



CSO REJOINDER ON **UGANDA'S** VNR REPORT

JUNE 2020

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THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Goal 1: No Poverty

Goal 2: Zero Hunger

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

Goal 4: Quality Education

Goal 5: Gender Equality

Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Goal 10: Reduced Inequality

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Goal 13: Climate Action

Goal 14: Life Below Water

Goal 15: Life on Land

Goal 16: Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals





“Our development gains are at risk of being reversed in the very year when we launched a Decade of Action and Delivery to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.”

**President of the UN ECOSOC,
March 2020**



“While this crisis is imperiling progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, it also makes their achievement all the more urgent and necessary.”

**UN Secretary General,
March 2020**

Preamble

The world is five years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In 2020, 47 countries are submitting their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Uganda is one of those countries and it is submitting to the Voluntary Review Process for the second time. While in the first VNR for Uganda the country submitted a readiness report, in the current report, Uganda is submitting a progress report that touches on several SDG targets. Uganda's report presents a mixed picture of progress. The global development objective that the world signed up to under the Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, inequality and curb effects of climate change is now under significant threat. As civil society in Uganda, we issue this rejoinder to Uganda's National Voluntary Review Report as an effort to highlight the critical areas of concerns that we as a country need to focus on as we embark on the Decade of Delivery under the most extraordinary times occasioned by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Global and national development efforts are being challenged to their core by this pandemic. While at the launch of the Decade of Action in 2020 during the SDG Summit, there was a call for accelerated action, we now need to move beyond acceleration of action and transformation to rethinking of actions and re-invention. The world is in an unprecedented global emergency. We now are focusing on saving lives of the many people impact and infected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ideals and international development norms that we espoused are now under threat. Many countries are looking inwards and have closed the borders between human and human. But the border between the human and the COVID-19 virus is still open and the world needs to close it quickly. In these times, we must all come together and find a global solution to a global and local problem.

COVID-19 must be contained and countries get back on track towards the Sustainable Development Goals path.

We therefore issue this rejoinder fully cognisant of this 'new normal' and the critical need for all of us to think outside the box and act urgently to restore our path towards ending hunger in all its forms, leaving no one behind as we care for people and the planet. We therefore have no luxury to look inwards but to understand that urgent collective action is what is required from every government around the world.

This rejoinder is a synopsis of key messages under the three dimensions of sustainable development that group the 17 SDGs under the themes; Society, Economy and Environment, with Partnerships as a cross cutting theme.

SDGS AND SOCIETY

Under society we focus on SDG 1, 2, 3, 4,5,7 and 11. The following key messages are highlighted under the dimension.

Message 1. Vulnerability to Poverty in Uganda is Still a Challenge that Needs to be Tackled

Uganda witnessed income poverty declines from 56.4% in 1992/93 to 19.7 % in 2012/13. But this has since increased to 21.4 % in 2016/17. This accounts for over 8 million people in poverty.¹ Vulnerability to poverty is still a challenge that needs to be tackled. One study estimated that between 2005 and 2009, for every three Ugandans who were lifted out of poverty, two fell back into poverty, illustrating the fragility of the gains realized by the poorest households.

Within the context of the SDGs in Uganda, it remains critically important that any poverty reduction strategy also pays attention to the households that are living just out of poverty who remain vulnerable to falling back into poverty in the face of negative shocks. In the era of COVID-19, we also note that many more people have fallen into poverty and hence a renewed focus on poverty reduction actions will be critical. These may include the development of new approaches to mitigating poverty challenges that may include; bailouts to businesses, increasing social protection actions for the most vulnerable and providing essential services like education, water and health through government financed free services. These actions will allow people to be protected from falling further into poverty.

Message 2: We must Urgently Protect Girls and Women from Gender Based Violence

While we recognize that ending gender based violence and ensuring women and girls' safety is a priority for the Government of Uganda, this now must become a national emergency. The number of girls and women who are reported to be experiencing violence has grown exponentially. Women are trapped with abusive partners during the lockdown and in situations where violence has been happening, it is expanding.

In economic terms, GBV incidents cost the Ugandan economy over UGX 77 billion. Health care providers spend about UGX 18.3 billion annually on GBV related cases, while Police and local councils invest approximately UGX 32.2 billion to deal with the effects of GBV. More than 1 million women are exposed to sexual violence every year in Uganda.² Unless Gender Based Violence is decisively addressed, Uganda's gains in gender equality and ultimately achievement of the SDGs will be undermined. Actions will therefore focus on implementation of GBV policies and legislations and ensuring sufficient budgetary allocations, human resources and building institutional capacity to respond to the various challenges emanating from GBV.

Message 3: Food and Nutrition Insecurity Must Be Eliminated

While the Government of Uganda has made several commitments at national and global level towards ensuring food and nutrition security, the prevalence of food and nutritional insecurity remains high since the majority of its population depends on rain fed agriculture as a source of livelihood. The 2018 Global Hunger Index (GHI), revealed an increase in hunger among Uganda's population, evidenced by a score of 31.2 compared to a score of 26.4 in

THE NUMBERS

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¹ UBOS (2018) 2018 Statistical Abstract, UBOS, Kampala
² UDHS, 2016



2016. Despite being acclaimed as the “regional food basket” for East Africa, Uganda's GHI score is higher than its immediate neighbors' (Kenya, 23.3; Tanzania, 29.5; and Rwanda, 28.7) and the sub-Saharan Africa regional average of 29.4 (GHI 2018). This situation underscores an immense challenge to achieving the zero hunger target by 2030.

This situation has been driven by a number of factors. The land question is recognized as a barrier to realizing food and nutrition security and may hinder the achievement of SDG 2. The issues of land tenure systems, formal land titling, land fragmentation and land inequality continue to remain unresolved in Uganda³. The current population growth rate of 3 percent per annum, remains high in relation to the rate of agricultural growth (food production), which has stagnated at approximately 2 percent for over a decade⁴. The ever-increasing price of food further has worsened the hunger and intake of adequate nutritious foods thereby increasing vulnerability to malnutrition. Gender inequality is also among the root causes of food and nutrition insecurity. For example, while women in Uganda constitute 82 percent of the agricultural workforce, they continue to be voiceless in the market chain and in economic decision making.⁵ Lastly Government investment in the agriculture sector is critical for improving food security, however sectoral allocation as a percentage of the National Budget remains low. For instance, while the sector makes a contribution of 22% to GDP only second to the services sector, in financial year 2020/21 the sector was allocated 3.2% of the National Budget.

It is therefore important that Government explores mechanisms to address the above binding constraints to agriculture that have a direct bearing on food and nutrition security in Uganda.

Message 4: Uganda Must Protect and Continue to Build its Education System

The NDP III recognizes the centrality of a well-educated and healthy human resource in facilitating Uganda's development. The current Education and Sports Sector Plan (ESSP) 2017/18-2019/20) is premised on the critical role that the education and sports sector has to play in realization of the national development agenda, articulated in the NDP and the Vision 2040. While we appreciate these Government efforts, there remain significant shortfalls in Uganda's education system.

The Government of Uganda's public education system is grossly underfunded. Access to education for school going children, especially in rural areas is still a challenge and yet these constitute 70% of the 15 million learners in Uganda's education system (UNICEF 2020). There are serious staffing gaps at both secondary and primary especially for the science subjects. Uganda is behind on its infrastructure commitment, considering that Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) is still struggling to meet a more basic goal of at least one primary school per parish and one secondary school per sub county. Low prioritization of inclusive education poses a challenge for children with disabilities. The system lacks skilled teachers in inclusive pedagogical education approaches, coupled with limited scholastic materials adaptable to the learning needs of children with special needs. There is an increase in the number of unskilled Ugandans joining the labour market and there is no deliberate effort by Government to trace and retrain the school-dropouts (NDP III 2020/21-2024/25).

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the glaring gaps in Uganda's education

³ <http://npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SDG2-Strategic-Review-Report-Final.pdf>

⁴ <http://npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SDG2-Strategic-Review-Report-Final.pdf>

⁵ <http://npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SDG2-Strategic-Review-Report-Final.pdf>



A young child with dark skin and large, expressive eyes is holding up a piece of brown cardboard. On the cardboard, there is a hand-drawn symbol in blue ink, which appears to be a circle with a vertical line through it. The child is wearing a blue school uniform with a white collar. The background is slightly blurred, showing other children in similar uniforms.

There are serious staffing gaps at both **SECONDARY AND PRIMARY** especially for the science subjects. Uganda is behind on its **INFRASTRUCTURE** commitment, considering that Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) is still struggling to meet a more basic goal of at least one primary school per **PARISH** and one secondary school per **SUB COUNTY**.

CREDIT/STOCK PHOTO

system, ultimately undermining prospects for achieving SDG 4 by 2030. By July 2020, all children in Uganda had been out of school for four months. The impact on this long absence from school has serious ramifications on the lifelong learning goals of many young people. We therefore owe a duty to ensure that the generation affected by these conditions is protected and supported.

The current sporadic efforts to try and address issues of continuity of education are mostly flawed and further entrench the inequality in the education system⁶. On-line learning, study on radio and TV, newspapers, which are some of the actions undertaken in the recent past, have disenfranchised learners from families of lower socio-economic status. While Government has started on a plan to deliver learning materials to rural communities through the parish system, the materials are insufficient and in some instances the process has also been politicized by the local leaders. The pandemic has also exacerbated the risks of the girl child dropping out of school which has further entrenched gender gaps in education and undermined long-term opportunities for children in fragile situations. There is also limited evidence of deliberate initiatives aimed at addressing disability inclusion. In the aftermath of COVID-19, Government must invest in building a resilient and equitable education system that promotes equitable education opportunities and learning outcomes for all.

Message 5: Full Inclusion of PWDs in Implementation of SDGs is Critical

The SDGs have given a new impetus to disability inclusion. Some of the goals are explicit on disability while others mention disability by referring to "Inclusive" and "All". PWDs constitute 14.8% of Uganda's total population.⁷ These include 17% of all adults (aged 18 years and above), 7% of children (aged 5-17 years) and 4% of children (aged 2-4 years) have a disability.⁸ Owing to the above, Uganda has enacted a number of disability friendly legislation and policies to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. These include Disability Inclusive Planning Guidelines; Special Grant for Persons with Disabilities; Gender and Equity Certificate; and Mental Health Act, among others. Uganda also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) in 2008. As such, SDGs and the CRPD must be implemented as a whole. Nevertheless, the majority of these persons face enormous economic, political, and social barriers and remain invisible in the national policy agenda.

The challenges of the PWDs have also been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. While measures in place like washing hands, social distance and wearing masks may work for some people, for PWDs who may need a person to be in close contact, this poses a challenge. Public messages need to also be passed in sensitive ways. We must urgently create a COVID-19 environment that is disability friendly in all its forms. In the spirit of leaving no one behind, successful disability-inclusive development requires better and disaggregated data on disability by gender, age, nature and extent of disability. Further effective engagement of Disability Persons Organizations in all national SDG processes is important to increase strengthened commitments towards disability inclusion in the SDGs implementation.

⁶ <https://glissafrika.org/storage/transitions/May2020/4QEo199HtbuCVoxfCyEI.pdf>

⁷ GoU (2014) National Housing and Population Census, UBoS, Kampala

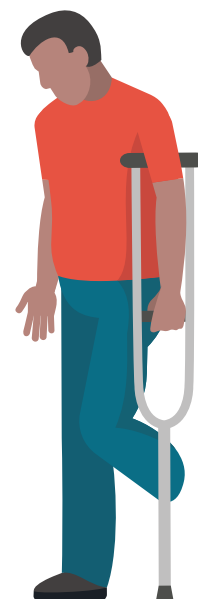
⁸ <http://www.ngoforum.or.ug/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Implementation-of-SDGs-in-Uganda-v5-mobile.pdf>

THE NUMBERS

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Message 6: A National Health Insurance Scheme for All is Now a Priority

Over the years, Uganda has put in place policies and programmes that seek to improve equal access to health care services: National Health Policies I&II, Uganda Minimum Healthcare Package, the National Hospital Policy, the Health Sector Development Plan 2015/16- 2019/20 and the proposed National Health Insurance Policy. Despite these efforts, the Uganda Health system has a long way to achieve universal health coverage. Funding to the health sector remains low, the state of infrastructure and distribution of health facilities undermines access and quality of health services for all. These gaps need to be addressed if Uganda is to move towards Universal Health Coverage.

Within the context of COVID-19 Uganda has significantly had to expand its investments in the health sector. It is therefore imperative that Uganda puts in place a health insurance system as soon as possible. This is because with many people losing their means of livelihood, health is one of the highest costs that they have to incur. In situations where many people are rebuilding and just coping with the effects of COVID-19, it will be important to put in place a system to ensure that other diseases and health challenges do not disproportionately affect citizen.

ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Under the economic dimension the messages here relate to SDGs 8,9,10 and 12. These SDGs are premised on the idea that the world needs a thriving economy that works for people and planet.

Message 7: Address Inequality through Social Protection

While Uganda registered reduced poverty levels from over 56 per cent in the 1990s to 19.7 per cent in 2012/13, extreme poverty rose again to 21.4 per cent in 2016/17⁹. Uganda's NDP III (2020/21-2024/25) also notes that, the percentage of people living below poverty line was 21.4% in FY 2017/18 compared to NDP II target of 14.2%. Vulnerability to external shocks remains high, out of every three Ugandans who get out of poverty, two fall back in. The incidence of poverty remains higher in rural areas than the urban areas.

All Uganda's regions registered an increase in the number of poor persons, with the notable exception of the Northern region, which is the poorest, and where poverty decreased from 44% to 33%¹⁰. Additionally, income inequality remains high despite progress in recent years. Income inequality declined from a Gini coefficient of 0.43 in 2009/10 to 0.40 in 2012/13 but increased to 0.42 in 2016/17. A 2016 study by OXFAM reports that the richest 10 percent of Uganda's population have benefitted from 35.7% of Uganda's economic growth while the poorest 10 percent claim only 2.5% of Uganda's economic growth. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development estimates that 2.6 million people are likely to fall back into poverty.

Government is implementing social protection programmes aimed at addressing poverty, inequality and vulnerability. Social protection programmes have not fully provided adequate coverage to the majority of the economically active population. Only one in ten Ugandans is covered by some form of social security. In the Social Protection Index (SPI), Uganda scores 0.48 just below the average score of 0.5¹¹. Furthermore, Uganda's investment in social protection remains low. For instance, in 2019, Government invested only 1.82 percent of GDP overall in social protection, including only 0.17 per cent on direct income support and only 0.09 per cent on the Senior Citizens Grant specifically¹².


Even though Uganda has made some progress towards ending poverty in all its manifestations, the poor and vulnerable - especially women, children and youth - are still being left behind. There is rising inequality and interventions are not translating into a better quality of life for the majority. As Uganda works to ensure that no one is left behind, there is need for a holistic social protection system that is linked to the broader national development strategies as an avenue to strengthen inclusive social development and equitable economic growth.

⁹ UBOS (2017a), based on UNHS 2016/17.

¹⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/overview>

¹¹ <http://csbag.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/TRACKING-UGANDA-COMMITMENT-TO-SDGS-.pdf>

¹² <http://npcsec.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/2019-SUPRE.pdf>

A young girl with dark skin and short hair is the central figure. She is wearing a vibrant red dress and a colorful, beaded necklace. On her head, she balances a large, heavy bundle of dry sticks and branches, secured with a red cloth. Her arms are raised, supporting the bundle. She has a determined expression on her face. The background is a bright, clear blue sky with some blurred greenery and a sandy ground, suggesting an outdoor, rural setting.

Even though Uganda has made some progress towards ending poverty in all its manifestations, the **POOR AND VULNERABLE** - especially women, children and youth - are still being left behind. There is rising **INEQUALITY** and interventions are not translating into a better quality of life for the **MAJORITY**.

CREDIT/STOCK PHOTO

Message 10: Fast-Track Job Creation

Decent employment opportunities for all in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity are critical if Uganda is to attain its transformative agenda. To this end, over the past years, Uganda has adopted policies and put in place initiatives to effectively tackle employment and decent work challenges. These include; the National Employment Policy; youth policies such as the National Youth Policy, Youth Venture Capital Fund and Youth Livelihood Programme; legislations against child labour, human trafficking and the recently passed Minimum Wage Bill.

Nonetheless, there are still a number of bottlenecks impeding the fulfilment of this goal. There is insufficient creation of quality and gainful jobs in the economy, especially for the youth with an estimated unemployment rate of 13.3%. Currently about 78% of the population is aged 30 years and below¹³. The limitations of investment capital make it difficult for the young people to tap into the available opportunities. 61% of the persons in employment are in 'vulnerable employment' with females (71%) being most likely to engage in vulnerable employment.¹⁴ Most importantly, beyond the wages and hours worked, it is important to consider the other factors that contribute to 'decent work' and the antithetic vulnerable employment.¹⁵

Message 11: Stop Child Labour in Uganda

Child labour is still a challenge in Uganda. The country needs to work to eliminate all forms of child labour. In these times of COVID-19, when children are at home, the temptation is even higher to subject children to child labor. These efforts by Government and partners to deal with the crisis of child labour are being erased by the economic effects of COVID-19 on families. We recognize that Government has made efforts in the past to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. MoGSLD, in partnership with the KCCA in 2018, for instance, removed 283 children from the streets of Kampala and provided them with social services. The government harmonized legal provisions on minimum age to align with international standards. It also drafted a National Action Plan on Child Labour, which was approved in February 2019. However, children still engage in the worst forms of child labour that include; commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking.¹⁶ Children also perform dangerous tasks in gold mining. The lack of a centralized supervisory authority, as well as inadequate funding, training, and resources, hampered the capacity of law enforcement agencies to conduct child labour inspections and investigations. Gaps in the legal framework persist, including contradicting laws regulating the minimum age for employment. In addition, existing programs are inadequate to address child labor in the country.¹⁷

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¹³ Third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21-2024/25

¹⁴ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) classifies own-account workers and contributing family workers to be in vulnerable employment. This kind of employment is typically by low earnings, limited productivity and various conditions that ultimately undermine workers' fundamental rights.

¹⁵ Akina Mama Wa Afrika (2019)

¹⁶ See synopsis of child labor status in Uganda at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/uganda>

¹⁷ Houdet, J, et al. (2015), *Cost Benefit Analysis of the Mining Sector in Karamoja*, IUCN Uganda Country Office, Kampala

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

Message 12: Take Advantage of the Potential to Recycle Waste in Urban Areas

As Uganda rapidly urbanizes, solid waste management is becoming a critical issue that needs to be dealt with decisively. Garbage in Kampala city and urban centers is becoming an environmental disaster. While the country is continuously overwhelmed by the ever-increasing population of urban and city residents, increased levels of economic activity lead to higher levels of waste. In Kampala City, KCCA has contracted private companies to assist it with the management of solid waste collection so as to improve the city's cleanliness. However, in spite of this, less than half of the total waste generated, estimated to be 1,500 tonnes daily, is collected.¹⁸ The uncollected waste is normally dumped in open areas, streams, open drainage channels and other areas inaccessible to waste collection vehicles, thus creating both an environmental and public health disaster for the inhabitants of Kampala. In times when health strategies are now a priority public health concern, the disposal of waste and need to recycle waste is important.

There are also opportunities that have been identified and studies show that waste dumped in Kampala and urban centers could play a phenomenal role in future energy supply, mainly through thermochemical, physico-chemical, and biochemical transformations as well as conventional combustion.¹⁹ Organic fraction of domestic waste generated can provide an opportunity for exploitation through the process of composting, thus releasing vital nutrients to the soil.²⁰ Organic waste is therefore a substantial potential source for nutrient recycling, especially for urban farming which often requires a considerable amount of nutrients to replace losses from intensive farming.



Message 13: Stop Deforestation Now

The current trends in deforestation put Uganda at risk of losing all its forests if deforestation in Uganda continues at its present rate. Studies indicate that there would be no forests left in 40 years if the current trends continue.²¹ There are several reasons given for these trends and some of the critical ones include: poor rural electrification and costly electricity which makes 89% of Ugandans to use firewood and charcoal as the main sources of fuel to cook. Large amounts of forests are also spent as trees are cut for timber and wood because the construction industry still greatly uses timber rather than steel and other substitutes in construction work. The National Forest Authority reports that Uganda's forest cover across the country tremendously declined from 24% (4,933,271 hectares (Ha)) of land area in the 1990 to less than the current 9% (1,956,664Ha) in 2018. Uganda has lost about 3,000,000 ha of forest cover in 25 years. The situation is being blamed partly on Uganda's booming population, which is growing at a rate of about 3.6% per annum. At that growth rate, by 2025 the population will almost be approximately 63 million²². Population growth and migration does increase demand for agricultural land and firewood energy, and rural poverty restricts the ability to invest in sustainable land use practices. The population growth rate of 3.6% per annum will therefore lead to high pressure on the forest resources in order to derive people's livelihoods, higher population makes land for settlement and agriculture inadequate and consequently people resort to forest land.²³

While Uganda has put in place several policies as well as legal and institutional reforms and measures (National Forestry Policy 2001, National Forestry and Tree Planting Act 2003) aimed at promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the country's forest resources, more needs to be done if we are to attain modest progress towards the SDGs and the NDPIII.

18 OAG (2010). *Value for money audit report on solid waste management in Kampala*. (Office of Auditor General (OAG), Republic of Uganda
19 NEMA (2007). *State of Environment Report for Uganda 2006/2007*. National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kampala, Uganda, 357.
20 NEMA (2007). *State of Environment Report for Uganda 2006/2007*. National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kampala, Uganda, 357.
21 Ibid, p.6
22 See <http://envalert.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ENR-CSO-Network-Engagements-31July2019.pdf>
23 Ibid, p.3

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES-GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Message 14: Building Strong Partnerships is Critical to the Decade of Delivery

The Decade of Delivery in the SDG agenda will be a decade of national and global solidarity. Uganda has had a history of developing partnership policies. The first one was developed as a Partnership Policy relating to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan in 1998. The most recent policy was the Partnership Policy in 2013 and the attendant Framework for the Partnership Dialogue to provide a new framework for relationships between Government and donors. The 2013 Partnership Policy identified the Policy Coordination Committee, the Implementation Coordination Steering Committee and the Technical Implementation Coordination Committee as bi-annual, quarterly and monthly meetings designed as a replacement for the Joint Budget Support Framework, but expanded to cover issues from strategic priorities, to aid effectiveness and Government Performance Annual Reporting. The Framework for the Partnership Dialogue also introduced the National Partnership Forum (NPF) as the highest level of consultation, with fewer links to Government of Uganda processes and less frequent meetings, but that covered similar topics. The Government would present annual reports on the implementation of the Partnership Policy to Parliament every three years, to facilitate an independent evaluation of the Partnership Policy, and the performance of Government and each donor is to be reviewed twice annually with development partners and the results made public.

The current challenging conditions call for the enhancement and broadening of the scope of the partnership policy. An identified area for improvement is better differentiation between financier types and better integration of the civil society and private sector. These are measures that will be instrumental in improving policy coherence for sustainable development which will be a critical policy strategy in the decade of action.

Message 15: Leadership for Results will be a Cornerstone of the Decade of Delivery

For Uganda to attain the SDG targets, leadership will be a critical variable. Good leaders guide governments at all levels to perform effectively for their citizens. Good leaders deliver sustainable models that ensure secure livelihood for citizens, they ensure the functioning rule of law; education; health; and a framework conducive to economic growth. They empower civil society as well as protect the environment. Consultations with local leaders in the process of localization of the SDGs led by civil society under the Tondeka Mabega²⁴ campaign revealed that across the board, leaders are faced with a multitude of trends which include: the democratization of the localities, the empowerment of the individual, the rise in new technologies, innovations, industries and societies that are more informed and connected citizenry.

It is therefore imperative that leaders at all levels of society in Uganda will need to be adept at identifying, responding to, capitalizing upon, and managing trends and emerging chal-

GOOD LEADERS deliver sustainable models that ensure **SECURE** livelihood for citizens, they ensure the functioning **RULE OF LAW**; education; health; and a framework conducive to economic growth. They empower civil society as well as protect the **ENVIRONMENT**.

²⁴ 'Tondeka Mabega' (meaning Leave No One Behind) is an SDG domestication process started by NGOs in Uganda since 2017 which is - not just an exercise in making meek demands to government - but are a participatory process of mobilizing and documenting different ways in which people who are 'left behind' are doing something to catch up with the world and how those who are in positions of power can create opportunities for collaborative co-creation of the future we want through the domestication of SDGs.



The current challenging conditions call for the enhancement and broadening of the scope of the **PARTNERSHIP** policy. An identified area for improvement is better differentiation between financier types and better integration of the civil society and private sector.

CREDIT/UNNGOF



allenges and changes in society. Leaders are now confronted with several opportunities and threats and they must respond to both. COVID-19 seems to be one of the biggest threats and mitigating and managing it will be critical. But Uganda still has to contend with several threats that include; community conflicts over resources, political differences, social and economic inequalities, organized crime, drug trade and illicit financial flows; poor management of diversity; religious extremism, tribalism, nepotism and corruption. While managing these threats, we should be open to opportunities before us that include; rapid advances in technology, education and interconnectivity; a large youth population; abundant natural resources and innovative financing mechanisms. All these will support the decade of delivery and our collective pursuit of transformation of societies through the SDGs. Leadership will therefore be critical and Uganda stakeholders should come together to build a culture of leadership that will deliver the kind of transformation that we desire.

Beyond the localization agenda, it is now common knowledge that the SDGs will be won and lost in the arena of leadership. Where there is decisive, citizen-based and inclusive leadership the SDGs will thrive. However, the leadership required for the success of SDGs in Uganda will not be leadership that is copied from a global template. It will have to be home-grown leadership that responds to Uganda's peculiar circumstances, but learning and adapting from the solutions from elsewhere.

A CIVIL SOCIETY AGENDA FOR ACCELERATED ACTION IN UGANDA

The focus of the SDGs that is encapsulated in the idea of serving-people and the planet is very compelling for civil society. For the last 5 years, civil society in Uganda has worked together to implement the SDGs agenda under the CSO SDG Core Reference Group. This group brings together over 100 member organizations at national and local level that include; women, youth, PWDs, faith organizations, cultural organizations and mainstream CSOs and links to global CSO processes like the Major Groups at the UN and Action for Sustainable Development. Civil society has built a coherent set of actions that will engage with the SDG process and highlight the integration process that is ongoing.

The following are key areas that we shall accelerate as part of the of the Decade of Delivery actions:

- **SDGs Awareness Building:**

We shall continue to partner with likeminded stakeholders and Government agencies, especially at the local government level.

- **Advocacy for Country Level:**

Acceleration Action by Government and its Partners; our 15 messages contained in this rejoinder will be expanded, articulated in depth and operationalized into strong advocacy campaigns as we pursue a collective global and local agenda towards the year 2030.

- **Promoting Domestication of SDGs at National and Local Level:**

While there has been some progress, we recognize that the domestication of SDGs will be central to the attainment of the goals and targets relevant to Uganda. We shall therefore work to ensure that we expand our agenda at a local level, focusing on the communities most in need.

- **Participatory Citizen Monitoring of SDGs:**

The monitoring and reporting on the SDGs will be critical. We recognize the Government of Uganda has put in place the SDG Secretariat, we shall work closely with this secretariat to ensure that we continue to pursue a shared agenda of tracking and reporting results with the SDG framework and the context of National Development Plan III

- **Supporting Implementation through Resource Mobilization for SDGs:**

Financing the SDGs agenda will not be attained through the use of only traditional resources. With the collapse of many income streams for people around the world and many economies going into recession, we believe that exploring new ways of financing SDGs will be critical in this decade of action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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