return to school (Habati, 2022). Indeed, *Reuters* (Biryabarema, 2022) observed that Uganda was hailed by the New York–based Human Rights Watch as one of the five sub-Saharan African countries who, since 2019, have instituted policies that protect the rights of pregnant school girls and adolescent mothers. However, as Habati (2022) in *The Independent* states, there exist dissenting voices, as represented by one teacher, Ezra Bakundika, who raises some concerns: "Do schools have facilities that will accommodate this pregnant student? Do schools have provisions for how this pregnant student will freely interact with the father of the child? Will the school timetable accommodate antenatal reviews? How will this mother be maintained in school with less stigma? How will a government that owns less than 20% of the schools influence strong foundation bodies, whose religious ethos can't accommodate such case scenarios?" (Habati, 2022).

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

23. Civil society organizations with expertise in communications for development should sensitize the public regarding teenage pregnancy to reduce stigma in schools and society.
24. Civil society organizations should target men and boys in maternal and child health education to develop male allyship for girls, mothers, and women.

> "Sharon, a young girl of 17, became pregnant while out of school during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her school administration had previously received training on how to bring students back to the school, including pregnant women or mothers. The school was able to assist Sharon in finding care for her child while in class, still allowing time and proximity to breastfeeding. Sharon went on to be elected head girl that year, all while caring for her infant and completing her studies. Sharon plans to become a chef when she graduates.
>
> —Muzugu (2022)

Older Persons in Uganda

The Uganda National Policy for Older Persons (2009) defines *older persons* as those aged 60 and above. It calls for equal treatment, social inclusion, and the provision of livelihood support for older persons. The policy fulfills the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of The Constitution, which stipulates that "The State will make reasonable provision for the welfare and maintenance of the aged" (GoU, 2009). The United Nations report *World Population Ageing* 2015 describes significant growth in the numbers and proportions of the populations of older persons in every country in the world (UN, 2015, p.10). Population aging is predicted to become one of the "most significant social transformations of the twenty-first century" (UN, 2015, p.14). Thus, the demand for goods and services to cater to the aging populations, such as housing, transportation, social protection, and innovative policies, is rising. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2020) observes, "There is an urgent need for policies and services that enable 'active aging' that can enable every person to age with dignity" (p.12). It is therefore imperative for the Ugandan government to plan for the socioeconomic shifts to ensure not only development progress but also unburden the lives of the country's senior citizens.

The Government of Uganda developed a plan of action, including rights-based policies, laws, and programs to cater to the needs of the older people. For example, the Local Governments Act (Cap 243)

Section 10(1) provides for older persons' participation in decision-making at all levels: "two older persons, a male and female, elected by their associations to represent them in the local governments' councils." Part III, Section 14 of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act of 2007 provides for monitoring and evaluation of policies, laws, plans, programs, activities, practices, traditions, cultures, usages, and customs to ensure that they "are compliant with equal opportunities and affirmative action in favor of groups marginalized on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, creed, religion, social or economic standing, political standing, disability, gender, age, or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom."

The national planning framework also includes the Poverty Eradication Action Plan, and the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan, which address major challenges of inequality, inequity, exclusion, unemployment, and low productivity among the poor and the vulnerable. These policies were formulated within the framework of international instruments such as the United Nations Plan of Action on Ageing (1982), the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (1991), United Nations Proclamation on Ageing (1992), the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002), and others. Additionally, the policy is consistent with international human rights instruments, including the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). All the above measures in place suggest that Uganda as a country has strengthened the foundation on which the lives of older persons can be built and rebuilt. The question then remains how practical, equitable, and inclusive the measures will be when shifted from documents and applied to the day-to-day lives of the older persons in communities.

Millions of older people across Africa are poor; many have no support, no access to pensions or support from significant others. Because of this, they have to continue working in old age in order to survive. Moreover, those who are disabled, and those who have ill health cannot work (UNDP, 2017). Evidence shows that for a long time, older people have been forgotten or served minimally in government plans. They have been facing the challenge of age-related discrimination, or ageism, and even accept age discrimination as part of being old. Yet, research shows that in Uganda, older persons are key players in development

through their contribution to wealth creation and preservation of culture and traditions passed on from generation to generation; they create social cohesion and resolve conflict in their communities. Older persons also support and care for orphans and other vulnerable children (Ministry of Gender, Labour, & Social Development, 2020).

Traditionally, interventions in sub-Saharan Africa, such as social protection projects, have paid attention to children and people living with HIV/AIDS, among other vulnerable groups, but excluded older persons (Rademeyer & Maharaj, 2020). In Uganda, the strategic framework for coordinating and implementing HIV and AIDS interventions mostly excludes older persons (MGLSD, 2020). Article 32 of the Ugandan Constitution states, "Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, the State will take affirmative action in favor of groups marginalized based on gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, to redress imbalances which exist against them."

Despite the article that promises affirmative action in favor of marginalization due to age, violation of older persons is still highly prevalent. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) (2020) observes that the existing legal and policy frameworks that provide for human rights in Uganda seem to have laxity towards older persons because their rights continue to be violated. Wamara et al. (2021) state that in Uganda, as in different parts of Africa, the abuse of older peoples is culturally defined. In agreement with this notion, MGLSD (2020) extrapolates that violations of older people in most cases are caused by the "cultural connotations that are deeply rooted in our communities. Older persons' rights violations are not viewed as violations and are often left unattended to" (p.78).

The existing evidence shows that culture is fundamental to older persons' understanding of abuse, which demonstrates that there is a need to develop a "broad, culturally appropriate framework to define, classify, and explain what constitutes abuses of older people in the global south" (Wamara et al., 2021, p. 288). These researchers carried out a study to investigate the perspectives of older people in Uganda on behaviors they consider abusive. They categorized the abuse in terms of (1) economic abuse, including land grabbing by their children and relatives, coercion to sell off their land, people stealing their money and property (goats, chickens, trees), and telephone fraud, in which children

who help them register for mobile money may discreetly use their secret codes to obtain loans or withdraw money from their accounts; and (2) disrespect in terms of mocking and taunting, people not listening to their advice, being blamed for others' misfortunes, being irritated and scared them by people on their doors in the night, and being called taunting names, among other disrespectful behaviors; (3) neglect and abandonment by family members and society; (4) discrimination at both family and institutional levels, including discrimination perpetuated by the courts and government services, as well as hospitals, where they receive inadequate medical attention and doctors label them as suffering from "diseases of old age"; (5) harassment and violence, including physical abuse and rape, which mostly affects widows (Wamara et al., 2021). The authors further state that the above-mentioned abuse is mainly attributed to the absence of a strong governing body that defines and protects the rights and interests of vulnerable people. Culture also plays a part in the economic abuse, as it encourages and privileges male ownership of property (Wamara et al., 2021). Below are a few voices captured in this study:

Our land is usually grabbed by our biological children and relatives. They grab our land simply because they know we have grown old, weak, and we cannot fight back apart from letting it go. They use force to take the land they want from us. My own son snatched two acres of land outside what I gave him. (FGD 2, man)

The people in my family borrowed one hundred and fifty thousand Ugandan shillings [about US$40] from my Mobile Money account without my consent. They only refunded one hundred thousand when I asked for it back [about US$27]. I consider this a form of abuse and a lack of respect for me and my phone. (OP 8, man).

In 2018, a man came at night and knocked on my door. I refused to open, but my door was weak, so he pushed the door and entered and raped me. I was in pain the following day. I was taken to the hospital where I was treated and given post-exposure prophylaxis. I did not go to the police, because it would bring a lot of shame to me. (OP 6, woman).

In an article by Help Age International, a former physiotherapist from Kampala named Margaret has been campaigning for the rights and protection of older persons. She is quoted as stating the following while reflecting on her experience and work:

"Up to now there are still no drugs for older people with non-communicable diseases and this to me is still discriminatory. I once met some older women who felt discriminated against due to their age as they could not get services from health officials. Discrimination, where boys rape their own grandparents, is the worst form of violence. They threaten to kill them for their property. . .

"My proudest moment was when Uganda passed a number of polices. These included the National Policy for Older Persons (2009), the g for Older Persons Act (2013) and regulations in 2015. I was so proud as I participated in the whole process and development of these policies."

—Margaret Kabongo, Help Age International (2018)

The 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted during the Second World Assembly on Ageing, highlighted the need to consider older persons in development planning. It emphasized the need for older persons to participate in and benefit equitably from the fruits of development to advance their health and well-being (United Nations, 2015). The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development "calls for leaving no one behind and for ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are met for all segments of society, at all ages, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable—including older persons." The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2017) suggests that implementation of the agenda requires a shift from regarding older persons as a vulnerable group to recognizing them as "active agents of societal development in order to achieve truly transformative, inclusive and sustainable development outcomes" (p.17).

Most recently, the fight for the inclusion of older persons has culminated in such interventions as availing social pensions as a powerful

way to provide financial independence to improve the health and well-being of persons in old age. A social pension is a "cash transfer from the government to more senior individuals that meet a set of requirements" (Rademeyer & Maharaj, 2020). The social pension is also a response to national policy stipulations about social protection instruments for addressing older persons' needs, including direct income support and social insurance. Uganda is among the countries in sub-Saharan Africa that have social pension programs, which differ from contributory pensions in which an individual/and or employer pays a portion of the employee's salary into the system and then one receives their money back upon retirement (Rademeyer & Maharaj, 2020).

In 2010, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development launched the Senior Citizens' Grant as part of the wider Social Assistance Grants Empowerment (SAGE) program. This is a noncontributory social pension of 25,000 Ugandan shillings amounting to US$7 a month per qualifying older person (UNDP, 2020). The grant was a response to the constitutional obligations of the Ugandan government toward meeting the welfare of older people and the policy commitments of the National Protection Policy of 2015 (Livingstone & Isaacowitz, 2018).

The Senior Citizens' Grant is an unconditional cash transfer aiming to reduce poverty, provide income security to older persons, and provide children access to health care and education. According to UNICEF (2017), the grant program has had positive outcomes as stipulated in the expost analysis comparing districts with and without the SAGE program. Some of the main impacts highlighted by the report include food security and nutrition in terms of an increase in weight-for-height for children under 5. Between 2009 and 2013, districts with the SAGE program experienced more than a 22 percentage-point increase in school attendance, as well as an increase in employment (UNICEF, 2017).

Social pensions come with eligibility criteria. Uganda is among the countries with targeted programs that use a means test for eligibility for the pension. The means text requires that certain needs or income requirements must be met (Rademeyer & Maharaj, 2020). Research shows that countries with means testing have lower rates of coverage, including Uganda (HelpAge International, 2018). Besides the reality of an applicant failing the test, other reasons for low coverage include barriers that prevent some eligible persons from applying for and

receiving the pension—for example, lack of knowledge of eligibility, lack of transportation to reach application centers, and failure for a person to avail documents necessary for application (Rademeyer & Maharaj, 2020). This perhaps highlights the idea of "reinforced spatial patterns of economic exclusion and disadvantage," as observed by Kuss et al. (2021, p.2164). Based on a qualitative case study design carried out by the researchers, findings showed that recipients in remote areas are more likely to be excluded as a result of such criteria. So the low coverage of the government social welfare system in Uganda has implications for equity and inclusion. Older persons who are excluded due to ineligibility contribute to household and family care needs with few resources on which to rely, while at the same time needing care and seeking ways to meet their own need for care (Mugisha et al., 2015).

Therefore, "for social transfers to contribute to inclusive growth and development for all, it will be vital to invest in complementary development interventions in economically disadvantaged areas (Kuss et al., 2021, p.2174). In regards to contributory pensions, very few (7.1 percent) Ugandan older persons receive these pensions, and those who do face multiple hazards in processing their retirement benefits (MGLSD, 2020).

The needs of older persons in Uganda have also been exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic over the years ravaged the country. Therefore, developing care models and support services for older people requires an assessment of their needs. Effective intervention requires that care and support needs be identified and understood from older people's perspectives and that the wider context in which they live and interact be appreciated (Abdi et al., 2019). Uganda has experienced an estimated 28,000 HIV/AIDS–related deaths since the beginning of that pandemic, leaving approximately 660,000 children as orphans (UAC, 2016). In a study done to inform the development of culturally relevant interventions needed to improve the quality of life of older Ugandan grandparent-caregivers, Matovu & Wallhagen (2020) found that in Uganda and other similarly impoverished settings, grandparent-caregivers experience a significant amount of stress. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has created a gap between the older generation and the very young. Older Ugandans are essential care providers to others infected and affected by HIV. Moreover, in some situations, these persons

providing care may be in need of care themselves, but have already lost their children or significant others who would otherwise be caring for them (Mugisha et al., 2015).

In 2015, the government launched the National Social Protection Policy, which caters to social protection interventions for senior citizens in Uganda. The policy defines social protection as "public and private interventions to address risks and vulnerabilities that expose individuals to income insecurity and social deprivation, leading to undignified lives." (MOGLSD, 2015) It emphasizes social security (protective and preventative interventions), social care, and support services (UNICEF, 2017). According to Matovu & Wallhagen (2020), it is imperative to consider not only availing more psychosocial interventions of social support and/or coping skills as protective factors of mental health among grandparent-caregivers, but also interrogating the effectiveness of existing models of support. This aspect points to the need to involve and listen to the different perspectives of the grandparent-caregivers and to regard them as key stakeholders who provide input into appropriate resources, skills, or other interventions needed to support them.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

25. Businesses in the information technology sector should increase investment in digital technologies as a tool for the older and disabled population to be more integrated into daily life and experience more freedom.
26. Civil society organizations should train communities in ways to cater to older people and those with multiple issues (i.e., intersectionality).
27. The government and civil society organizations should address the stigmatization of disability and the aged, awareness of mental health, and equitable service delivery.
28. The government should secure funds to provide affordable, feasible, and age-friendly access to health care services for older persons. The current funds under the Social Assistance Grants Empowerment program do not offer sufficient independence and freedom for older people.
29. The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) should provide

pre-retirement orientation for informal and formal workers, encouraging them to save for retirement. After retirement, older persons should receive training in business and investment through the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda (PSFU).

Insights from a Socioeconomic Perspective

As with development, social inclusion cannot be understood as a stand-alone concept. Social inclusion and exclusion are closely related, and to better understand the former, the two concepts need to be placed and discussed alongside each other (Hayes et al., 2008). Social inclusion can better be seen through the lens of exclusion. Levitas et al. (2007) describe social exclusion as a complex, multidimensional process that leaves out some categories of people regarding resources, rights, goods, and services. Such people do not participate in the activities available to society members, including participation in economic, social, cultural, or political arenas. This lack of involvement affects their quality of life and the equity and cohesion of a community or society as a whole.

Therefore, in the context of development, *inclusiveness* is the expansion of equal opportunities for all society members to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities, and sustain growth (Kuss et al., 2021). Research has shown that inclusive development, widely considered in theory, remains a challenge in practice (Naziri et al., 2017). In practice, then, exclusion persists.

According to USAID (2017), exclusion occurs in "vulnerable groups," including orphans and other vulnerable children, persons with disabilities, older persons, marginalized women, unemployed youth, displaced persons, and ethnic minorities. In Uganda, persons with disabilities constitute about 18 percent of the population (UBOS, 2010), 46 percent of girls are married below the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2015), and youth unemployment stands at 18 percent (MGLSD, 2016). Women are disproportionately represented in unpaid care work. On average, they spend more time on housework, over 3 hours a day, than men, who spend less than 1 hour (Action Aid, 2014). In addition, very few women have technical and professional jobs, limiting their incomes. Men earn more than twice (USD 2,535) as much as their female counterparts (USD 1,008) annually (WEF, 2016). Youths are also excluded from the labor

market by limited skills and experience. Persons with disabilities face exclusion by limited labor capacity, and other minority communities experience low social tolerance (USAID, 2017). Interventions have been started at the community level to reduce exclusion, such as forming self-help groups to resolve common problems, local mediation of disputes by society leaders, such as clan heads who intervene to minimize social injustice, and community safety nets to support the most vulnerable. Other interventions include pooling labor and other resources to support asset building in communities (USAID, 2017).

Other strategies to promote inclusion have happened at a higher level. The international donor community has focused on fostering social cash transfers as policy instruments to promote participation in economic processes as a strategy to reduce poverty (Kuss et al., 2021). "SCTs [social cash transfers] can enhance the economic participation of recipients and their families, as well as improve the economic opportunities of non-recipients through increased local demand for goods and services as well as increased supply" (Kuss et al., 2021). In a rigorous review of the impacts of cash transfers, Bastagli et al. (2016) detail evidence that reflects the effectiveness and power of cash transfer as a policy instrument. They highlight the range of potential benefits for beneficiaries, including, among others, increased empowerment of women, increased school attendance, decreased school absenteeism, increased use of health services, and increased dietary diversity. Some studies have shown that cash transfers have led to significant increases in households reporting savings in the accumulation of productive agricultural assets for crop production, among other benefits (Bastagli et al., 2016).

On the other hand, cash transfers have not been found to have a significant impact on employment. And although they are a thriving entity, social transfers pose a risk for "spatial inequalities on productive structures in the poorest locations with local productive capacities" (Rougier et al., 2018). For example, Kuss et al. (2021) observe that "the implementation of a national SCT program unintentionally perpetuates inequalities of opportunity, which are present in much of rural Africa." In other words, this strategy performs poorly when it targets a homogeneous population.

And yet, as other researchers have noted, the term *poor* is often defined ambiguously (Fenny et al., 2018). Such emphasis on the poor ignores other intragroup differences that influence people's participation in economic processes (Kuss et al., 2021). This opens doors for inequalities. Similarly, priority has been given to gender and income inequality; however, there is a need to focus on all marginalized groups (Moyi, 2012).

The geographical factor has been recognized as equally important in influencing people's ability to participate in economic growth. The distribution of infrastructure is highly inequitable (Orem & Zikusooka, 2010). "The importance of location with its local economic structures, such as the available infrastructure, opportunities for work or the presence of markets, has largely been ignored in social protection evaluations. Therefore, For SCTs to be more inclusive, complementary investments into basic infrastructure in remote areas are necessary" (Kuss et al., 2021).

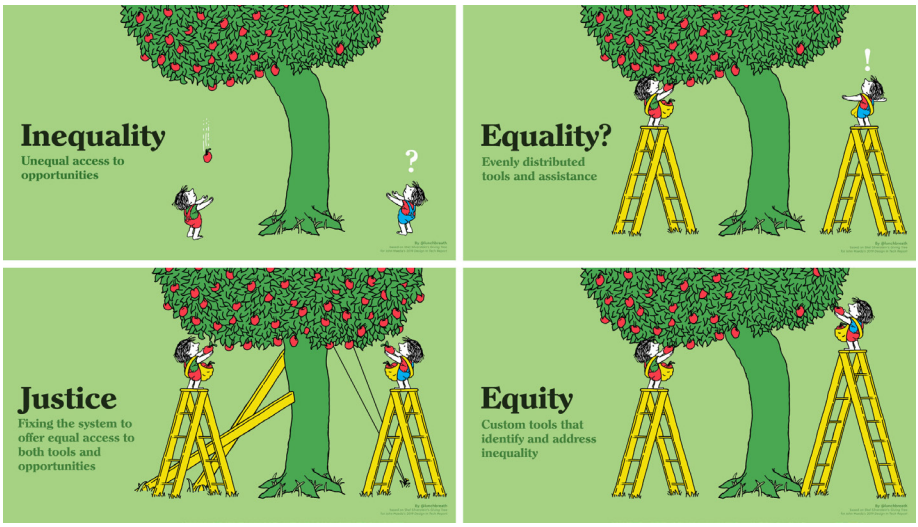

FIGURE 6 Equality, equity, and justics.
SOURCE Tony Ruth (Maeda, 2019).

Taxes

Uganda's tax system is unfair and exploitative, particularly for low-income earners and small businesses. Local manufacturers are denied tax breaks while foreign investors are treated more favorably to attract foreign capital. Exemptions undermine the mobilization of tax revenues for the delivery of public services. Value-added tax is applied at a blanket rate of 18 percent, which affects the poorest hardest. High levels of domestic borrowing have created a large fiscal deficit, requiring supplementary budgets and the issuance of government securities. This has crowded out private-sector enterprises and has pushed up interest rates, generated inflation, and increased the cost of living. Over the years, the government has retreated on some of its proposed tax measures. This practice has benefited producers but not final consumers, as the former do not adjust their pricing after the announcement of such measures (Ssewanyana, 2015).

In May 2018, through an amendment of the Excise Duty Act of 2014, the Government of Uganda introduced both a mobile money tax (a 1 percent tax on the value of remittances sent using mobile phones) and an over-the-top service tax on the use of streaming (social) media services like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter (fixed daily levy of 200 Ugandan Shillings/US$0.05 to gain access). In relative terms, the $0.05 per day tax is large; annualizing the $0.05 per day gives a tax burden of the social media tax at roughly 1 percent of Uganda's GDP per capita (Boxell & Steinart-Threlkeld, 2019; Ndajiwo, 2020).

As of 2018, mobile money transfer apps, with 24 million subscribers in Uganda, are used more than banks by rural–urban work migrants to remit extra earnings to their families in rural areas. According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development, 70 percent of Ugandans have access to a mobile phone, and there were 9.8 million internet subscribers as of March 2018. Mobile money is the most-used means of payment for digitalized transactions in Uganda; currently, about USD 16.3 billion in transactions are carried out via mobile money, equaling half the country's GDP (UNCTAD, 2018). The tax is added to transfer charges imposed by the service provider. Both taxes are regressive and widely perceived to be unfair, as they disproportionately affect people in lower-income groups. Shortly after the tax was passed, the finance

minister "disowned" the enacted mobile money tax, stating the cabinet had agreed on a 0.5 percent instead of 1 percent rate. Parliament voted to reduce the rate to 0.5 percent a few months later (International Budget Partnership, 2021). Beyond these taxes, there are no taxes on the gig economy or digital businesses earning revenues from Uganda, including multinational enterprises, such as Amazon (UNCTAD, 2018).

On distributional impacts, the Excise Duty Act tax reform enhanced the progressivity of pay-as-you-earn with a greater tax burden on the richest decile. The forgone revenue is worrying given Uganda's narrow tax base against its several unfunded long-term development programs—especially if the enhanced disposable incomes of the low-income earners do not translate into higher consumption taxes (Ssewanyana, 2015). The potential to increase the current value-added tax to 18 percent is limited given the ongoing tax harmonization efforts with the East African Community. Government efforts are focused on broadening the tax base by reducing the number of tax exemptions on basic goods and services. Presumptive tax, a final tax on business income, was introduced in Uganda in 1997. The simplified tax regime for small businesses is charged on turnover. It has been reformed several times since its conception, with the latest reform in July 2020, which sought to make the presumptive regime more progressive, simpler, and fairer to small firms. It has, however, raised new worries about lower revenues and greater complexity, including a lack of clarity as to what constitutes acceptable record keeping (Waiswa et al., 2021).

Insights from Politics and Governance

The Status of Corruption

Political corruption occurs at the highest levels of political authority involving politicians, government ministers, senior civil servants, and other elected public office holders. It entails the abuse of office by those who decide on laws and regulations and the basic allocation of resources in a society. Political corruption is usually enormous in scale and may include tailoring laws and regulations to the advantage of private-sector agents in exchange for bribes, granting large public contracts to specific firms, or embezzling funds from the treasury. High-level political

corruption endures largely because it is situated within the framework of neo-patron-clientelism and skewed power relations. Institutions have not effectively engaged the inner-circle ruling elite because of a lopsided power structure that serves narrow political interests. Bureaucratic forms of corruption are equally extensive and challenging, though only the former have been affected by zero tolerance policies (Asiimwe, 2013).

Bureaucratic corruption occurs when implementing public policies involving appointed bureaucrats and public administrators at the central or local level. Uganda's corruption is principally manifested through bribery, extortion, illegal use of public assets for private gain, overinvoicing and underinvoicing, payment of salaries and wages to nonexistent workers (ghost workers), embezzlement of national funds, devious court decisions, nepotism, and patronage. Despite Uganda's robust anticorruption framework, patronage and corruption have continued to thrive mainly because of the failure of anticorruption institutions to enforce the anticorruption framework, making the fight against corruption a losing battle (Mbabazi, 2015).

Women in Politics

In 1997, Uganda approved its first National Gender Policy (NGP). Before this policy emerged, the Ministry of Gender and Community Development had been excluded from key economic policy discussions in other areas where gender issues were recognized as critical, such as poverty reduction. The Ministry and powerful feminist politicians were excluded from national economic planning processes. For example, gender equity concerns were excluded from Uganda's national planning document, the 1993-96 Rehabilitation and Development Plan (Goetz, 1998).

However, after the approval of the NGP in 1997, there were some achievements. It became the overall framework for gender equality in the country and increased awareness among policy makers and other key actors on gender as a significant development concern. It also started key conversations toward gender equality and equity. Some of the objectives of this policy relevant to this review, and specifically for this subsection, are (1) to strengthen women's presence and capabilities in decision-making for their meaningful participation in administrative

and political processes, and (2) to address gender inequalities and ensure inclusion of gender analysis in macro-economic policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (National Gender Policy, 1997).

Today, Uganda is one of the few African countries with an active women's movement in politics. In 2021, two women were nominated for top positions in the government: Jessica Alupo (Vice President) and Robinah Nabbanja (Prime Minister). The proportion of women in the cabinet has risen from 27 to 43 percent. Women now hold 46 percent of local government positions, 33 percent of parliamentary seats, and 43 percent of cabinet positions (Tripp, 2021)

Persons with Disabilities in Politics

Another group of people that have benefited from political inclusion is persons with disabilities. Evidence shows that the Ugandan Disability Movement is highly vibrant. The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the political arena was supported by the affirmative action policy of 1989, which fronted the representation of marginalized groups in politics from the village level to the parliament level. "69396 disability councilors were represented in the decision-making structures. Today the representatives with disabilities are elected by Persons with Disabilities themselves at district levels which realizes the global disability movement slogan of 'nothing about us without us'(Katsui, 2020).

The National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda realized success in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2019. For instance, its disability rights awareness project enhanced inclusive government planning and budgeting for persons with disabilities, including the participation of persons with disabilities in implementing Agenda 2030. It also had an inclusive economic empowerment program in which persons with disabilities, caretakers, and community members benefited from financial inclusion, literacy training, and income-generating capacity (NUDIPU, 2018).

Insights from Migration

As of November 2021, Uganda became the third-largest refugee-hosting country in the world (following Turkey and Colombia and tied with Pakistan) and the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa (UNHCR, 2021). Uganda hosts more than 1.5 million refugees, with the majority coming from southern Sudan (61 percent); followed by the Democratic Republic of Congo (29 percent); and the rest migrating from Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and others (UNHCR, 2021).

The refugees are victims of forced displacement caused by wars and conflicts; economic circumstances; and natural or climate-induced calamities, such as drought, famine, and floods, among others. For the majority of refugees migrating to Uganda, the major causes are the wars and conflicts in their respective countries, especially those from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia. The South Sudanese conflict alone has led to the migration of over 1 million refugees to Uganda. As seen in Figure 7, the majority of refugees settle in the northern districts of Yumbe, Madi-Okollo, Terego, Adjumani, and Obongi—with refugees making up 70 percent of the total population in Obongi (see https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga). Within these districts, Ugandan refugees are hosted in 11 main settlement camps: Achol-Pii, Bidi Bidi, Impevi, Kampala, Kiryandongo, Kyaka II, Kyangwali, Nakivale, Pagirinya, Rhino, and Rwamwanaja (Bapolisi et al., 2020).

Uganda is a signatory to several international legal instruments for the protection of refugees. These include the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention. Uganda has also adopted two items of legislation which reflect the government's commitment to current international standards of refugee protection. These include the 2006 Refugees Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations. The government has also repeatedly affirmed its commitment to integrating refugees into the development agenda through such strategies as the 2004 Development Assistance to Refugees Hosting Areas Programme and the 2015 Settlement Transformative Agenda (Moyo et al., 2021). Uganda's refugee policies have been recognized as

progressive and friendly to the welfare of refugees, allowing them the freedom to work and to own land, among other liberties (Omata, 2020).

The Government of Uganda has developed policies to ensure that the refugees are protected and can access vital and basic needs while in settlements. The Uganda Refugee Response Plan 2020-2021, for example, aims to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers have access to asylum, that the asylum procedures are fair and swift, and that each refugee has full enjoyment of their rights as set forth in international and domestic laws (ReliefWeb, 2021). The plan emphasizes the following: (1) registration of refugees on an individual basis, (2) ensuring access to refugee-status determination procedures, (3) providing targeted support to persons with specific needs, (4) addressing complaints through effective feedback mechanisms, (5) providing psychosocial support, (6) providing legal assistance and legal aid services, and (7) sensitizing refugees about Ugandan and refugee law (UNHCR, 2021).

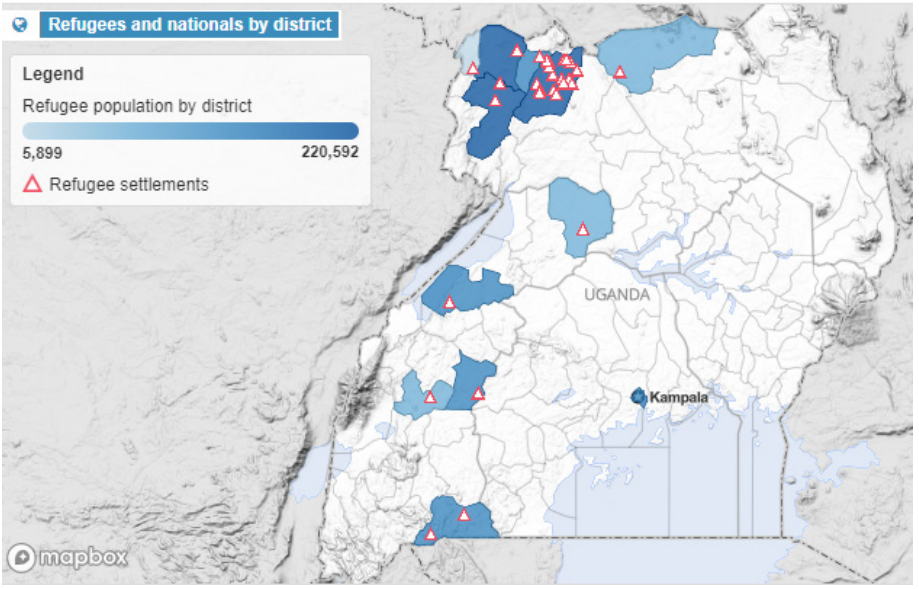

FIGURE 7 Refugees and national by district, 2022.
SOURCE: Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal (https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga [accessed 25 September 2022]).

Additionally, these progressive policies concerning the ability for refugees to enter Uganda, move freely in-country, receive gainful employment, and be placed in self-reliant settlements as opposed to refugee camps are among some of the most inclusive in the world. Yet the huge rate of migration into Uganda challenges the sustainability of some of these policies long term. Especially because Uganda itself has one of the most rapidly increasing populations in the world, with an annual growth rate of over 3 percent, ongoing resource limitations strain relations and can increase discrimination and violence against refugee populations (Ahimbisibwe, 2019). The steady increase in refugee numbers in Uganda, protracted displacement due to unabating conflicts in surrounding countries; limited international support to address the growing needs of refugee populations; and existing resource limitations in terms of food, water, and land can lead to tensions between refugees and host communities (Ahimbisibwe, 2019).

For some refugee populations, repatriation is not the goal. For example, many Rwandan refugees, who fled to Uganda during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, are still reluctant to return home; this may be a combination of negative perceptions of their origin country, as well as positive experiences in their host country (Karooma, 2014). And as one Sudanese female refugee explains, "My father is no longer in South Sudan, my husband is also no longer in South Sudan and this thought disturbs my mind every day. […] I will never return to South Sudan. […] My children, if they are big and they are working and they are mature, they can go back and leave me. If Uganda says they don't want refugees any longer, I will look for another place like Kenya, Ethiopia or America, if possible I will go. But South Sudan, no" (Vancluysen, 2021). In contexts such as these, in which many refugees find the possibility of repatriation impossible or unappealing, it will be necessary to rethink current refugee strategies to ensure long-term sustainability.

A lack of international donor support also puts further stress on Uganda's ability to support its growing population of nationals and refugees. For example, by mid-2020, Uganda had received only 22 percent of the funding needed to support its refugee population for that year (Moyo et al., 2021). Furthermore, there is a lack of transparency and clarity surrounding funding, including funding scandals, and many donors do not support devolved funding that would give much more

power to local governments because of the lack of human resources and local capacity that would ensure program success (Hammond et al., 2020).

Food accessibility is a common stressor that is evident in multiple studies (see Figure 8). One study describes a typical trajectory for young refugees when they arrive in Uganda, in which individuals migrate to Uganda with hope and a belief in possibilities, yet are later disillusioned by difficulties in obtaining food and establishing a livelihood (Schlitz et al., 2019). Another study attributed food insecurity and widespread hunger to the lower educational attainment of youth refugees (Meyer et al., 2019). One young female refugee described, "When there is hunger, children may lack focus on studies simply because they don't have energy" (Meyer et al., 2019). Furthermore, stress and food insecurity was further associated with domestic violence against refugee youth in Uganda. As one caregiver for youth refugees in Adjumani explains, "There is much violence this year compared to last because this year things are down, like parents are always in bad moods due to hunger in homes, some of them have resorted to beating children and children have also involved themselves in fighting with each other" (Meyer et al., 2019). Especially as food rations are decreased to encourage self-reliance among refugee populations, many individuals may face sexual exploitation in order to obtain food or security (Nagai et al., 2008).

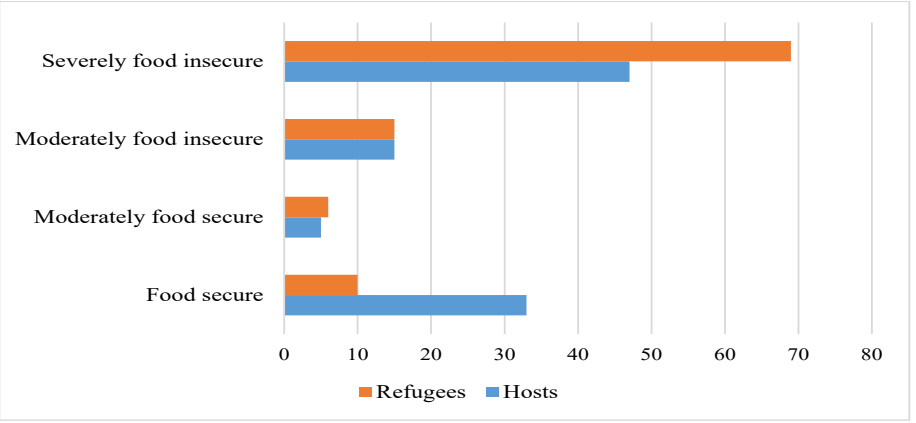

FIGURE 8 Food insecurity among refugees and host communities, Uganda 2018.
SOURCE: World Bank (2019c).

There are also large discrepancies in employment outcomes when comparing labor force participation for refugees (42 percent) and Ugandan nationals (69 percent) (UNHCR, 2021). Furthermore, the overall unemployment rate for refugees at 31 percent is also 24 percent higher than that for the host community, and is even higher for refugee youth at 44 percent (UNHCR, 2021). Interestingly, as seen in Figure 9, while men have the highest unemployment rate in refugee populations, the opposite is true in the host community, with women having slightly higher unemployment. These disparities in labor force participation are exacerbated by employers' lack of awareness on refugee rights and on difficulties in receiving work permits in-country.

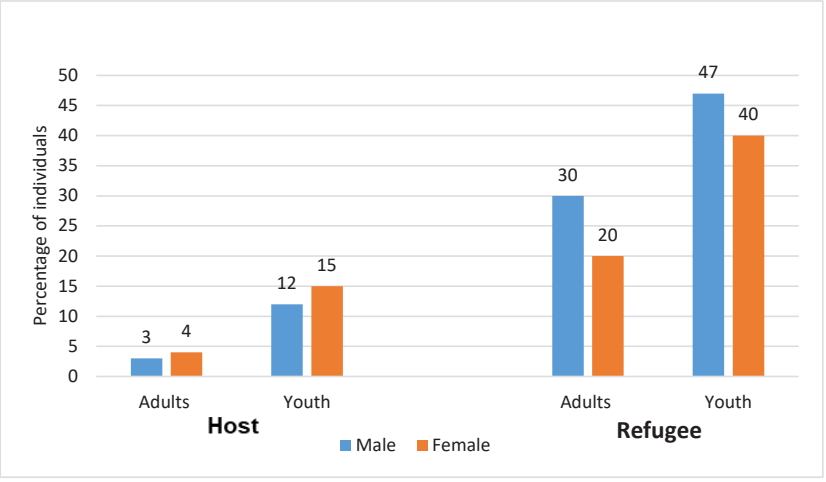

FIGURE 9 Unemployment by refugee and youth status
SOURCE:UNHCR (2021).

Uganda's refugee policy under the Refugees Act of 2006 provides refugees with "freedom of movement" and "gainful employment," which makes it easy for them to quit camps, move, and settle in any part of the country, rural or urban. Some decide to leave rural settlements and move to urban areas hoping to find better jobs and send money to their families in the settlements. Such is common among Somalian refugees in Nakivaale refugee settlement who move to the Somali community in Kampala and Mbarara. The 2020 report by the Knowledge, Evidence, and Learning for Development program states that there is strong

economic interdependence between refugees and host communities. Strong evidence exists that refugees in Uganda have had some significant positive effects on host communities in terms of job creation, and increased demand and supply of goods. Such effects are felt both locally and in the wider Ugandan economy. In addition, Somali refugees with entrepreneurial skills run businesses in Kampala, including forex bureaus, petrol stations, mobile money kiosks, and hotels (Kalyango, 2017).

Although there are tensions between Ugandan nationals and refugees over job competition, refugees also contribute to the local economy through the purchase of goods and services in markets (World Bank, 2019b). At least 54 percent of refugee households sell what they produce from the land provided to them. Furthermore, many refugees (especially in urban settings) have become entrepreneurs and employers, with Ugandans making up about 40 percent of people employed by refugees (Bahati et al., 2020). Refugees contribute to the economy not only by integrating their business activities into those of the host communities, but also by buying goods and services offered in these communities and filling gaps in the workforce that would not be filled by many Ugandan nationals (Omata, 2020).

Furthermore, refugees contribute to the skilled labor workforce, cultural diversity, and economic development of Uganda by contributing to taxes, although they are still often seen as burdens infringing on host community resources rather than as contributors to economic development (Bahati et al., 2020). However, the World Bank & UNHCR (2021) caution that "risks exist that Uganda's asylum space and refugee policies could become more restrictive in response to the strain on services and the natural environment, continuing refugee population growth, COVID-19 fall-out and political pressure."

Evidence demonstrates that displaced persons prefer to live in host communities rather than in organized camps (UNHCR, 2012). Reasons for this choice include the absence of camps in some situations, a desire to be integrated among the local people, and a desire to find work in town areas, among other reasons (UNHCR, 2012). Hosting refugees can exacerbate the poverty in host communities, which may suffer from having to share inadequate resources or from the gradual depletion of resources as time passes (Fajth et al., 2019). Indeed recent studies

highlight that "Uganda's refugee-accommodating capacity has been over-stretched due to continuous influxes of refugees to the country" (Omata, 2020, p.682). A World Bank report (2019c) titled *Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey* reveals that the refugee arrivals have put additional pressure on local host communities, the public services delivery systems, and infrastructure. They have also exacerbated a range of ongoing environmental factors.

Moreover, as discussed, the majority of the hosting districts are in the northern region, which is among the least developed in the country. The region has much lower levels of human capital and enrollment in education. Opportunities for attending secondary school are limited for refugees and host communities alike in these districts. In fact, "in eight of the refugee-hosting districts, only 11 percent of refugees have accessed secondary education, with only 33 percent of these being girls. In the same eight districts, only 18 percent of the host community secondary school-aged children are enrolled, which is considerably below the national average" (World Bank & UNHCR, 2021). This is compounded by the fact that Uganda has some of the lowest expenditures on education in sub-Saharan Africa, with only 11 percent of the national budget being spent on education (Hammond, 2020). Some of the main limitations regarding educational attainment were due to human resources, as some schools had a 300 to 1 student to teacher ratio, as well as extremely diverse linguistic environment, where it may be difficult to find a language to teach in that will be understood by all students (Hicks & Maina, 2018).

The World Bank (2019b) reports further that, in some cases, refugees have higher rates of access to basic services compared with host communities because of the compelling humanitarian response to their situation. For example, about 95 percent of refugees and 66 percent of hosts have access to improved water (World Bank, 2019b). Especially for rural populations in northern Uganda, which has been historically marginalized with limited formal economic development, outcomes for local Ugandan nationals and refugees may be similar (Bohnet & Schmitz-Pranghe, 2019), which may lead to strain or competition over limited resources. Such occurrences create tensions between the hosts

and refugees, ultimately resulting in inequality in the provision of services.

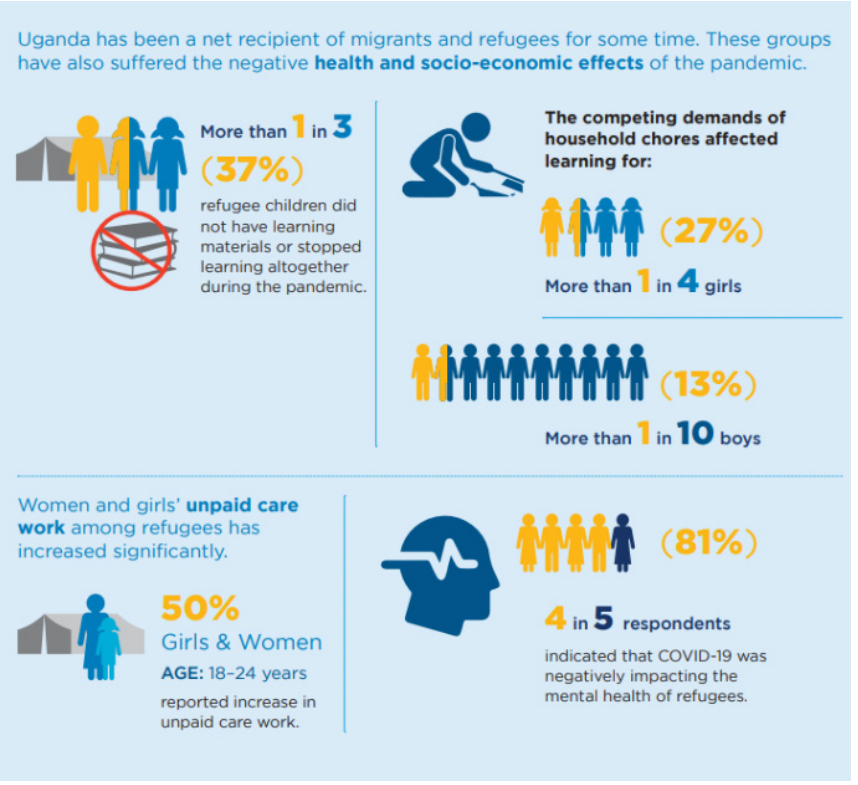

FIGURE 10 Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the refugee population in Uganda.
SOURCE UBOS, 2021.

In fact, a review of the Performance Dashboard report for January–September 2021, by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of Uganda, reveals that some specific activities or programs focus only on refugees, which creates unfairness to the host communities (UNHCR, 2021). Those provided to both refugees and host communities focus primarily on conflict resolution and addressing complaints that emerge between the two communities. For programs involving promoting economic development among the beneficiaries, a larger proportion of the refugees is targeted as compared

with the host communities (Fajth et al., 2019). One violent dispute between refugees and the host community in 2020 resulted in the death of 10 refugees in Madi-Okollo, one of the northern districts with the largest number of refugee settlements (Moyo et al., 2021).

Such occurrences have led to increased social tensions within societies. "Despite this evident potential threat to social cohesion, the social impact of hosting refugees on local communities has remained an understudied field of inquiry" (Fajth et al., 2019, p.1); thus there is a need to investigate how social life is affected by their presence so as to promote cohesion, peaceful and inclusive societies. Existing research shows that, although coordination is often lacking between local and international actors involved in refugee support, collaboration with local authorities can strengthen the capacity of service delivery by ensuring this support remains in place even when donor interests change and increasing inclusion of host communities as cobeneficiaries of the intervention (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016). In these ways, collaboration builds cohesion between refugees and host communities.

Certain response approaches that have been adopted to meet the refugee situation have also created their own challenges. For example, while providing land to refugee households (such as 30' by 30' plots) is good for the refugees, some local people have no land. In 2017, Ugandan nationals led a protest in the settlement area of Nakivale because of land disputes, which intimidated many refugees in the area; other Ugandans feel that the Ugandan Office of the Prime Minister has caused the land conflicts because of a lack of clarity regarding land allocation and boundaries (Betts et al., 2019). The practice of providing refugees with land is intended to promote refugee self-reliance, but it may not be realistic as a method for refugees to support themselves. Because refugee aid is tied to the settlements, it forces refugees to remain on land that may not be viable for income generation (Bohnet & Schmitz-Pranghe, 2019).

Environmental stressors related to limited availability of fertile land, as well as soil erosion and pollution, also make it difficult for refugees to sustain themselves agriculturally (Tulibaleka & Nakalema, 2022), especially because many refugees may not have been farmers in their origin countries. This practice of allocating small plots of land to refugees is not sustainable long term; there is not enough land to

support those living on it along with any livestock they may attempt to raise, especially with instances of drought, soil infertility, or pests (Grosrenaud et al., 2021). Thus, agroforestry and reforestation programs could be useful to rehabilitate existing land to improve productivity, thereby improving the livelihoods of refugees and surrounding host communities.

These environmental stressors will only be exacerbated further by climatic changes that affect temperature, annual rainfall patterns, and climate-induced disasters. According to the World Bank (2021), sub-Saharan Africa could see around 86 million climate migrants by 2050. Especially given that Uganda is extremely vulnerable to climate change and unprepared to deal with its challenges (Uganda is currently ranked the 15th most vulnerable country and the 147th most prepared) (Twecan et al., 2022), it is very possible that the already strained agricultural yields and limited national food supply will be insufficient in the future.

Many individuals who rely on agriculture to survive have already had to change their lives in some way—such as by switching to raising cattle, fishing, or migrating—to accommodate the lack of rainfall (Afifi et al., 2012). As described by the Ministry of Agriculture in Uganda, "Movement as a form of adaptation [to climate change] has increasingly taken place in the last 10 years, particularly from rural to urban areas.… Farmers are moving to cities in search of alternative forms of livelihoods. For example, many of the young Boda Boda [motorcycle taxi] drivers in Kampala are farmers from the countryside" (Afifi et al., 2012, p.41).

Especially in northern Uganda, home to the majority of refugee settlement camps, climatic changes could prove disastrous for people's livelihoods (Twecan et al., 2022). Furthermore, climate change may be a risk multiplier for conflict, gender-based violence, and forced displacement, all of which must be considered in the context of vulnerable populations (Kozlovsky et al., 2018), especially for refugees who may have already lived through conflicts in their origin countries. Additionally, given that Ugandan youth, especially women, already suffer disproportionately from economic shocks, poverty, internal displacement, competition for jobs, and limited adaptive capacity, climate change has the potential to hit the youth demographic the hardest (Mugeere et al., 2021).

Measures to Create Equal Opportunities for All

Research by UN Habitat (2020) indicates that "equity of rights with host communities is still something that needs to continuously be worked on by local authorities and all other stakeholders working on refugees" (p.7). Measures and interventions are being promoted currently by various development partners/agencies to improve the self-reliance of refugees and their host community counterparts, aimed at enhancing aspects of both livelihood and living in harmony.

One such measure is an agreement signed between the Uganda National Water and Sewerage Cooperation (NWSC) and UNHCR to ensure a sustainable water supply for refugees and nationals in the southwestern region of Uganda. The agreement transferred water distribution assets and systems management from UNHCR (an NGO) to NWSC.

In March 2020, NWSC took over the management of the Rwamwanja settlement in the Kamwenge district. The move from humanitarian assistance to long-term approaches means a shift from temporary services, such as water trucking, to more sustainable systems (Schweitzer et al., 2021). This transition aims to ensure sustainability and requires a subsidized charge for the water. The integration of the supply systems means that refugees and host communities alike benefit from an increase in the amount of water received per person (each person receives 20 litres per day compared with the 17.5 litres that individuals received under NGO management) (UNHCR, 2019). Research shows that with the new arrangement, by June 2019, water trucking had been reduced by 80 percent in 1.5 years in some refugee settlements, and in others, it was entirely eliminated (Schweitzer et al., 2021). Nevertheless, research has also demonstrated that this transition needs to be critically examined and strengthened; otherwise, the transition could risk increasing inequality, depriving water to an already vulnerable population (Allen & Muturi, 2021). Allen & Muturi (2021), through their analysis of equity and water supply and management in refugee settlements, indicate that there are multiple levels of equity for refugees: "the two tariffs applied in refugee settlements are the PSP and domestic rates. Refugee and host community customers are charged at the same rates. NWSC branch managers interviewed for this study

confirmed that their tariff structure does allow for cross-subsidization and that refugee water users, particularly those accessing water from public tap stands, would be cross-subsidized in this way" (p.12).

The Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda (ERP) seeks to provide education to the 567,500 children and youth in refugee-hosting areas. The plan was launched in September 2018 "as the first sector-specific operationalization of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework worldwide and is an Addendum to the Education and Sports Strategic Plan [ESSP]" (MoES, 2020b, p.1). ERP targeted districts include Yumbe, Moyo, Arua, Adjumani, Koboko, Lamwo, Kiryandongo, Kyangwali, Kamwenge, Kyegegwa, Isingiro, Kampala, as well as 34 subcounties containing refugees settlements. The plan "covered all refugee children, adolescents and youth registered by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) from South Sudan, DRC, Burundi, and other countries as well as the host community children" (Oxfam, 2021, p.3). According to the MoES, the plan has already realized achievements. During 3.5 years of implementation, access to education and the quality of education have increased significantly. In estimation, about 100,000 out-of-school children and youth have accessed learning since the initiation of the plan in 2018. Therefore, Uganda's ERP promotes refugee-inclusive education as a crucial priority (MoES, 2020b).

More actions to effect the plan are in place: overcrowded public schools in refugee hosting areas would receive a standard package for additional infrastructure. Funds would be provided to benefit schools to procure required learning materials and other resources as required. For example, the Government of Uganda would recruit, train, and pay salaries to more teachers in these schools. In 12 targeted districts, new lower-secondary schools would be built in refugee-hosting subcounties, and the existing ones supported. The following programs would be executed: (1) accelerated education program, (2) school capitation grants, and (3) certification of prior education. Also, plans for social and emotional learning programs recognize the specific psychosocial challenges faced by refugees (World Bank & UNHCR, 2021).

Additionally, the Lutheran World Federation also established the Functional Adult Literacy educational program in refugee settlements in the Palorinya and Adjumani districts. This program aims to meet

the education needs of illiterate refugees through basic literacy and numeracy skills. One of the beneficiaries, James Erama, a shop owner, says that he is able to run his business without losses because of the skill he has gained from this program: "I now have a cash book where I record all the goods in my shop, the sales, and profits," he said. With the acquired knowledge, the people have also started saving initiatives, including the Village Saving and Loan Association, where members can access loans (LWF, 2018). Other activities include tailoring and knitting skills that have changed the livelihoods of some of the refugees. One of the beneficiaries who earns UGX 400,000 a month through knitting explains, "My family gets enough food, my boy goes to a private school and we rent accommodation in a decent neighbourhood in the host community."

Refugees in Urban Areas

Refugees in urban areas face such challenges as lack of housing, income, food, and health services. Limited accessibility to general health care or more specific mental health services makes it difficult to determine the prevalence of help-seeking activities and engagement with the health care system for refugees in Uganda (Adaku, 2016). Contributing factors to the lack of access to health services experienced by many refugees include language barriers; a lack of appropriately communicated information; absence of health care resources such as medicines, diagnostic equipment, and specialized care; discrimination by providers; financial barriers; and sociocultural factors (Bukuluki et al., 2020).

Many refugees are stigmatized and face fears of being repatriated. They suffer racism, social exclusion, and perceived low status from members of the community (Nose et al., 2018). In a study conducted to examine the association between stigma and depression among urban refugees in municipality of Mbarara, in southwestern Uganda, findings showed that the refugees faced substantial stigma associated by being avoided and treated unfairly by members of the community (social discrimination). Those who marry within the broader community are treated unfairly, so the majority marry among themselves. In addition, refugees suffer from "internalized behavioral tendencies," concealing

their identity as a coping mechanism (Bahati et al., 2020). Refugees in urban areas also have high levels of internalized stigma, which makes them prone to depression. Bahati et al. (2020) suggests that there is a high need for interventions aimed at reducing stigma, as this could subsequently reduce depression among these refugees.

Additionally, many refugees have been exposed to multiple traumatic events either in their origin country, during their flight into Uganda, or once in Uganda. In Kampala, over 76 percent of Congolese and Somali female refugees reported experiencing physical violence, and over 64 percent reported experiencing sexual violence (Morof et al., 2014). One study found that Sudanese refugees in Uganda had experienced or witnessed eight or more traumatic events, and many reported symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Nagai et al., 2008). Exposure to sexual violence—which, as discussed, is especially prevalent among vulnerable populations such as refugee women and children—was also associated with development of PTSD (Ainamani et al., 2017). In the Nakivale settlement specifically, 67 percent of refugees experienced PTSD, which was often associated with lack of resources and medical care (Bapolisi et al., 2020). This, coupled with limited access to mental health support for many refugees, means that many refugees may be suffering from traumatic experiences without receiving professional assistance. Furthermore, PTSD symptoms may be further associated with declines in memory, as well as executive and cognitive functioning; these negative outcomes may further adversely affect an individual's interactions within their community and work environment (Ainamani et al., 2017).

One study on mental health and psychosocial support interventions for refugee populations in Uganda found that international guidelines on best practices for this type of support include strengthening family and community-level support networks alongside improving basic and specialized mental health service delivery (Adaku et al., 2016). One intervention designed to address the gap in mental health service delivery among refugees in Uganda is a group-based self-help intervention that can be scaled up and rapidly implemented across large populations (Tol et al., 2020). By supporting self-care and community support, a cohort of South Sudanese female refugees experienced improvements in such

indicators as psychological distress or PTSD and depression symptoms after 3 months (Tol et al., 2020).

Furthermore, research shows that during the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees in urban areas faced heightened stigma and isolation due to general perceptions that COVID-19 was an imported disease. As such, refugees in urban areas were "assumed importers" (Bukuluki et al., 2020). The author further noted that since many refugees neither understand English nor local languages, they did not receive first-hand information about COVID-19 protective measures, which increased their risk of getting inadequate information. In addition, limited access to health care services placed more vulnerable refugees, such as women and young children, at a higher risk of health problems (see figure 10).

Insufficient funding and shortages in medical professionals and equipment present challenges in health care delivery that have been exacerbated by the influx of refugees in recent years. A lack of access to basic sexual and reproductive health services further compounds the negative health outcomes resulting from high rates of gender-based violence that refugees and other vulnerable populations may experience. Additionally, mobile populations, such as migrants and individuals living in border regions, experienced elevated disruptions to sexual and reproductive health services because of COVID-related restrictions, especially women and youth (Bukuluki et al., 2020).

UN Habitat (2020) indicates that it is easier for refugees in refugee camps to access medical services than in host communities, for the services in refugee camps are non-discriminatory and onsite. However, in the host communities, many refugees are asked to provide the same documents as locals before receiving care. This practice contradicts the Global Action Plan fully embedded in the World Health Organization (WHO) vision with the Thirteenth General Program of Work, emphasizing equity and inclusion for migrant communities.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MLGSD, 2020) observes that refugee status can also increase the risk of vulnerability for persons with disabilities in Uganda. Risk of gender-based violence is especially high for refugees with disabilities in Uganda, which is compounded by discrimination, lack of support, low self-esteem, and lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services and information (Tanabe et al., 2015). However, research

shows that specific information about refugees is still limited. Abubakar & Zumla (2018) found that the impact of migration on health and well-being, including the health and well-being of persons with disabilities, has been well documented. However, specific data about refugees with disabilities in Uganda is minimal (MLGSD, 2020).

A recent study of refugees in Uganda found that "around a quarter of the country's 1.22 million refugees report having 'some difficulty in at least one functional domain,' 6.4 percent report 'a lot of difficulty in at least one functional domain,' and 0.7 percent report being 'unable to do at least one functional domain'" (MGLSD, 2020). The report cautions that the above figures were based on WGSSQ, which provided limited mental health or psychological disabilities data. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development observes that disabilities are likely to be prevalent among refugees who have experienced violence, conflict, and displacement. Refugees with disabilities are likely to be younger than the host population with disabilities, likely because many refugees' disabilities and migration patterns have to do with violent conflicts in their origin countries, and because of older persons with disabilities face difficulties crossing the border into Uganda.

In terms of assistance to urban refugees, NDP II (2015–2016) includes refugees in development planning through the Settlement Transformative Agenda. Because of the focus on refugees in rural settlements, such policies tend to forget the increasing number of refugees migrating to urban areas (Kalyango, 2017). Research shows that refugees living in Kampala don't receive humanitarian assistance and have to fend for themselves; because urban refugees are expected to be self-sufficient, there exists little social protection in Kampala (Lyytinen, 2015). This is highlighted by the fact that many urban refugees, although they felt safer than in their origin country, often reported feeling less safe in Kampala than they would in other parts of Uganda (Lyytinen, 2015). One male Congolese refugee echoes this sentiment when he explains, "in Kampala there is no shooting and there is no war, but despite of that [sic], we are in insecurity because we do not have that psychological stability" (Lyytinen, 2015).

While some initiatives, such as Inter Aid Uganda, target urban refugees (Nyende, 2021), the general failure in policies to cater to migrating refugees creates a gap in inclusion and has implications for

equity—while refugees have been granted the freedom to move and live in any area they want, they are not provided with tools needed to make this transition.

According to UNHCR (2020), over 80,000 refugees were living in Kampala with the majority found in Rubaga and Kisenyi. Ethiopians and Eritreans settled in Mengo and Kabusu, and Congolese settled in Katwe Nsambya and Makidye, among other locations (Nyende, 2021). Many others live in poorer Kampala urban suburbs, such as Kisenyi, Bwaise, Makindye, Nsambya, Kirombe, and Kasaato with inadequate accommodation and public facilities. The concentrated population growth of refugees in Uganda, urban migration, and urbanization of settlement areas all lead to challenges in terms of the sustainability of Uganda's settlement system. Waste management issues and overcrowded conditions, along with limited postsecondary educational opportunities in settlements present challenges to the refugees residing there (Tulibaleka & Nakalema, 2022).

Urban Refugee Youth

Urban refugee youth are also extremely vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination, which is especially important given that, according to the UN Development Programme (UNDP, 2021), "Uganda has one of the youngest and most rapidly growing populations in the world with a 3.7% population growth rate and 78% of Uganda's population being under the age of 30" (p.1). For refugee youths, instances of discrimination are especially hard on psychological development and mental health. A lack of social cohesion among refugees in Uganda, which is emphasized by ethnic tensions, instances of gender-based violence, and food insecurity contribute to negative mental health outcomes and reduced psychosocial well-being (Chiumento et al., 2020).

Social rejection and discrimination against refugee students due to religious, linguistic, or cultural differences in schools and public spaces add to the stressors urban refugee youths face when settling in host communities (Stark et al., 2015). As one young Somali female refugee explained, "Teachers in my class tell Ugandan students that they must learn well because [otherwise] foreign people will take your places; foreign people are becoming many in Uganda, and tomorrow you will

see they will take everywhere and start working your country and you, you will work in farms. At this point, as children, you feel discouraged; the teachers don't love you" (Stark et al., 2015). Many Somali female refugees further reported being sexually intimidated, especially due to religious articles of clothing such as the hijab or for perceived practices of female genital mutilation/cutting in their origin country (Stark et al., 2015).

One study by Bwambale et al. (2021) examining mobility and intraurban migration of youth in Kampala showed that most street children and youth live under the care of "street uncles"—landlords who charge them fees per night spent. They sleep on the streets, in markets, or taxi parks. Many come from rural areas with strained livelihoods, so such youth are also breadwinners for the families they left back home. The authors also state that male street youth migrate at a higher rate than females because of involvement in gang crimes and thus the need to keep on the run. Girls stay longer in particular locations where they feel protected. Youth involved in sex work are more likely to migrate than those who are not (Bwambale et al., 2021). The authors captured the voices of the youth and street uncles below:

Where to stay is determined by how much rent you can afford to pay. Sometimes, when we have money, we can pay and have a peaceful sleep. Failure to pay for the sleeping space does not only earn you strokes but also the landlord searches you and takes all the money they find on you. Due to the harassment from the landlords, we must move from one place to another.

—In-depth interview with a child living on the street

Sometimes, private security guards charge us between UGX 1000 to UGX 2000 as "rent" for sleeping in verandas of shops which they guard at night. If you do not have money to pay, sometimes they can sleep with (rape) you in exchange for space.

—In-depth interview with a female child living on the street

The rent paid varies according to the place. A sleeping corridor can go for UGX 500 ($0.15), a temporary structure built with mud, grass and tarpaulin at UGX1000 ($0.3), while rent for a room goes for UGX 4000($1.2) for a night.

—In-depth interview with a street uncle

Bwambale et al. (2021) suggest interventions in terms of (1) provision of safe and cheap housing options for the youths; (2) targeted policies that safeguard youths and street children from all forms of violence, including sexual exploitation; (3) gender-responsive policies to address gender-associated risks and vulnerabilities; and (4) economic strengthening through integral entrepreneurship skills.

Some economic interventions are in place; for example, UNDP has committed to several initiatives that empower youth in Uganda with skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship. These are targeted to enable UNDP's development agenda in Uganda (poverty eradication, promotion of sustainable development, and achievement of the 2030 Agenda). Youth4Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship was developed by UNDP in partnership with Stanbic Bank to enable youth ages 18–35 to implement sustainable and commercially viable ideas. The initiative is expected to create 20,000 new jobs for youth and equip 50,000 with innovative skills between August 2020 to June 2025 (UNDP, 2020). While the initiative is a boost for youth entrepreneurs, the criteria have equity and inclusion implications. For example, application and selection criteria exclude some applicants and "at the moment, the facility is targeting MSMEs (micro, small, and medium enterprises) that have been in business for at least one business cycle (12 months) and not start-ups." (UNDP, 2020). Such interventions therefore are more likely to exclude the more vulnerable youths discussed above.

Similarly, the Lutheran World Federation partnered with Uganda Youth Development Link to prevent teenage pregnancy and avert adverse outcomes for youth. One of the projects is the Urban Youth Empowerment project, which targets teenagers in seven divisions in Kampala, (Nakulabye, Bwayise, Masooli, Makindye, Nateete, Banda, and Kmwokya). The project fronts sensitization campaigns on sexual and reproductive health. Also, with funds from the Iceland Church Aid, the Lutheran World Foundation offers teenage mothers vocational

skills, such as tailoring, hairdressing, catering, and jewelry-making. In addition, after a 9-month course, they are given start-up kits to help them use their skills for to generate income (UNHCR, 2018). It is important to note here that while such interventions for girls are critical, they leave boys behind. The young mothers are surrounded by boys, including their brothers and friends, and it is important for equity and inclusion purposes to remember boys, especially those plighted by wars, sexual violence, poverty, and lack of education, among other factors.

Refugee Population by Territory of Asylum (Uganda)

Figure 11 describes the increase in refugees seeking asylum in Uganda, rising drastically after 2010, demonstrating that a focus on all aspects of refugee health care is vital to Uganda's overall strategy to care for all people in an equitable manner.

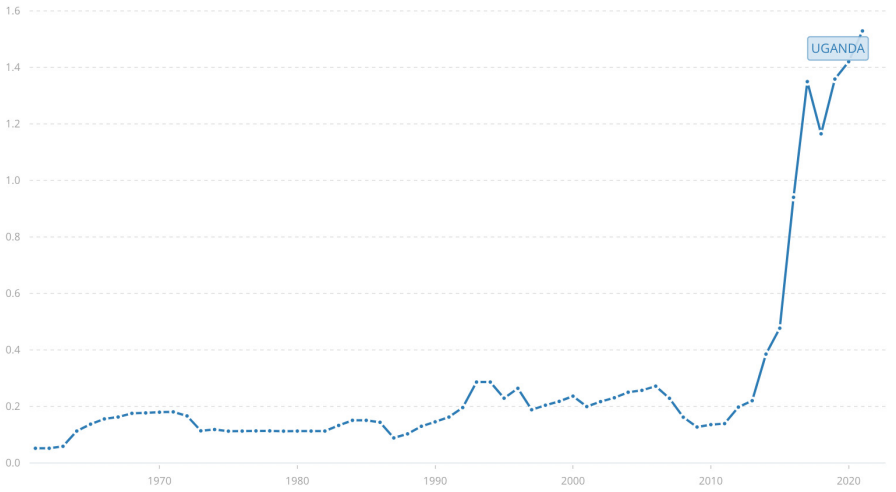

FIGURE 11 Refugee population in Uganda.
SOURCE: World Bank (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.REFG?locations=UG).

Refugees and Maternal and Child Health

Before the early 2000s, the UNHCR health system operating in the West Nile region was independent from Uganda's public service system. Refugees had special services with favorable conditions in terms of high pay to staff and better-equipped facilities than those available to Ugandan nationals. As a result, qualified staff preferred to work in these refugee health facilities rather than in those of host communities (Rustad et al., 2021).

Later in the 2000s, however, integrated health systems allowed both groups to access any health center they preferred. Rustad et al. (2021) carried out a study of these integrated systems in the West Nile region to investigate whether mothers from the two groups experience the same access to and quality of maternal health services and whether refugee and host-community mothers perceive the maternal health services differently. Findings showed few differences between the two communities in terms of access to health care and quality of care received. In these communities, both refugee and host-community mothers have equal access to resources and to quality of care. However, there is a gap between the two groups in terms of how the women feel treated. Findings suggested that refugee women feel discriminated against; therefore, policy makers and practitioners in the health sector need to pay attention to inequalities and ensure equally inclusive treatment across groups (Rustad et al., 2021).

In another study, Nara et al. (2020) studied Congolese women's access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health, including pregnancy and delivery care, in the Nakivaale settlement and Kampala. Results indicated that refugee women faced "significant challenges accessing delivery care in both camp and urban settings" (Nara et al., 2020). The study indicated a need to devise approaches that overcome the language barrier so as to minimize miscommunication and improve patient–provider trust (Nara et al., 2020). The researchers further observed that there might be larger differences between refugee and host communities in other regions in Uganda because Demographic and Health Surveys data show that mothers in the West Nile region have better access to high-quality maternal health care compared with the rest of the mothers in the country (Rustad et al., 2021).

Research also shows that "in many humanitarian emergencies, the physical conditions in which displaced populations live are highly pathogenic settings characterized by congestion, poor sanitation" (Komakech et al., 2020, p.7). As such, humanitarian emergencies place a bigger emphasis on addressing urgent needs such as the provision of safe and clean water, food, shelter, land, and health services for infectious diseases. In such places, other important issues related to maternal and child health tend to be underplayed. For example, in a study done to investigate newborn care practices in refugee settlements among mothers of infants 0–6 months, Komakech et al. (2020) found that newborn care practices (code care, breastfeeding, thermal care) is unsatisfactory. The authors note that young mothers do not care for their newborns in recommended ways. This study informs policymakers about the need for community-based interventions that specifically target vulnerable mothers, including young mothers in refugee communities, and recommends further investigation into the care of newborn practices, including feeding, which has significant implications on infant mortality and morbidity (Komakech et al., 2020; Nabugoomu et al., 2018).

Trafficking and Exploitation

Across sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in Uganda, human exploitation and trafficking is pervasive. The Global Slavery Index estimates that Uganda's trafficking prevalence is 7.6 persons out of 1000, which is the 16th highest in Africa (Kiss et al., 2022). Additionally, Uganda is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficked individuals, with most trafficked individuals originating from Uganda or neighboring countries (Lansink & Nampewo, 2022). To combat the high rate of trafficking, Uganda's government adopted the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act in 2009, which not only criminalized sex trafficking in Uganda but also prescribed severe punishment for trafficking-related offenses.

According to the *2022 Trafficking in Persons Report*, Uganda is currently ranked as Tier 2, indicating that "the Government of Uganda does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so" (USAID, 2022+). As

seen in Figure 12, after a drop in 2019, trafficking instances skyrocketed in 2020, which may relate to the beginning of the pandemic.

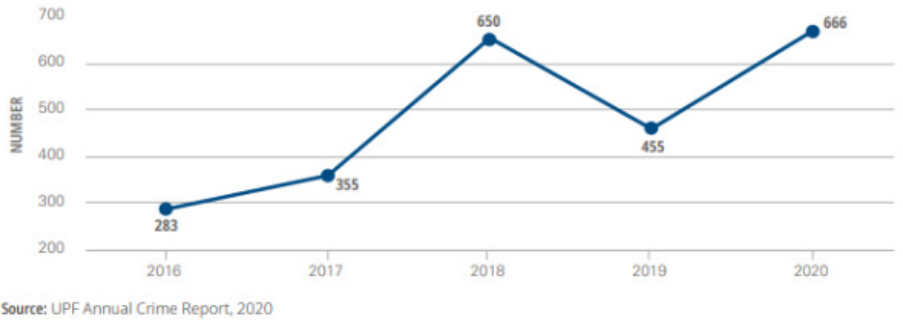

FIGURE 12 Number of human trafficking victims per 100,000 population, Uganda, 2016–2020.
SOURCE: SDG Secretariat (2021).

However, in 2021, Uganda succeeded in investigating, prosecuting, and convicting the most offenders ever in a single year (30 individuals) and not only identified more trafficking victims but also provided direct assistance to victims for the first time in 6 years (TIP Report, 2022). In 2021, the Government of Uganda investigated 501 suspects of human trafficking offences (a 325 percent increase from 2020), initiated prosecutions against 537 potential traffickers (a 190 percent increase from 2020), and identified 710 victims (a 276 percent increase from 2020). Still, services for trafficking survivors are limited—Uganda has no victim-witness protection policies, and police corruption hampers prosecution efforts. Police and immigration officer laxity enable the continued prevalence of trafficking within and across borders in Uganda (Nambatya & Gubo, 2016). During the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic and sexual violence increased in Uganda, and instances of teen pregnancy rose by over 1.5 percent as compared to the previous 3 years (Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza, 2021). Domestic abuse may increase as socialized norms of masculinity and men's role as providers are challenged; this is exacerbated as lockdowns prevent women and children from escaping these situations (Barasa Asekenye et al., 2022). Given that domestic physical and sexual violence and adverse childhood

events are risk factors for trafficking and exploitation, it is essential to take this into consideration for an inclusive pandemic recovery.

Additionally, the social and economic stressors caused by the current pandemic have the potential to exacerbate gender-based violence, sexual and labor exploitation, trafficking, forced marriages, and teen pregnancy, as well as to further entrench gender disparities. Refugee women and children may be especially vulnerable to these negative outcomes, or feel forced to engage in transactional sex in order to provide for themselves and their families. School closures in particular left many children vulnerable to trafficking, and survivors of trafficking may feel forced back into abusive situations by widespread poverty and lack of resources during the pandemic. Entrenched social norms and cultural traditions promoting child domestic work in Uganda may further restrict attempts at reducing trafficking for girls (Nambatya & Gubo, 2016).

Children, especially orphans or those living on the street, are vulnerable to being trafficked, with many young women and children seeking economic opportunities in other locations and facing high rates of violence and abuse during migration (Kiss et al., 2022). Even before the pandemic, sexual exploitation of urban youth and refugees was extremely high. Many Ugandan youth were trafficked from rural to urban areas, with boys being trafficked at a slightly younger age than girls (Nambatya & Gubo, 2016). A study exploring rates of sexual exploitation among youth in Kampala slums found that more than one-third of youth living in slums had a history of sexual victimization, the majority of which (82 percent) are girls (Self-Brown et al., 2021). Those who engaged in transactional sex self-reported having little or no school-based education, were orphaned, having a history of rape, and were using alcohol (Swahn et al., 2016). Furthermore, according to Taremwa (2017), "It is estimated that around 18,000 girls/young women are forced into commercial sex work in Kampala's slums as result of increasing youth unemployment in the country" (p.64).

When COVID-19-induced lockdowns began, many psychosocial and counseling support services that could support victims of these types of exploitation halted. One counselor explained, "If we were doing counselling, it was face-to-face, right now it is generally by phone. So, what is the safety of that sort of remote counselling compared to face-

to-face counselling? It is absolutely laden with risk. In the sense, you can't read properly what the dynamic is, you don't actually know what space your client is in, and whether their space is safe, who else might be listening in, if someone else is listening in, whether the client feels able to tell you" (Barasa Asekenye et al., 2022).

Partnerships and collaborations between NGOs, health care providers, and the government also halted as a result of the lockdown, as did government attempts to repatriate trafficking victims abroad. Given that many survivors of trafficking escape their situation by either acquiring sufficient financial resources to leave on their own or by getting into contact with organizations to help them exit, it is clearly vital to ensure the continued provision of services by these types of organizations (Nakaiza, 2021). Furthermore, as many individuals are unaware of the definitions of trafficking, their rights as laborers, or support services, it is essential that these organizations become more vocal and visible in vulnerable communities, such as refugee settlements.

CULTURAL, STORYTELLING, AND COMMUNICATIONS ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

> There is no 'culture' which determines that a human being can diminish, oppress and discriminate against another human being. That is not culture; that is a tradition, a practice. Culture is the best of the values we as human beings cherish.
>
> —Graca Machel

Cultural, Storytelling, and Communications Aspects of Belonging

The Uganda National Culture Policy defines culture as "the sum total of the ways in which a society preserves, identifies, organizes, sustains and expresses itself" (MGLSD, 2019, p. 2). The policy recognizes culture and the creative arts as indispensable drivers of development. The policy has its roots in the years after independence when newly independent African countries tried to craft national identities and build viable economies (Byram & Kidd, 1978) as separate endeavors. In contrast, the current policy views promoting culture and economic development as interlinked pursuits (MGLSD, 2019).

According to UNESCO (2020), since the policy's implementation, the cultural sector has received 0.000125 percent of the national budget for policy development, the revival of national sites and museums, and supporting the activities of cultural leaders. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have invested in the performing arts to promote organizational goals. Although laudable, these efforts have remained uncoordinated. No formal framework exists for promoting cultural heritage education, resulting in a limited appreciation of culture as a driver of development. In national development programming and financing, culture remains a low priority despite pronouncements in Uganda's National Development Program (NDP) III (UNESCO, 2020). Culture, a potent enabler of national development, is excluded from the development process it ought to enable. Given this background, this section provides a starting

point for stakeholders to address this exclusion and make the Uganda National Culture Policy a reality.

Languages and Education

Uganda has experimented with policies that mandate instruction in indigenous languages in the early years of primary school (Akello, 2018; Mukisa & Makuthi, 2021). Learning in indigenous languages contextualizes school-based instruction for the pupils. When they eventually learn English, they build on an intellectual foundation informed by their cultures (Stranger-Johannessen & Norton, 2017). Learning draws from existing knowledge within local communities, which enables pupils to connect what they learn within schools to where they belong (Jones & Mutumba, 2019; Mukisa & Makuthi, 2021; Ngugi wa Thiongo, 1987). A harmony vital for lifelong and enduring learning emerges under this approach. It also increases pupils' sense of self-efficacy, self-worth, and rootedness in their communities (Brunette & Wakeham, 2020; Jones & Mutumba, 2019; Kezabu, 2022).

Languages and education, as cultural markers and transmitters of culture, provide opportunities to decolonize indigenous cultures (Lamwaka, 2020). Learning in indigenous languages, reading stories that reflect communities' sociocultural realities, and making local ways of knowing visible affirms their relevance and humanity (Abdi, 2012; Eglash et al., 2020; Girei, 2017). This approach takes into account globalization and modernity, emphasizing the possibility of modernizing while remaining uniquely African or Ugandan (Ayeni & Aborisade, 2022; Nussbaum, 2010; Rukuni, 2012). As local ways of knowing gain prominence, they become powerful means of archiving culture and history, which cement identity even in times of fast-paced change (Makwa, 2021; Stanton, 2018).

Ngaka et al. (2016) further emphasize the value of indigenous languages and knowledge in the context of national development. The uniqueness of each language and knowledge system increases the number of literary and other experiences that inform the implementation of a development plan. These experiences, gained from experiences both in and outside of school settings, shape the meanings learners attach to them. Emphasizing one language (e.g., English) dramatically

diminishes the power of ethnolinguistic diversity to drive national development (Isabirye, 2019; Jones & Mutumba, 2019; Ngaka et al., 2016; Ssentanda et al., 2019).

In December 2021, the Uganda Development Forum celebrated outstanding achievements, innovation, and diversity in Ugandan cultural, creative, and performing arts by supporting the Janzi Awards. It was sponsored by Stanbic Bank and the Ugandan Communications Commission in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Ugandan Musicians Associations, and the National Culture Forum. The awards were presented across various categories, including music, visual arts & crafts, writing, and books & publishing. Such initiatives to support art are relevant to cultural development.

Walaabyeki Magoba, veteran radio journalist, novelist, and playwright, was awarded. For the past 8 years, he has devoted himself to children's literature and has written 30 children's works aimed at exposing children to indigenous literature. He started a bilingual newsletter, *Diamanda (DIAMOND)*, publishing children's work. He intends to help children learn to write in both English and in Luganda. He has initiated the only Luganda children's magazine, *Entanda 'Yabato* to promote a culture of reading in Luganda. He has organized literacy and literature festivals, involving such activities as spelling quizzes, read-alouds, and drama performances in Luganda and based on the Luganda storybooks the children have read.

These efforts and others have been effectively improving the rate of literacy in all populations since 2012 (see Figure 13).

Performing and Literary Arts

NDP II (2015–2020) recognizes that culture is manifested in various forms and influences different aspects of perception and aspirations in life and development options. The policy proposes a strategy to intensify the promotion of Uganda's visual and performing arts both locally and internationally (MGLSD, 2019). In Uganda, categories of art include performing arts (music, dance, drama, radio, video, television, internet), media arts (film, narrative documentary, computer, digital art), visual arts (painting, sculpture, crafts, weaving), and literary arts (fiction,

poetry, playwriting), as well as other forms of traditional expression (oral traditions, etc.).

Literary arts are those in the form of writing, including novels, short stories, poems, plays, and memoirs, among other forms. These are characterized by artistic and cultural values, and the usage of language to convey meaning. Literature develops language abilities. Through literature, we learn about people, cultures, behaviors, and other social norms (Mustakim et al., 2014). Exclusion in the Ugandan literary scene has mainly manifested in gender differences and in the aspect of languages. Women's writing has been marginalized for a long time, as has literature written in local languages. In the early 1970s, the literary scene in Uganda suffered a setback, as writing was under attack during the political insurgencies of the era. Writers and publishers fled the country, creating a gap in literary mentorship and in writing. In the 1990s, indigenous publishing houses and a new generation of writers were reborn, many of whom were women. However, literature written by women remained invisible, highlighting publishers' bias against women writers (Kyomuhendo, 2001).

In 2019, the National Curriculum Development Center revised the curriculum and made a new list of the books set for literature in English for the year 2020–2025 for both O and A levels. Whereas the appearance of Ugandan writers on the list speaks to an acknowledgment of local writers, there is a huge gap as far as gender is concerned, with more than six Ugandan male authors—including poets and prose writers such as Victor Byabamazima, Joseph Serunkuuma, Okot P' Bitek, Alex Bangirana—but only one female author: Sophie Bamwoyeraki (NCDC, 2019). Despite the high quality of literature by Ugandan women writers—such as Doreen Baingana and Jennifer Makumbi, among others, whose works have won international literary prizes—women's literature is still marginalized.

Despite the challenges of exclusion, the writing community has become increasingly vibrant. "Uganda is regaining its pace as a literary Hub" (Anena, 2015). There are a number of literary initiatives that have not only promoted Ugandan literature, including that written in the local language, but also given the youth platforms for meaningful expression. Such initiatives include FEMRITE (Uganda Women Writers), Writivism, The Lantern Meet of Poets, and Writing our World, among others.

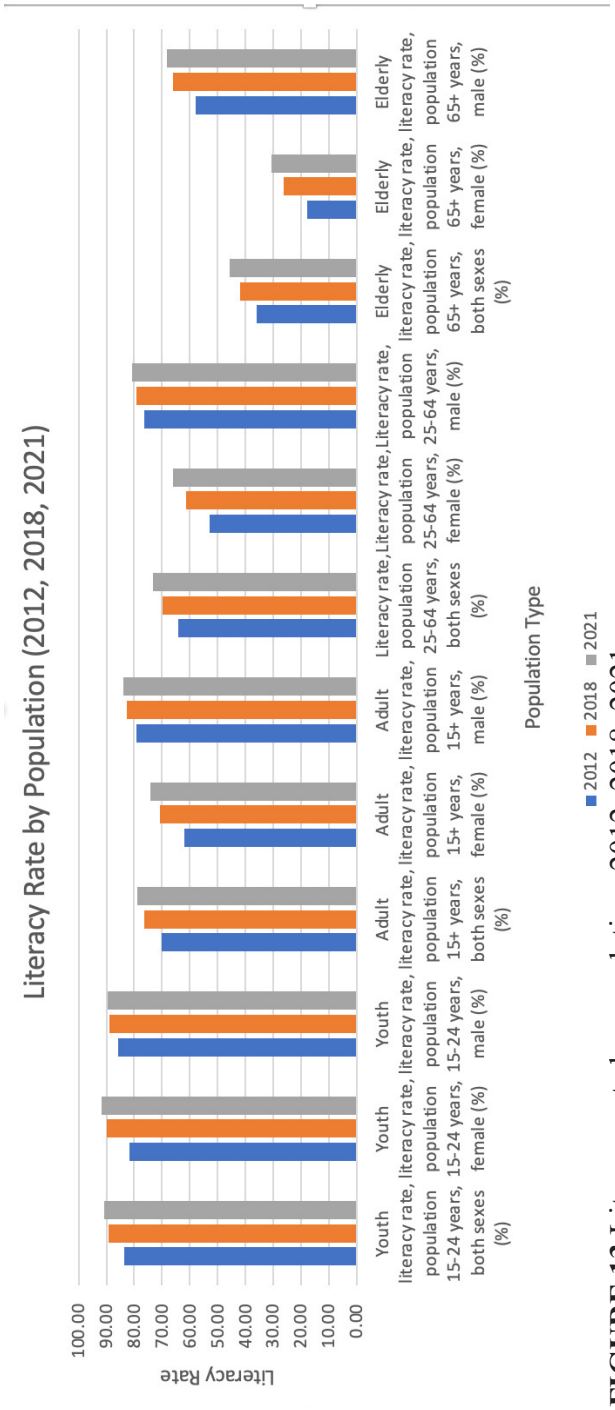

FIGURE 13 Literacy rate by population, 2012, 2018, 2021.
SOURCE: Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (http://sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org).

The Monitor (2020) observes that the creative industry is a crucial development opportunity in countries such as Uganda that are characterized by poor education, youth unemployment, and unbalanced opportunities in formal institutions, among other challenges. In Uganda, the performing arts have become a source of livelihood for many people and have enabled them to transform in meaningful ways. Artistic expression gives young people an opportunity to serve as community educators through creative skills and knowledge. For example, many youths have found meaning in their lives through performance. Kagayi Ngobi, poet, performer, and author of a poetry collection entitled *The Headline That Morning* has broken national and international barriers through performance. He is one of the leading writers connecting with mother tongues through writing and performance. He is the founder of Kitara Nation, an initiative that promotes poetry in secondary schools and in higher institutions of learning through programs such as training, publications, and performances.

Artistic expression has been used not only to communicate but also to heal societies and bring them together. Hanebrink & Smith (2013) argued that the arts, in their various forms, have restorative qualities that offer a platform for peaceful reconciliation, since they drive expression and the restorative "negotiation of individual and social identities and relations" (p. 195). Societies recovering from war (e.g., Acholi land), have used artistic expression (e.g., drama, stories, art) to reconstruct social and cultural identities that had been deconstructed by conflict. Similarly, in the surge of HIV/AIDS in Uganda, especially during the early 1980s, when the disease was still mysterious, behavioral change interventions offered the best options for preventing its spread. People used theater, music, dance, and drama as powerful cultural resources in sensitization, prevention, and rehabilitation through outreach programs to communities. People listened to songs about HIV/AIDS, songs about prevention, and songs about behavioral change.

Along with the discussion on decolonization of culture, it is important to highlight the potential corrosive power of money in the performing arts. When artists receive financial incentives to communicate a message, they may be driven by the motives and motivation of those who fund the work (e.g., civil society organizations). Those incentives rarely align with the needs of the communities they purport to serve

(Mangeni, 2013). Some of these actors also use narratives of survivors of atrocities to promote their work without attending to the psychological needs of traumatized communities (Pavarini et al., 2021). In other cases, the work perpetuates existing inequities between communities and researchers or practitioners who use the performing arts in their work (Bunn et al., 2020; Chinyowa, 2013; Mangeni, 2013). Perverse incentives harm communities, posing a risk to any sense of belonging that the performing arts may generate.

Despite these perverse incensitves, the performing arts, and indigenous cultures, have the potential to promote equity, inclusion, and belonging. To celebrate our cultures and promote performing arts that promote rootedness in our communities would generate much-needed renewal from our roots in a modern world.

Based on the evidence in this section, the Committee recommends the following:

30. Local philanthropists, cultural institutions, and development partners who promote indigenous cultures should establish a governance structure that celebrates, commissions, and disseminates cultural expression and cross-pollination in local languages.
31. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Education, and the Uganda National Committee for UNESCO should reimagine and invest in the implementation of the Uganda National Culture Policy.
32. The National NGO Forum, funding partners, research regulators, and community development officers should formulate and implement clear ethical guidelines for using the performing arts in communications for development.

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