

Country Youth Profile



UGANDA



Women and Youth Empowerment Division
Resilience and Social Development Department
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Socio-Economic Profile

1.1 The Republic of Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa with an estimated population of 45,293,068 in 2018¹. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) between 2000 and 2014 averaged 6.6%². The GDP in 2016 was 2.3% and rose to 4.8% in 2017 and is expected to rise to 5.1% in 2018³. Although Uganda was among the few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to halved extreme poverty, the poverty level rose again in recent years (since 2016). For example, poverty decreased from 56.4% in 1992/3 to 24.5% and 19.7% in 2009/10 and 2013/14 respectively⁴. In 2016, the poverty level increased from 19.7% to 27.3% in 2017⁵. Given the current growth trends and projections, it is projected that Uganda may not achieve middle-income status by 2020⁶. Uganda's rank of 162nd among 189 countries on the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) 2017 Human Development Index (HDI) is one step higher than its 2016 position of 163rd. However, while Uganda's HDI of 0.516 is above the 0.504 average for countries in the low human development group, it is below the average of 0.537 for SSA countries⁷.

1.2. Uganda has the second youngest population globally with 78% of its citizens below 30 years, after the Republic of Niger's 83%⁸. Ugandan youth constitutes 22% or 8.2 million of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBoS) projected population of 37.6 million for 2017⁹. Children below 18-years account for 55% of the population¹⁰. Uganda uses two different categorizations for youth. The National Youth Council classifies youth as individuals aged 18-30 years¹¹ and, the revised youth policy use 15-30 years¹². The Commonwealth identifies young people aged 15-29 years as youth. Uganda was ranked 135th out of 183 countries on the Commonwealth's 2016 Global Youth Development Index (YDI)¹³. Uganda was designated eighth among ten countries with the highest rank in Political Participation domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score¹⁴.

Table 1: Youth at Glance in Uganda

Categories	Females	Males
Age of marriage	18	18
Labour Force Participation (ILO 2017)	36.9%	49.6 %
Unemployment (ILO 2017)	17.3%	12.7 %
NEET (ILO, 2017)	42.3%	23.7 %
Gross Attendance Ratio (DHS, 2016)	24%	28 %
Literacy Rate (UNESCO, 2012)	81.65%	85.76 %
Out of School Youth (WEF-GGGR)	4.7%	7.7 %

1 World Population Review (2018), Uganda Country Profile, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/uganda-population/>

2 GoU (2015), Uganda Millennium Development Goals Final Report, https://ug.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/42/2016/07/UGANDA-MDG_2015-FINAL-REPORT.pdf, P.6

3 AfDB (2018), Uganda Country Notes, https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/country_notes/Uganda_country_note.pdf, P.1

4 Ibid:7

5 Ibid:9

6 Ibid:9

7 UNDP (2018), Uganda Country Note, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/UGA.pdf, P.3

8 UNDP (2016), Brochure for Youth Engagement and Employment (YEE) Convergence of the United Nations, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/uganda/docs/Brochure%20for%20Youth%20Engagement%20and%20Employment%20\(YEE\)%20Convergence%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20in%20Uganda.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/uganda/docs/Brochure%20for%20Youth%20Engagement%20and%20Employment%20(YEE)%20Convergence%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20in%20Uganda.pdf)

9 Hire the Youth (2017), State of the Youth Report, <https://www.hiretheyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/State-of-the-Youth-Report-2017-Uganda.pdf>, P. 1

10 Ibid:1

11 GoU (1993), The National Youth Act, 1993 <https://ulii.org/ug/legislation/consolidated-act/319>

12 GoU (2016), National Youth Policy Popular Version, http://upfya.or.ug/wp-content/files/National_Youth_Policy_Popular_Version.pdf, P. 3

13 Commonwealth Secretariat (2018), Global Youth Development Index Report, <http://cmydiprod.uksouth.cloudapp.azure.com/sites/default/files/2016-10/2016%20Global%20Youth%20Development%20Index%20and%20Report.pdf>, P.126

14 Ibid:45

2. Youth in National Development: Institutional and Policy Framework

2.1. Youth as a social category in Uganda's national development process started in 1960 with the establishment of a Youth Affairs section in the Ministry of Culture and Community Development¹⁵. The enactment of the National Youth Council (NYC) in 1993, was part of the National Resistance Movement's reform project outlining the new direction of youth in Uganda's development process¹⁶. The NYC was established to mobilize, organize and engage youth in development activities¹⁷. It seeks to be the leading organization in the empowerment of youth and acts as an umbrella organization for young people and youth organizations in Uganda¹⁸.

2.2. The Minister for State for Youth and Children heads the Department of Youth and Children's Affairs within the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development¹⁹. It aims to ensure care, protection, and empowerment of children and youth. The department's focus on policy, legislation, programs, stakeholder coordination, participation, service provider, training and responding to the concerns of children²⁰. Youth issues are managed at the district level within the portfolio of the Community Development Officer (CDO)²¹.

2.3. The National Youth Policy was adopted in 2001 and revised to 2016 to take cognizance of emerging issues such as youth empowerment and development in the country as well as harnessing their potential to contribute to national development²². The policy's guiding principles are Non-discrimination, Gender Inclusiveness, Inclusion and Participation, Innovativeness and Adaptability, Multi-Sectoral Collaborations, Good Governance, and Decentralized Service Delivery²³. Its objectives are i) to improve youth access to quality service, ii) to enhance the productivity and employability of youth for sustainable livelihood, iii) to promote equitable participation in decision-making processes that impact on youth and community at all levels, and iv) to promote effective coordination and programming of youth interventions at all levels²⁴.

2.4. The legal age of marriage for both girls and boys is 18 years, although a girl can marry at 16 years with parental consent²⁵. According to UNICEF, as of 2017 10% of girls marry by age 15 years and 40% by 18 years²⁶. Uganda has the 16th highest prevalence rate of child marriage in the world and 10th highest absolute number of child brides globally at 787,000²⁷. The Government of Uganda (GoU) launched the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage and its National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy (2014/15-2019/20)²⁸. The overall goal of the strategy is to end child marriage and teenage pregnancy for prosperity and social, economic transformation²⁹. Among its strategic areas of focus are: strengthening the legal and policy environment to protect children, empowering boys and girls with comprehensive and appropriate information on life skills, and generating relevant data and evidence for programming and monitoring of progress toward ending child marriages and teenage pregnancies³⁰. It must be noted that Uganda is a focus country of the UNICEF-UNFPA Program to Accelerate the End of Child Marriage, a multi-donor, multi-stakeholder program working across 12 countries over four years³¹.

2.5. Uganda has committed to eliminating child, early and forced marriage by 2030 in line with target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³². During its Voluntary National Review at the 2016 High-Level Political Forum,

15 Larok, A. et. al, (2010), At Crossroads? The Youth Politics of Interest Groups and Influencing National Policy Processes in Uganda, http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/at_crossroads_youth_rngagement_in_policy_in_uganda.pdf, P.5

16 Tigweb (ND), Uganda National Youth Council, <https://orgs.tigweb.org/uganda-national-youth-council-unyc> & Youth Policy (2014) Uganda Youth Policy Factsheet, <http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/uganda/>

17 Ibid

18 Ibid

19 Youth Policy (2014) Uganda Youth Policy Factsheet, op.cit,

20 Ibid

21 Ibid

22 GoU (2016), National Youth Policy Popular Version, http://upfya.or.ug/wp-content/files/National_Youth_Policy_Popular_Version.pdf, P.7

23 Ibid:8

24 Ibid:8

25 Girls not Bride (2017), Uganda Country Report, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/uganda/>

26 Ibid

27 Ibid

28 Ibid

29 UNICEF (2015), National Strategy on Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy, https://www.unicef.org/uganda/NATIONAL_STRATEGY_ON_CHILD_MARRIAGE-PRINT_READY.pdf, P. 40

30 Ibid:40

31 Girls Not Bride, op.cit

32 Ibid

the government provided baseline data on the situation for child marriage³³. Uganda co-sponsored the 2013 and 2014 UN General Assembly resolutions on child, early and forced marriage, and the 2013 Human Rights Council's resolution on child, early and forced marriage³⁴. In 2014, Uganda signed a joint statement at the Human Rights Council calling for a resolution on child marriage³⁵. A World Bank study shows that ending child marriage in Uganda could generate \$ 514 million in earnings and productivity³⁶.

3. Education

3.1. The GoU promotes equal opportunities throughout all phases of the sector such as Universal Primary and Secondary Education and applying affirmative action in Uganda's Post Primary Education and Training. Uganda's adoption of Universal Secondary Education in 2007, is the first in Sub-Saharan Africa³⁷. The affirmative action policy entails giving women extra one and half (1.5) points for public university admission process³⁸. Consequently, enrollment in primary school reached near parity, 90% in secondary school and 80% in tertiary in 2015³⁹. Despite these impressive enrollment figures, the sector faces challenges of low retention and completion rates and low quality of learning outcomes for both boys and girl⁴⁰. For instance, the survival rate to the last grade of primary school was 35.2% and 35.73% for boys and girls respectively in 2016⁴¹, and transition rate from primary to secondary school for boys was 60.67% compared to 57.26% for girls over the same period⁴².

3.2. A World Bank study on education in Africa notes that despite the high enrollment rate, Uganda's education system is characterized by a high dropout rate for children of primary school age and low retention of pupils⁴³. It was reported in another study that out of the 1,897,114 students who enrolled in primary school in 2008, only 604,971 or 31% sat their Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in 2014⁴⁴. Furthermore, only half (326,591) of the 604,971 enrolled for secondary school in 2015 with 330,721 sitting the 2018 Uganda Certificate of Uganda exams meaning that only 17.4% of the 1,897,114 completed the Senior Four⁴⁵. Of these, 169,059 and 166,376 students were male and female respectively⁴⁶.

3.2. Skills-Based Training

3.2.1. Uganda's Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) Strategic Plan 2011-2020 builds on earlier reforms that started in 2008. The Strategic Plan named 'Skilling Uganda' represents a fundamental change in earlier skills programs. The BTVET system is expected to emerge from an education sub-sector into a comprehensive system of skills development for employment, enhanced productivity and growth⁴⁷. The aim is to create employable skills and competencies relevant to the labor market instead of educational certificates⁴⁸. The objectives of the Strategic Plan are i) make BTVET relevant to product development and economic growth, ii) increase the quality of skills provision, iii) increase equitable access to skills development, iv) improve the effectiveness in BTVET management and organization and v) increase internal efficiency and resources to BTVET⁴⁹.

3.2.2. The situation of female students in BTVET was appalling in 2012. In addition to their low participation rate of 25%, the training environment was found to be unsuitable for girls⁵⁰. Hostels lacked appropriate facilities to ensure

33 Ibid

34 Ibid

35 Ibid

36 Ibid

37 The Guardian (2011), Free Universal Secondary Education in Uganda Has Yielded Mixed Results, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/oct/25/free-secondary-education-uganda-mixed-results>

38 UNICEF (2014), National Strategy for Girls' Education in Uganda, https://www.unicef.org/uganda/NSGE_Policy_Brief_-_Final_-_16_10_2014.pdf, P.1

39 AfDB, op.cit:7

40 USAID (2017), Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis: Uganda, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Gender_Social_Inclusion_Final_Report_08.23.17.pdf, P. 10

41 UNESCO (2016), Uganda Country Data, <http://uis.unesco.org/country/UG>

42 Ibid

43 All Africa (2019a), Education Poor in Education, World Bank, <https://allafrica.com/stories/201902050177.html>

44 All Africa (2019b), Uganda:1.5 Students Fail to Complete S.4, <https://allafrica.com/stories/201902040107.html>

45 Ibid

46 Ibid

47 GoU (2011), Skilling Uganda: BTVET Strategic Plan 2011-2021, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/equest.fileutils.dochandle?p_uploaded_file_id=153, P. vii

48 Ibid

49 Ibid: viii

50 Ibid:26

girls security⁵¹. Given this situation, the GoU proposed to develop and implement a Gender equality in BTVET Strategy to address the needs for a national gender awareness program, improvement in female hostel facilities, and to assist with job assistance in job placements for female graduates⁵². Also, special incentives or quota to increase the participation of female students might be introduced⁵³.

3.2.3 The Directorate of Industrial Training will prioritize the development of Assessment and Training Packages (ATPs) in occupations that women dominate at a rate of 35%, and 50% of all ATPs that are professions attractive to females by 2015 and 2020 respectively⁵⁴. Secondly, equitable access to skills development will be ensured to increase the number of BTVET graduates to 450,000, with 50% female participation⁵⁵, and boost the share of women's participation in formal BTVET from 25% to 40% by 2020⁵⁶. At the same time, female BTVET graduates will be prioritized in BTVET instructors training to increase the share of women instructors in the system⁵⁷ and their number will be increased to 40% by 2020⁵⁸.

3.3 Inclusive Education

3.3.1 At the international level, Uganda is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities in 2008⁵⁹. Article 21 of Uganda's 1995 Constitution prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. The constitutional provision was backed up with the enactment of the Persons with Disability Act (2006). Both the Constitution and the Act demand access, equity and quality in regard to services for persons with learning needs⁶⁰.

3.3.2. The Ministry of Education and Sports established the Department for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (IE) to implement its agenda⁶¹. The general objective of the department is to deliver Special Needs and Inclusive Education Services in a coordinated and adequately resourced manner. The implementation of IE in Uganda has resulted in the modification of curricula, teaching methods, teaching/learning services, the medium of communication and adjusting the learning needs⁶². The method being used to deliver IE has been described as learner-centered, flexible and adjustable to the individual needs and potential of every child⁶³.

3.3.3. Uganda hosts the largest number of refugees in Africa and is the third refugee-hosting country worldwide after Turkey, and Pakistan in 2017⁶⁴. Refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda access the same rights as Ugandan citizens⁶⁵. The country's refugee population of 1.4 million in 2017, represents a 44% increase from the 2016 estimates⁶⁶. The refugee population constitutes at least 61% of children below 18 years, and this is putting a strain on limited resources in the host communities⁶⁷. Most classrooms have no walls or electricity and lack latrines and basic facilities that are needed to host refugee children safely and in dignity⁶⁸. Furthermore, there are drastic shortages of teachers as well as of essential materials such as books and desks⁶⁹. In all, more than 500,000 children are out of school-57% (353,000) of refugees, and 34% (171,000) of local children in refugee-hosting communities do not have access to education⁷⁰.

51 Ibid:26

52 Ibid:26

53 Ibid:26

54 Ibid:42

55 Ibid:51

56 Ibid:53.

57 Ibid:26

58 Ibid:53

59 GoU (ND), Special Needs and Inclusive Education Department, <http://www.education.go.ug/data/smenu/15/Special%20Needs%20and%20Inclusive%20Education%20.html>

60 Ibid

61 Ibid

62 Ibid

63 Ibid

64 UNHCR (2017), Forced Displacement in 2017, <https://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf>, P.17

65 UNHCR (2018), Uganda Launches New Education Response Plan for Africa's Biggest Refugee Crisis, <https://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/press/2018/9/5b9fabe84/uganda-launches-new-education-response-plan-for-africas-biggest-refugee.html>

66 UNHCR 2017, op.cit:17

67 UNHCR (2018), Uganda Launches New Education Response Plan for Africa's Biggest Refugee Crisis, <https://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/press/2018/9/5b9fabe84/uganda-launches-new-education-response-plan-for-africas-biggest-refugee.html>

68 Ibid

69 Ibid

70 Ibid

3.3.4. In response, the GoU, Partners in Development, UN agencies, and NGOs, launched the Education Response Plan (ERP) with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) adopted in September 2016 by the 193 UN Member States, to provide quality education to both refugee and host community children⁷¹. It must be stated that the ERP is the first globally and is aligned to Uganda's Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2017-2020⁷². The ERP will be achieved through the following activities:

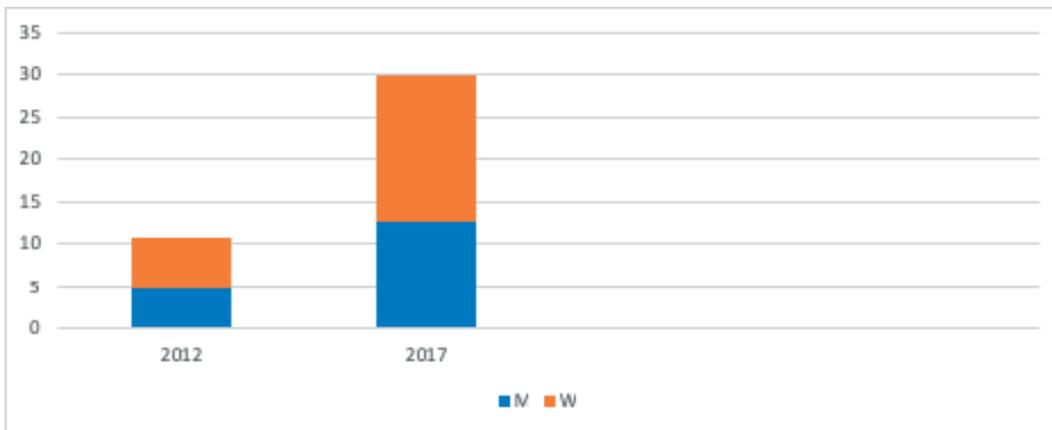
- Constructing new classrooms and repairing existing ones to make schools safer and more accessible-for example-so that children with disabilities can attend;
- Providing essential material such as textbooks, desks, and stationery;
- Addressing teacher gaps and capacity to deliver quality education to refugees and host community learners;
- Strengthening the national and district level education system for effective and sustainable service delivery;
- Getting older youth who had dropped out of school back into education, through Accelerated Education Programs and vocational training; and
- Piloting innovative education⁷³.

4. Economic Empowerment

4.1 Employment and Unemployment

4.1.1 About 400,000 youth compete for 9, 000 jobs annually in Uganda⁷⁴, the unemployment rate among young people of 14.8% in 2017 is 5.4% higher than the adult rate of 9.4%. The female youth unemployment rate was 17.3% compared to males at 12.7% over the same period. There were also more women in the out of school and not in employment, education or training categories at 78.4% and 42.3% compared to 71.8% and 23.7% in 2017 respectively. The female youth unemployment rate increased from 6.0% in 2012 to 17.3% in 2017 (see Figure 1 below). Youth account for 60% of the country's unemployed while three-quarters of working youth are in vulnerable employment, cannot negotiate their wages and generally, do not hold bank accounts⁷⁵.

Figure 2: Trends in Youth Unemployment 2012 and 2017



Source: ILO, ILOSTAT, 2017

4.1.2. In response, the GoU established various youth employment schemes in collaboration with development partners to reduce the unemployment rate. Some of the programs include:

71 Ibid

72 Ibid

73 Ibid

74 UNDP (2012), Youth Engagement and Employment, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/uganda/docs/Brochure%20for%20Youth%20Engagement%20and%20Employment%20\(YEE\)%20Convergence%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20in%20Uganda.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/uganda/docs/Brochure%20for%20Youth%20Engagement%20and%20Employment%20(YEE)%20Convergence%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20in%20Uganda.pdf)

75 FAO (2017), Uganda and FAO Launch a New Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture, <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/en/c/1069622/>

- The National Strategy for Employment in Agriculture (NSYEA) launched in October 2017 in collaboration between the GoU and the Food and Agriculture Organization launched . The 5-year Strategy with a total budget of Ushs 52.9 billion is being invested in re-engaging youth in agriculture to create more and better jobs along agricultural value chains, from production to agro-processing and marketing of agricultural inputs and products. In particular, the Strategy aims at strengthening the legal and institutional framework for youth employment in agriculture, ensuring the provision of youth-sensitive agricultural extension services and creating a national information center that will serve as an innovation hub. The Strategy also emphasized the need to set-up a youth-in-agriculture fund to support youth agro-entrepreneurship. The Fund will enable rural youth to access affordable financing, training, land, and equipment required for startup.
- The Nationwide Youth Livelihood Program (YLP) was initiated in FY 2013/14 to address the high unemployment and poverty rates among the youth. The program is implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social and Development (MGLSD) and it is a community demand-driven project. Youth are equipped with vocational skills and a revolving fund of up to Ushs 12.5million to procure startup kits. Also, loans of up to Ushs 25 million are given only under special consideration by the program management. Before the disbursement of funds is approved, groups are subjected to orientation and training in financial management, accountability, and vocational training. The local governments advance the funds the Youth Interest Groups (YIG) as a revolving fund. (groups of 10-15 youth aged 18-30 years that are unemployed, poor, vulnerable, with a 30% female membership). A total of 6,970 projects benefiting 98,884 persons of which 49, 437 and 40, 447 are males and females respectively.
- The Youth Engagement and Employment (YEE) is one of three Delivery as one Convergence areas for the United Nations in Uganda, focusing on involving young people in decision-making and empowering them to be the solution to the development needs of the country. YEE led by the UNDP and co-chaired by the International Labor Organization (ILO), YEE is currently implementing the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (Youth-SWAP), which provides an opportunity to harness the strengths of the UN System in the area of youth development. The initiative was developed as part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

4.2 Ecosystem and Entrepreneurship

4.2.1 The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)'s 2015 report, named Uganda as the world's most entrepreneurial country⁷⁶. However, it was noted that most of these businesses are small-scale and informal, generate little employment and have a high discontinuation rate⁷⁷. The Ecobank, an African-owned bank revealed that Uganda is second after Kenya in East Africa in the number of Fintech and technology hubs⁷⁸.

4.2.2. Uganda's vibrant hubs include:

- Outbox-founded in 2012 provides co-working space, mentorship, and training programs for startup ventures and tech enthusiasts. Outbox has helped new startups raise money for their venture and to access the market. Outbox has housed 13 resident startups that have raised over \$1, 000,000 and created 80 jobs. It has also channeled over 7,000 participants through in-house workshops.
- The Space Hub- founded in 2016, has served as home to a couple of startups including Pearl Guide, Eatout, TNS, and Qwicart as well as One Africa Media's Brighter Monday and Cheki in Uganda.
- Venture Labs East Africa- is home to both startups and mature companies. It is a mix of private offices and shared spaces.
- Hire Colab- established in 2010, is Uganda's oldest hub. Its most recent startups include Sulapay Sign, Airsave, Bakulu Power, Lipamobile, among others. The Hire Colab opened a branch in Mbarara.
- The Innovation Village Kampala- is a convergence of different fora that brings together ideas from captains of business and industry, public and academia to expand the boundaries of knowledge through social innovation.

⁷⁶ Good (2015), Why Uganda is the World's Most Entrepreneurial Country, <https://www.good.is/articles/why-uganda-is-the-worlds-most-entrepreneurial-nation>

⁷⁷ ANDE (2018), Uganda Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Initiative: Phase1, https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.andeglobal.org/resource/resmgr/research_library/UEEI_Report_November_2018_Fi.pdf, P.12

⁷⁸ Sautitech (2018), How Uganda Startups Are Failing Themselves, <https://www.sautitech.com/startups/how-ugandan-startups-are-failing-themselves/>

Innovation Village has two wings, the co-sharing space, and the Bureau. The Bureau is home to a couple of local and regional companies including Andela, Challenges Worldwide, Innovate, Xente, Sellio, Milima Technologies, Kola Studies, and many more.

- Women in Technology Uganda (WITU)- started in 2011, aims at empowering, inspiring and training the next generation of Uganda female leaders, business women, and technologists. Their holistic theory of change looks at a girl or young woman's life in a 360 angle, looking at Personal development, Leadership, Life skill, Health, Computer Science, Entrepreneurship and Business skilling and Job linkages or Smart loans.

Other hubs in Uganda include Tech Buzz, NFT Mawazo, Tech Hub and Host Hubs.

5. Youth Civic Engagement and Participation

5.1 Youth civic engagement and participation are included in Uganda's legal framework. These include the National Youth Council Act and the 1995 Constitution. Youth civic participation takes place in two different arenas namely through state initiatives and civil society organizations.

- The National Youth Council's current composition includes a representative from each district elected by members of the district council; two student representatives elected by the Uganda National Students Association, one of whom is a female, ten female representatives elected by the conference from among members of the conference, and two to represent a region⁷⁹. The NYC has over 5,000 council members nationally in the country, including 11 executive members. The GoU allocates a yearly subvention of USh 1billion to NYC. NYC members are paid sitting allowances whenever they attend council and national executive meetings⁸⁰.

- Article (59) (1, 2, &3) stipulates that every Ugandan of 18 years of age and above has the right to register and vote for elections and referenda, and Article (78) (1) makes provision for youth representation in parliament. Five elective seats are reserved for youth representation. Four of which are openly contested at the regional level, and one is reserved for a female youth representative at the national level⁸¹. The current youth representation includes two females and three males⁸². At the local level, out of these the four seats reserved for youth, two are designated for women⁸³. It has been argued that the inclusion of the Youth Council with reserved seats in parliament and local governance structure was intended to establish a channel to "install a spirit of patriotism, national consciousness and a spirit of unity among youth all over the country irrespective of their tribe, religion, and background"⁸⁴.

- The Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs (UPFYA) is an advocacy platform established in 2008 to promote youth issues through legislative, budgetary appropriation and oversight⁸⁵. The Forum works with civil society and development partners to achieve its goals.

5.2. Youth civic engagement and participation include independent organizing to get youth voices in the policy arena, training, advocacy, research, and lobbying. Some of their notable initiatives include working with the Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs to make draft legislation youth-sensitive, participating in the Constitution Review Commission in 2003, sending recommendations to the Equal Opportunities Commission and Land Bill Amendment Committee in 2002, presenting the Youth Jobs Bill to Parliament in 2010 and participating in the National Development Planning process in 2010⁸⁶.

- The National Youth Manifesto was launched in 2005 to bring together the priorities and concerns of young people

79 Uganda Radio Network (2018), National Youth Council Move to Extend Term of Leaders to Seven Years, <https://ugandaradionetwork.com/story/national-youth-council-move-to-extend-term-of-leaders-to-seven-years>

80 Ibid

81 IKnow Politics, (2017), Consolidated Reply on the e-Discussion, on Youth Political Participation, http://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/consolidated_reply_youth_political_participation_en_0.pdf, P.6

82 Ibid:6

83 Muriaas et al op.cit:312.

84 Muriaas, R.L and Wang, V. (2012), The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 50 Issue 02, P. 319

85 New vision (2017), Uganda https://www.newvision.co.ug/digital_assets/15cc613a-2197-4cd8-9995-7f7fe880439f/53-UPFYA-hp1-new1.pdf

86 Larok, et al, op.cit:6-10

to the country's political leaders. The platform was organized under the leadership of the Uganda Youth Network in readiness for the 2006 general elections⁸⁷. The platform was hailed as a groundbreaker in the country's political landscape for bringing together youth from political parties, civil society, and academia⁸⁸. The platform continued to the 2010 and 2016 elections.

- The UPFYA and the Youth Coalition on Electoral Democracy (YCED) organized the 2016-2021 National Youth Manifesto. The demands are grouped under five thematic areas- Jobs, Education, Health, Youth Participation, and Sports and Creative Arts⁸⁹.

- The International Republican Institute's (IRI) and the Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) with funding from the USAID's Political Competition and Consensus Building have organized the Leadership Academy. As of 2017, the Leadership has enrolled 224 students, of which 38 alumni competed in 2016 national elections.

5.3 A huge social protest fueled by the social media tax imposed by the GoU erupted in Kampala, Uganda on 11th July 2018. The Excise Duty Amendment Act passed on 30th May 2018, went into effect on 1st July 2018⁹⁰. The Act imposed a 200 UG Shillings (\$0.05) on various social media platforms-Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, Snap Chat, among others. The Act also included a 1% tax on all mobile money transactions. According to the GoU, the law was enacted to halt the spread of "gossip" and "fake news" and get people to concentrate on work and not social media⁹¹. On the other hand, critics say that while the tax puts an undue burden on the poor, it was in reality meant to stifle freedom of the press⁹².

5.4. Although the government promised to review its decision to impose the tax after the public backlash against it⁹³. It was reported that three months after the imposition of the tax, the number of internet subscription fell by more than 2.5 million users and the sum of taxpayers from over-the-top (OTT) media services decreased by more than 1.2 million users. The value of mobile money transactions fell by 4.5 trillion Uganda shillings (\$1.2 million)⁹⁴.

Youth Organizations in Uganda

- Africa Youth Initiative: AYINET is committed to making peace and justice a reality for victims and survivors of war.
- The Uganda Youth Network has a 'black Monday' where they wear black to protest against the corruption in Uganda.
- Youth Action Uganda concentrates on helping young people get an education. Those that dropped out of school for one reason or another. Young people are given a second chance to fulfill their dreams through the hope of an education.
- TEENS Uganda is a youth-led organization focused on promoting healthy lives in communities, youth (socio-economic) empowerment, and addressing environmental issues. TEENS recognizes the contribution of real offline solutions to the risks (challenges/vulnerabilities) of youth/children and women, currently the most marginalized groups by engaging them in the decision-making process⁹⁵.

87 Ibid:8

88 Ibid:8

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6. Development Partners in the Youth Sector

- The World Bank
- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Government of Belgium
- Save the Children
- Action Aid
- Save the Children
- Plan International
- The United Nations System
- The European Union

7. Recommendations

- i. The IsDB should follow up on the gender equality provisions in the BTVET sector and advise the GoU to widen the admission process for female students to move into traditionally considered male-oriented sectors, especially the ones demanded by the market. Any training or education programme should also include prevention of all forms of violence;
- ii. IsDB should provide technical support to assist the GoU implement SDG target 8b (develop and operationalize a national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy);
- iii. Given the high youth unemployment rate, the Bank should intervene in the sector to promote youth employment and entrepreneurship skills through Islamic finance products paying specific attention to youth living in the poorest areas and ensuring inclusiveness of the ones facing more vulnerabilities (special needs, refugees, etc);
- iv. The Bank should work with the GoU on an appropriate definition of youth and ensure youth policies and programming are mainstreamed in all the relevant ministries;
- v. IsDB should work with the GoU to stymie the high dropout rates in primary and secondary schools of girls, looking at the root causes (social norms, lack of facilities, risk of violence);

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