

**MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**



**THE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION
STRATEGY**

FOREWORD

Uganda's National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) 2024-2029 is coming hot-on-the-heels of a menacing and cautionary COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated by the persistence of high levels of poverty and vulnerability. After many years of anti-poverty programming and following successful implementation of the initial phases of Uganda's Expanding Social Protection (ESP) programme, renewed attention is now being focused on investment in the next chapter of social protection by the Government of Uganda (GoU). From the COVID-19 pandemic we learned that a very large number of people in Uganda are vulnerable and that even a single co-variate shock can easily plunge them into poverty and destitution. The pandemic also revealed to us that current systems need improvement to ensure effective identification and outreach to the poorest and deserving.

The NSPS therefore, draws lessons from the achievements made and challenges encountered and lessons learnt during implementation of the Expanding Social Protection (ESP) Programme, as well as from numerous other reviews and experiences from social protection programmes across the world. The commitment by the Government of Uganda to mitigate the impacts of shocks, poverty, and vulnerability, as well as the building of human capital is very strong as evidenced in the National Development Plan III. However, as needs and expectations for social protection in Uganda grow, so will the requirement for objective-led direction, plus financial, human, and institutional capacities to achieve the objectives. Accordingly, a recasting

and reaffirmation of vision and mission as well as prioritization of objectives of social protection in Uganda are needed.

Over the past three decades, the debate on social protection in Uganda revolved around issues of affordability, cost-effectiveness, targeting, and how it complements other social services. After adducing evidence on many of these issues, there is now a general consensus that Social Protection can make immense contribution to human capital development. With the persistence, magnitude, and complexity of poverty and vulnerability coupled with the need for social justice, equity, and economic prudence, the cost of not investing in social protection is very high. For example, chronically and socially excluded people, as was for long the case in Northern Uganda, are usually dissatisfied and disaffected, becoming easy targets of agents of dissent and conflict.

Secondly, whenever a situation of poverty emerges, it also brings with it significant loss to the economy. Costs linked to not addressing climate change are also evident. For the period 2010-2050, the costs of inaction were estimated by the Ministry of Environment and Water to lie between US\$273 and \$437 billion¹. Even if there were no further increases in climate impacts, the cost of inaction would rise over time because of the rapid increase in the population of Uganda. It suffices to note that the cost of adaptation is high, but the cost of inaction is 24-46 times greater. Hence approval by the Government of the national policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management in 2010 and the National Climate Change Policy was a good first step. Further

¹Republic of Uganda. 2015. Economic Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change in Uganda. Climate Change Department, Ministry of Water and Environment. November, 2015. Republic of Uganda. 2015. Economic Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change in Uganda. Climate Change Department, Ministry of Water and Environment. November, 2015.

progress will be made if these efforts were linked to or harmonized with the country's social protection strategy.

A legal and policy framework exists for social protection in Uganda, but this need consolidating and strengthening. The National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) acknowledges that all Ugandans, regardless of their social or economic status, require guarantees for some form of social protection across the lifecycle. By implication, long-term planning is needed for the sector to mitigate the various and frequently metamorphosing risks and vulnerabilities which prevent people from meeting most of their basic needs. Among the many challenges that still need to be addressed is the one of fragmentation of programmes, which breeds inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Many short-to-medium-term social protection interventions which are currently being implemented have had

inconsistent messaging, poor coordination, and compromised effectiveness. This NSPS provides a holistic framework for addressing the challenges.

Aware that the provision of Social Protection services is multi-sectoral in nature, I call upon all relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to align their social protection initiatives and programmes to this Strategy. This strategy presents a new commitment and approach by Government of Uganda to harmonize, strengthen and effectively coordinate interventions for addressing socio-economic risks and vulnerabilities.



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ACRONYMS

DRDIP	Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ESP	Expanding Social Protection
GoU	Government of Uganda
IDA	International Development Association
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	National Planning Authority
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
SRSP	Shock Responsive Social Protection
UAIS	Uganda Agriculture Insurance Scheme
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPFSP	Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Social Protection
URBRA	Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) 2024 – 2029 seeks to translate the vision of the NSPP (2015) and the National Development Plan (NDP) into an actionable plan for addressing risk and vulnerability in Uganda. The strategy provides a framework and roadmap from which priority actions will be drawn. It also seeks to outline how the delivery of social protection in Uganda will be harmonized and coordinated, aware that many programmes are presently implemented by different Government and non-Government agencies.

A Transformative Social Protection model is proposed for the strategy. This envisions two interconnected strands for Uganda's long-term and sustainable poverty reduction, the first strand focusing on economic risk management which seeks to protect the poor or those who are most vulnerable against income and consumption variability. The second strand visualizes the positive relationship between livelihood security and empowerment, incorporating social dimensions of well-being and rights-based approaches. Strategically the model goes beyond conceptualizing social protection only in terms of public responses to livelihood shocks (the 'safety net' function) to concerns for equity and social rights, and by bringing the two strands into dynamic interaction, it is argued, policy conditions are created for a virtuous cycle of pro-poor growth.

Consistent with the NSPP, this Strategy is underpinned by the notion of a lifecycle which recognizes that vulnerabilities vary at different stages of life. Consequently, NSPS objectives and actions will align themselves to the diversity of the

stages, while at the same time recognizing that in the implementation phase of Strategy, there will be some complex and overlapping national and international socio-economic, political and structural factors, which are likely to influence the priority social protection interventions.

In the light of the foregoing, the NSPS will focus on six strategic objectives namely:

- i) Expanding the scope and coverage of social security for the most vulnerable groups across the life cycle;
- ii) Scaling up the provision of holistic social care and support services to socio-culturally vulnerable individuals across the life cycle;
- iii) Strengthening systems, policy and institutional framework for the effective delivery of social protection services;
- iv) Embedding shock-responsiveness in all key social protection programmes and interventions;
- v) Generating evidence on the effectiveness, impact and efficiency of social protection and using this to inform public debate on social protection;
- vi) Strengthening linkages between social protection, complementary services and livelihood enhancement interventions.

Specifically, the following interventions will be rolled out across the life-cycle

Life-course stage	Proposed Specific strategic interventions	Proposed interventions that cut across all life-cycle stages
0-5 Years (Early Childhood)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and gradually roll-out a Child Disability Grant Expand provision of Integrated Early Childhood Development programmes for the poor and vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide social care and support to all vulnerable persons across the life cycle (rehabilitative, residential and home-based care and support (including provision of food and non-food items) Rollout a National Health Insurance Scheme to enhance access to essential basic health services especially for low-income individuals and households. Develop a Social Registry to enhance identification and targeting of poor and vulnerable persons Document and progressively revive traditional social support systems to complement formal social protection services for the poor and vulnerable. Explore possibility of relaxing of nationality and residence restrictions on national social assistance to foster inclusion of refugees in accessing social protection.
6-17 Years (School Going Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen case management system on child abuse, neglect and exploitation Develop and progressively expand coverage of school feeding programmes especially for highly vulnerable areas such as Karamoja Promote establishment and rollout of school garden models for school feeding. 	
18 – 30 Years (Youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support (livelihood, psychosocial, health, legal) to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of violence Develop and provide incentives for skilling the youth 	
31-59 Years (Working Age adults)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand coverage of contributory social security to all persons in the formal sector Fast track the reform of Public Service Pensions Scheme to turn it into a contributory social security scheme for all civil servants Develop and implement strategy for Extending Social Security to workers in the Informal economy Design and progressively implement a National Labour-Intensive Public Works Programme which provides income security to the poor and vulnerable households while enhancing their livelihoods and building their resilience to shocks. Advocating for bilateral and multi-lateral agreements on social protection to allow for portability of social benefits across countries 	

Life-course stage	Proposed Specific strategic interventions	Proposed interventions that cut across all life-cycle stages
	in the East African Community	
60 Years and above (Old Persons)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressively lower the eligibility age for accessing SCG from 80 years to at least 75 years Develop Policy and legislation on age retirement 	
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and gradually rollout a severe disabilities grant Expand provision of rehabilitative and assistive devices for vulnerable persons, especially persons with disabilities Enforce development of disability friendly infrastructure Develop waivers and incentives for persons with disabilities e.g. in accessing public transport, employment opportunities 	

The NSPS elaborates how the programmes and interventions identified above shall be operationalized and the necessary supportive systems for achieving a coordinated and efficient delivery of social protection in Uganda. These include among others; strengthening capacity building of stakeholders across MDAs; putting in place an elaborate and supportive legal framework; strengthening targeting mechanisms and systems through establishment of a Social Registry and operationalization of the National Single Registry; building shock-responsive capacity across government; strengthening monitoring and evaluation framework and coordination mechanisms as well as linkages and referrals to complementary and other social services.

This Strategy is cognizant of the fact that financing social protection interventions is likely to present certain challenges, especially since the

programmes will almost exclusively be seeking to draw their resources from an already constrained public resource envelop. It therefore outlines possible financing sources and approaches for delivering and sustaining social protection provision in Uganda.

Finally, the NSPS outlines the costs of implementing the Strategy as a whole including systems strengthening and programmes, and based on scenarios modelled with selected levels of coverage of priority groups and benefit levels so as to achieve the Uganda Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan.



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This document presents the National Social Protection Strategy (2024-2029) which has been developed by the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, in consultation with relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies, local governments, development partners and other actors in the space of social protection to translate the vision of NSPP and the National Development Plan into an actionable plan for expanding the scope and coverage of social protection to poor and vulnerable persons. After many years of anti-poverty programming and following successful implementation of the initial phases of the Expanding Social Protection (ESP) programme, renewed attention is now being focused on investment in the next chapter of social protection by the Government of Uganda (GoU).

The NSPS draws lessons from the Social Protection Sector Review (2019) achievements made, and challenges encountered during implementation of social protection interventions in the country, as well as from numerous other reviews and experiences to draw priorities and strategies for what needs to be done to develop a shock responsive social protection system, to support reducing social and economic vulnerabilities, poverty and deprivation, as well as bolstering equity, social inclusion, and access to basic social services.

In defining and designing the NSPS, the MGLSD reflected on the historical evolution of social protection in the country and undertook a vulnerability analysis to help determine priority actions. Four broad points can be made at the outset. First, the GoU is constitutionally charged with promoting equity, dignity and shared

progress. Secondly, it is committed to sustainably dealing with the negative impacts of persistent poverty, risk and vulnerability to prevent further slippage. Thirdly, the time to strategically deal with newly emerging shocks such as disease epidemics, food insecurity, the impacts of extreme weather and burgeoning youth unemployment in the country is now. Finally, as a signatory to various regional and international conventions, Uganda is mindful of the responsibilities, opportunities and challenges which the global development landscape presents and the role that social protection can play.

1.2. Outline of Strategy

The National Social Protection Strategy document has been structured into 6 chapters as follows:

- **Chapter one:** provides the background to the strategy, detailing the linkage of the strategy to national frameworks, the process involved in the strategy development and institutions involved.
- **Chapter two:** presents an analysis of the poverty, risk and vulnerability situation of Uganda and the role of social protection.
- **Chapter three:** provides an overview of the current social protection system highlighting the legal and policy framework, key achievements made, challenges encountered and lessons learnt.
- **Chapter four:** presents the strategic direction of the NSPS, highlighting the goal and vision of the strategy, key objectives to be achieved, proposed

interventions and specific actions to achieve the aspirations of the strategy within the period 2024 – 2029.

- **Chapter five:** details the implementation mechanisms including the role and responsibilities of key actors, financing mechanisms and the communication plan of the strategy
- **Chapter six:** indicates the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for the Strategy.

1.3. Background

According to the preliminary results of the National Population and Housing Census (NPHC) of 2024, the total population of Uganda is estimated to be 45.9 million, out of whom 51.0% are female and 49.0% are male. The preliminary NPHC Report also indicates 50.4% of the population are children, 22.7% are youth, 21.8% are working age adults aged 31 to 59 years and 5.0% are older persons aged 60 years and above. The current population growth rate of 2.9% coupled with a large number of children overstretches the country's ability to provide vital services such as health care, education, housing and employment, thus exposing most individuals to poverty, risk and vulnerability.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that most households and individuals in Uganda have limited capacity to manage risks or to cope with shocks, which in turn has very serious negative implications for economic growth. In the five years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic, Uganda's GDP growth rate averaged 5.2 percent. Specifically, in

²Guloba, M.M., Kakuru, M. and Ssewanyana, S.N. 2021. The impact of COVID-19 on industries without smoke³stacks in Uganda. Economic Policy Research Centre. AGI Working Paper #33

³Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC). (2020). Uganda Business Climate Index, how has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Ugandan businesses? Results from a business climate survey. EPRC Special Issue 01, May 2020.

the third quarter of 2018/19, prior to the pandemic, the economic growth rate was 7.0 percent. However, the economic growth rate slumped to a mere 0.3 percent by the third quarter of 2019/20, declining further to -5.7 percent in the fourth of 2019/20. The negative growth corresponds to a decline in GDP value added at constant prices from UGX 28.5 trillion (approximately \$7.7 billion) in fourth quarter of 2018/19 to UGX 27.2 trillion (\$7.3 billion) in fourth quarter of 2019/20, representing a 4.6 percent decline². An estimated 3.8 million jobs were temporarily lost³ and 625,957 were permanently lost within that period. As a result, the poverty impact of COVID increased by 7.9 percentage points, enough to erase most of the gains in poverty reduction over the previous 10 years.

This Strategy has been formulated to tackle the socio-economic challenges posed by high prevalence of risks and vulnerabilities in the population. The development of this Strategy adopted an interactive and consultative process that involved constituting a taskforce and core team comprising of a cross-section of professionals drawn from the social protection fraternity in Uganda, including Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), development partners, Academia, NGOs and representatives of the private sector. The MGLSD conducted a series of consultations with state and non-state actors at national and sub-national levels who included: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development;

Ministry of Public Service; Ministry of Education and Sports; National Social Security Fund (NSSF); Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA); Office of the Prime Minister; National Planning Authority; Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Social Protection (UPFSP); and Development Partners under the Uganda Social Protection Development Partners Group. These multi-stakeholder consultations enabled the team to generate consensus on Social Protection priorities for Uganda. To enhance ownership and buy-in, the Strategy was presented to and endorsed by the Expanding Social Protection Steering Committee, Senior Management and Top Policy Management of the MGLSD and the Gender and Social Protection Sub-Programme of the Human Capital Development Programme of the National Development Plan.

1.4. Understanding Social Protection in Uganda

The conceptualization of social protection in Uganda is drawn from the National Social Protection Policy (2015) that defines it as **“public and private interventions to address risks and vulnerabilities that expose individuals to income insecurity and social deprivation, leading to undignified lives”**⁵. This defini-

Social protection in Uganda comprises two pillars, namely:



1

Social Security



2

Social Care and Support Services

tion evokes a broader vision that views social protection beyond poverty reduction to addressing idiosyncratic risks and vulnerabilities across the lifecycle and co-variate shocks which perennially affect large communities.

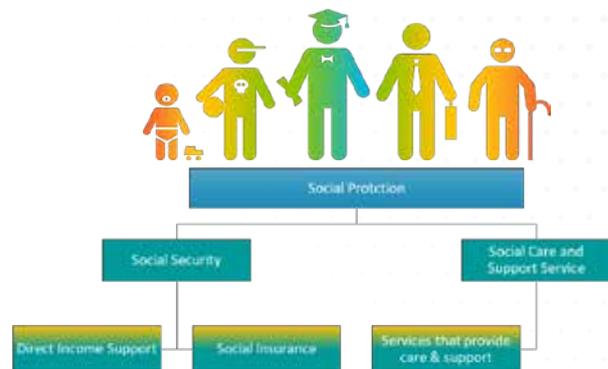
Social Security: encompasses contributory social insurance schemes and non-contributory direct income support programmes that seek to protect and prevent factors that lead to income shocks. Social Insurance schemes include but are not limited to: pension schemes for public servants, social security schemes for workers in the private sector, health insurance schemes and voluntary social security schemes for persons in the informal economy. Direct Income Support interventions include cash and in-kind transfers to vulnerable persons such as children, persons with disabilities, older persons and the youth among others.

Social Care and Support Services: on the other hand, refer to a wide range of public and private services designed to alleviate the socio-cultural vulnerability of individuals who suffer or are likely to face neglect, abuse, exploitation and social exclusion. These include among others; community and home-based care for children, elderly, People with Disabilities, People living with HIV, rehabilitation and support for out-of-school youth and drug users.

The Government of Uganda recognizes that social protection alone cannot tackle all the problems and challenges faced by vulnerable individuals and as such recognizes the role played by complementary interventions implemented by other MDAs and non-state actors; which include, but are not limited to:

- o Livelihood income enhancement programmes such as the Youth Livelihood Programme, Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme, Disability Grant;
- o Financial Inclusion interventions such as the Parish Development Model;
- o Routine social services provided under the different sectors of health, education and agriculture, among others.

Figure 1: Contextualizing Social Protection in Uganda



Complementary Services: health care services, formal education programmes, agricultural inputs, nutrition programmes, livelihood income enhancement programmes

1.5. The Evolution of Social Protection in Uganda

In Uganda, formal social protection, especially actions taken by the public and private sector, is relatively new, traceable only to 1967 when

Government enacted the Social Security Act No 21. This put in place the Public Service Pension Scheme (PSPS) to provide pensions to retiring Central Government public officers, local government staff, teachers as well as army, police and prisons officers. Later, in 1972, the Social Security (Amendment) Decree 33 was passed, and this was repealed with the establishment of the National Social Security (NSSF) Act of 1985. The latter extended the coverage of Social Security to the wider formal sector beyond the Public Service Pension Scheme. For over three decades, therefore, social protection in Uganda was largely driven by the two interventions for employees in the formal sector.

Direct income support was mainly characterized by provision of in-kind transfers in form of food distribution to households in a few food insecure areas. In other parts of the country especially Northern Uganda and Karamoja that experienced prolonged periods of war orchestrated by the LRA rebellion, provision of humanitarian aid arguably operated as a “de-facto safety net” for displaced people including the internally displaced persons, refugees and host communities. This role notwithstanding, there has been no formal linkage between social protection and humanitarian assistance and as a result, this strategy seeks to build clear linkages between social protection specific interventions, humanitarian assistance, disaster risk management and complementary services.

Efforts to establish formal cash transfers gained momentum in 2010 following the launch of the Expanding Social Protection Programme, which paved way for the piloting of the Senior Citizens Grant targeting older persons aged 60 years in Karamoja region and 65 years and above in the

rest of the country in the 15 pilot districts of Uganda and later expanded in 2018 to the whole country, but for only older persons aged 80 years and above following the pronouncement of the National rollout. To provide a clear direction of the implementation of Social Protection, the Government of Uganda in 2015 approved the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) which provides the overarching framework for the design and implementation of Social Protection interventions in Uganda.

The absence of formal social protection was however compensated by community-based social protection mechanisms which played a pivotal role in mitigating social risks and vulnerability at local and family levels. Traditional community social protection systems are built around the concept of risk pooling and reciprocity, where each person in need receives help from other members of the group, such as in the community-based “munno mu kabi” (friend-in-need) schemes. Family and clan-based systems of different ethnicities are yet another category of ‘traditional’ mechanisms most valued for giving a sense of identity and belonging, as well as helping in times of difficulty, especially in the event of demise of any person within the extended family setting.

Similarly, cooperative labour groups such as the “wang tic” in Lango and “leja leja” in different parts of the country have continued to be in operation though sometimes operating intermittently and with varying levels of success as self-help groups. These work to raise income, pool resources and deal with idiosyncratic and covariant shocks that affect them. These have, however, been eroded over time due to the changing nature of societies. Only a few of these formerly vibrant mechanisms can be traced and found operational and even where they are, they are no longer as inclusive as previously envisaged and implemented.

Notwithstanding the existence of the NSPP and commitments to social protection in the National Development Plan, scope and coverage of existing programmes has been limited. This is partly due to negative attitudes and beliefs by elites about social protection, with distinctions still being made between ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ people, concerns about sustainability of social protection interventions and the thinking that cash transfers can make beneficiaries “lazy” and “unproductive”.

1.6. Legal and Policy Framework

Social protection in Uganda is supported by a wide range of legal and policy instruments and these provided the foundation for the development of this Strategy.

1.7. National Policies and Instruments

The right to Social Protection is enshrined in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Chapter IV of the Constitution provides for the protection and promotion of fundamental human rights and freedoms, enjoining the State to take

affirmative action in favor of marginalized groups, protect the unique and natural maternal function of women, the rights of children, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and economic rights of every Ugandan.

The National Objective and Directive Principles of State Policy XIV of the Constitution “charges the state to endeavour to fulfill the fundamental rights of all Ugandans to social justice and economic development and in particular, (XIV (b)) to ensure that all Ugandans enjoy rights and opportunities and access to education, health services, clean and safe water, work, decent shelter, adequate clothing, food security and pension and retirement benefits”. In line with these objectives, the Second National Development Plan (NDP II), 2015/16 to 2019/20, sought to ‘increase the number of vulnerable individuals accessing social protection interventions from about one million people in 2013 to about 3 million by 2020.’ The NDP II prioritized ‘expanding access to contributory social security for workers in the informal sector and a gradual roll-out of a non-contributory social pension scheme for older persons.’ Similarly, NDP III 2020/21–2024/25 also committed to “expand social protection” and to “reduce vulnerability and gender inequality along the lifecycle”.



Figure 3: Some Social Protection Provisions in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda

Objective VII:	“The State shall make reasonable provision for the welfare and maintenance of the aged”.
Objective XI (i):	“The State shall give the highest priority to the enactment of legislation establishing measures that protect and enhance the right of the people to equal opportunities in development”.
Objective XIV (b):	“All Ugandans shall enjoy rights and opportunities and access to education, health services, clean and safe water, work, decent shelter, adequate clothing, food security, pension and retirement benefits”.

Other Legislation already in place includes; the Pensions Act Cap.89, the Workers’ Compensation Act Cap.233, the Employment Act Cap.226 as amended providing for rights of workers and employers’ obligations and the Domestic Violence Act Cap.123.

Legislation relating to social insurance includes the following:

- i) **The Pensions Act, Cap.89** covers the granting and regulating of pensions, gratuities and other allowances in respect of the officers of the public service under the Government of Uganda.
- ii) **The National Social Security Fund Act, Cap.230** provides for social security benefits for employees in the private sector.
- iii) **The Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority Act Cap.232** provides for an institution to regulate the establishment, management and operation of retirement benefits schemes in Uganda in both the private and public sectors.
- iv) **The Workers’ Compensation Act Cap.233** provides for compensation to workers for injuries and scheduled diseases suffered in the course of their employment.

In addition, there are numerous other policies which inform the direction of social protection provision and these include the National Child Policy (2020), the National Equal Opportunity Policy (2006), the National Disability Policy (2023), the Uganda Gender Policy (2007), the National Policy for Older Persons (2024), the National Health Policy (2010), the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management (2010) and the National Employment Policy (2011). Other relevant policies include the Uganda National Youth Policy (2016), the Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (2016), the National Policy for Elimination of Gender-Based Violence (2016) and The National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (2004).

1.8. Relevant Global Policies and Instruments

At the international level, Uganda is signatory to; The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1990; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1989; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006. The country is also signatory to the main international legal instruments for refugee protection, including

the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Refugee Convention. Further, Uganda is one of the countries that first committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including the attainment of SDG Target 1.3 regarding implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all.

Uganda is also party to several regional commitments in Africa relevant to social protection, including:

- i) The East African Common Market Protocol which permits workers to move freely within the territories of the partner states for the purpose of employment and guarantees them the rights and benefits of social security as accorded to the workers of the host partner state.
- ii) The Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan Alleviation in Africa (2004). The Plan calls for improvement and strengthening of the existing social protection schemes and extending it to workers and their families currently excluded.
- iii) The Livingstone Call to Action (2006), which obligates African Member States to put in place costed plans for the implementation of Direct Income Support (DIS) programmes; and
- iv) The African Union Social Policy Framework (2008) which calls on member States to recognize that social protection is a state obligation, with provisions in national legislations.

1.9. Alignment of Strategy to Planning Frameworks

The NSPS is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that consists of a set of 17 goals of which 14 are directly linked to Social Protection. At the regional level, the strategy contributes to the AU Agenda 2063 and the EAC Vision 2050. At the national level, the NSPS is aligned to Uganda Vision 2040 which seeks to transform the Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. The Uganda Vision 2040 underscores the importance of Social Protection to address risks and vulnerabilities. To this end Government recognizes the need to provide social assistance and care to people who are vulnerable either by age, social class, location, disability, gender, disaster or who do not earn any income.

The NSPS has also been aligned to the NDP which is the overarching framework for guiding national development efforts in the medium term. The NDP has adopted programme approach to planning and implementation through 20 integrated programmes. Social Protection has been mapped to the Human Capital Development Programme under the objective, which seeks to reduce vulnerability and gender inequality along the lifecycle. Particularly, the NDP priorities provide for Direct Income Support, Expansion of the coverage for Social Insurance as well as Social Care services for the vulnerable.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews Uganda's socio-economic conditions and describes the risks and vulnerabilities faced using a life-cycle approach. It provides a foundation and case for investing in social protection in the country. It also highlights the rationale for provision of Social Protection, giving evidence on the role that Social Protection plays in contributing to economic growth, building resilience to shocks, reducing poverty and reducing vulnerability across the life cycle, among others.

2.2. Demographics

Based on preliminary results of National and Housing Population Census (NHPC) of 2024 prepared by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBoS), the population of Uganda is estimated to have

grown to 45.9 million people in 2024 of which 49.0% (22.5 million people) are male and 51.0% (23.4 million) are female. The population of the country continues to be dominated by children who constitute 50.4% of the population of Uganda. The NHPC preliminary results depict that 73.1% of the country's population is aged 30 years and below, out of whom 50.4% are children and 22.7% are youth.

2.3. Poverty and Inequality Situation and Trends

Uganda has over the years made commendable progress in reducing poverty. National assessments reveal that poverty declined from over 50% in the 1990's to 31.1% percent in 2006, 19.7 percent in 2016, 21.4 percent in 2019 and 20.3 percent in 2021. Despite the decline, in absolute terms, the proportion of persons living below the poverty line increased from 8 million to 8.3

⁴Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2021. Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020. Kampala, Uganda; UBOS

⁵The HDI is a summary composite measure of a country's average achievements in three basic aspects of human development: health, knowledge and standard of living

million. This implies that, one in five persons in Uganda lives in poverty. In regional terms, poverty in Northern Uganda deepened from 8.9 percent in 2016/17 to 11.3 percent in 2019/20 and inequality among the poor rose from 3.4 percent to 4.9 percent⁴. Based on UNDP’s 2019 Human Development Index (HDI) and with a score of 0.554, Uganda was ranked 159 out of 189 countries, putting it in the category of low human capital development⁵.

Despite the economic growth and poverty reduction which the country registered over the years, many people are still stuck with a low quality of life, exacerbated by the growing inequality. Inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient rose from 0.40 in 2012/13 to 0.42 in 2016/17 before marginally dropping to 0.41 in 2019/20. A Gini Coefficient that is greater than 0.40 is regarded as high inequality which, therefore, categorizes Uganda as a country with high inequality.

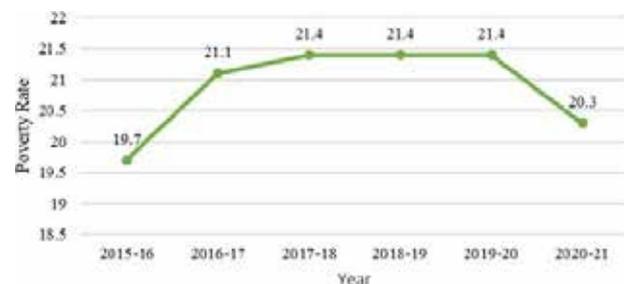
Based on the upper poverty line of USD 1.77 per person per day, the share of Ugandans living in poverty stood at 30.1%, representing 12.3 million poor persons in 2019/20. Thus, using the upper poverty line increases the number of poor persons by 4 million from that estimated using the existing poverty line of USD 1.0 of 8.3 million. Nearly 33.8 percent of the rural population and 19.8 percent of the urban population are living in poverty. The poverty headcount at USD 1.9 per person per day (2011 PPP-international comparison) was 41.1 percent and in absolute numbers, poor persons were estimated at 16.9 million.

Poverty in Uganda remains a rural phenomenon, but urban poverty is on the rise. The share and number of poor persons in urban areas significantly rose. Overall, the incidence of poverty in rural areas is more than two times the rate of

poverty in urban centers. Up to 23.4% of the population (about 7.0 million people) in rural areas live in absolute poverty, compared to only 1.3 million poor people in urban areas. There is clear evidence of regional disparity in income as depicted by poverty headcounts of 35.9% in Northern Uganda, 25.9% in Eastern region, 14.4% in Western region and 8.7% in Central region. Rural poverty is strongly associated with dependence of rural households on agriculture.

To sustain the gains made in poverty reduction, there is, therefore, need to not only pull the poor out of poverty but also to support the non-poor to remain out of poverty through appropriate social protection instruments.

Figure 2: Proportion of the population below the national poverty line



2.4. Vulnerability across the Life Cycle

First initiated in the 1940’s, the lifecycle approach to planning is directed at different stages of the physiological development from childhood to old age. This strategy outlines five (5) stages of life namely:

- i) Infants (0-5 years)
- ii) School-age (6-17 years)
- iii) Youth (18-30 years)
- iv) Working age (31-59 years)
- v) Older people (over 60 years)

The strategy recognises that Ugandans continue to face different vulnerabilities at various stages of the life cycle as indicated below:

Early Childhood (0-5 years)	School Age(6-17 years)	Youth (18-30 years)	Working Age(31-59 years)	Old Age (Over 60 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malnutrition • Wasting • Underweight • Stunting • Cognitive underdevelopment • Limited access to postnatal care • Inadequate or lack of parental care • Orphanhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate or lack of parental care • poor parenting • Orphanhood • Violence Against children • Child labour • School drop-out • Living and working in the Street • Drug and substance abuse • Defilement • Sexual exploitation • Teenage pregnancy • Early marriage • STIs, HIV and AIDS • Psychosocial challenges – stress, trauma, anxiety and depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate skills • Drug and substance abuse • Human trafficking • Unemployment and under-employment • Gender Based Violence • Sexual harassment • STIs, HIV and AIDS • Psychosocial challenges – stress, trauma, anxiety and depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment and under-employment • Job insecurity • Low wages • Occupational accidents and diseases • Discrimination • Gender Based Violence • Sexual harassment • STIs, HIV and AIDS • Psychosocial challenges – stress, trauma, anxiety and depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing frailty • Frequent illness • Disability • Diminishing productivity • Lack of income • Inadequate care from nucleus and extended family • Discrimination in labour force • Exploitation • Loss of property rights • Psychosocial challenges – stress, trauma, anxiety and depression
<p>Idiosyncratic Shocks: Chronic Illness, Disability, HIV and AIDS, Death, Injury, Crop failure, Job loss</p> <p>Covariate Shocks: Macroeconomic crisis, drought, natural disasters, climate change, pandemics and armed conflict</p>				

Early Childhood: Uganda has one of the highest fertility rates in the world, estimated at 5.2 children per woman⁶. Notwithstanding this, stunting and being underweight in early childhood remains high and a threat to the realization of the SDG goals. About 24.4% of children under 5 years are stunted (short for their age), 3.2% are wasted (thin for their height), 9.7%, are underweight (thin for their age) and 3.4% are overweight (too heavy for height). Stunting alone is responsible for more than half of all under-five deaths. Furthermore, only 54% of the children below 2 years have received all basic vaccinations. Despite progress in improving child survival, under-5 mortality is still high and most prevalent among children in the poorest households (88 deaths per 1,000 live births), compared to children in the wealthiest households (53 deaths per 1,000 live births)⁷. Vulnerabilities at early childhood reduce child cognitive development which affects human capital development and labour productivity later in life.

School going age: Uganda's children who comprise the largest age-segment of the population are also the most vulnerable demographic group. Children, defined as people below 18 years old, experience the highest rates of multidimensional poverty (56%), the rates being higher for those living in households with three or more children (62%)⁸. This has led them into adopting negative coping mechanisms such as involving in child labour and dropping out of school among others. Up to 28% (two million) children are involved in some form of child labour, with Eastern and

Busoga sub-regions being the most affected (44.7% and 38.3% respectively)⁹. While Uganda has a high enrolment rate of up to 85%, only less than 50% get to complete the first cycle of education (primary seven) with girls accounting for the majority of those that drop out. This exacerbates their exposure to poverty and other harmful practices such as commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, gender and violence against children among others.

Over the last two decades, implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme has been challenged by declining primary completion and achievement rates, low school attendance and performance which is below the desired minimum average for numeracy and literacy. Lack of a mid-day meal is one of the reasons that have been advanced to explain this. Similarly, available evidence on nutrition indicates that micronutrient deficiencies are common with anemia rates reaching 46% in girls of 11-14 years age¹⁰ (Barugahara et al, 2013) and the prevalence of malnutrition in children aged 5-19 years is 31% among boys and 17% among girls¹¹. In cognisance of the importance of school feeding in achieving national development and learning outcomes for children, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) issued guidelines on school feeding and nutrition interventions in 2013 with the aim of increasing access to parent-led school feeding and improving dietary diversity in schools. A fully functioning national school feeding programme, as a social protection instrument, would thus contribute enormously to improvement of education and health outcomes.

⁶2022 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey – key findings

⁷2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey

⁸UNICEF Uganda Demographic Profile

⁹The 2019/20 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS)

¹⁰Barugahara, El, Kikafunda, J and Gakenia, WM (2013) Prevalence and risk factors of nutritional anemia among female school children in Masindi district, western Uganda. African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development. 13(3).

¹¹ Global Nutrition Report (2020) Country profiles: Uganda. Available at: <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/africa/eastern-africa/uganda/>

Youth: The youth population (18-30 years) in Uganda stands at 22.7% of the total population. One of the biggest challenges faced by the youth is high unemployment rate, which stands at 17%, almost double the national unemployment rate¹² and especially underemployment and low-quality employment. Youth unemployment is mainly attributed to several factors. For example, job growth has been slow partly due to the inelasticity of employment growth compared to GDP growth, coupled with a high rate of population growth¹³. There is also a mismatch between the skills that young people have and what the job market requires. Inadequate training and limited job opportunities are the other challenges with up to 400,000 youth graduating annually from the various educational institutions compared to only 100,000 jobs that are being created annually. Under the medium-variant scenario, the Ugandan labor market will need to accommodate 14 million additional workers by 2040 to avoid underutilization of its human capital. This translates to approximately 1.1 to 1.2 million new entrants into the labor force per year over the next 16 years¹⁴.

Working Age Population (WAP): According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics' 2021 National Labour Force Survey (NLFS), there were 23.5 million people in the working age group, an increase from 20.2 million in NLFS 2016/17. Of these, the majority (35%) had attained some primary education with about 10 percent having never attended any formal education. The average age of the working age population in 2021 was 30 years.

Approximately, 47% were independent workers without employers while 34% were employees. Working persons in agriculture largely worked for non-commercial purposes (35%) and of these 58% did not look for work and were not available for employment. The main activity for persons in subsistence agriculture was growing of crops (80%) followed by mixed farming (17%). Unpaid work, constituting activities performed for self-benefit or for the benefit of others without pay such as subsistence agriculture (41%), other unpaid work (39%) and unpaid care work (21%) was noted to be a largely rural phenomenon with 7 in every 10 of the population aged 5 years and above engaged in unpaid work. Unemployment and underemployment in Uganda have been further exacerbated by COVID-19 where one in every 4 persons lost their job due to the pandemic¹⁵. Majority of the working age population is in the subsistence economy (39.3%) having declined from 43.3% in 2012/13. This notwithstanding, majority of Ugandans work in precarious and non-rewarding work, or in jobs that cannot offer decent incomes. Up to 83.5% of the Ugandan population aged between 15 and 29 years work in poor quality informal jobs.

Old age: Older persons in Uganda aged 60 years and above constitute 5.0% of Uganda's total population (2.3 million people in absolute terms). The number of older persons is projected to double by 2050. Forty five percent of older persons live in poverty while only one in five older persons can access any form of credit (goods, cash or services). This is compounded by the low

¹²The Annual Labour Force Survey (2018/19)

¹³It was estimated that between 1992 and 2014, more than 300,000 additional workers entered the labor market annually, numbers that are expected to double between 2014 and 2030, and to exceed one million per year between 2030 and 2040

¹⁴World Bank, 2020. Tackling the demographic challenge in Uganda.

¹⁵Rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on Labour, employment and productivity 2021

coverage of social security where only 2.3% of older persons receive a pension. Over the years with the breakdown of the traditional support mechanisms, family care for older persons has been declining and yet responsibilities for care of children have been increasing with almost two out of three older persons caring for young children. Because of increased frailty due to old age, inability to work and lack of care from families, older persons often became poor or vulnerable to falling into poverty.

Disability: It is estimated that 4 out of every 25 or 16 per cent of the Ugandan population, are disabled¹⁶. Disability is highest among children at 12.5% compared to other age segments¹⁷. Persons with disabilities face numerous challenges including but not limited to inability to access health facilities, schooling and employment. For example, there are 172,864 children with special needs in primary schools, comprising 2.0% of total primary level enrolment and 9% of all children with special needs. Similarly, out of 1,370,583 students enrolled in secondary schools in Uganda 8,945 students (0.6%) have special learning needs¹⁸.

Growing informal sector: Self-employment has become a predominant characteristic in Uganda. Informal sector employment in Uganda currently stands at 83% of the total employment¹⁹, with a higher participation of women compared to men. This is expected to further increase with the projected population increase by 2050. Informality is correlated with low human capital, limited access to basic services, limited financial inclusion, low earnings, and high susceptibility to shocks. Despite these vulnerabilities, informal

sector workers are not fully covered by social protection programmes. While the Government through the Uganda Retirements Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA) has registered growth of a social insurance scheme for the informal sector, coverage is still very low. Evidence from studies conducted on social protection instruments indicates that provision of social protection and economic inclusion programs for the informal sector is critical for enabling workers build sustainable livelihoods and by so doing contributes to building a productive and informal economy which is critical for the attainment of Human Capital Development.

Shocks posing serious challenges for social protection: Over the years, Uganda like other countries has been severely affected by a range of shocks. Between 1980 and 2012, the annual frequency of natural disasters, mostly attributable to climate change, increased by 250% and the number of people affected increased by 140%. Between 2015-2022, 77% of the total population were affected by effects of drought, 62% affected by sharp changes in prices, 61% by crop pests and diseases, 50% by livestock diseases, 15% by floods and the entire nation (100%) by COVID-19. The high frequency of shocks and their correlation with poverty are significant, and the above-described systemic drivers of poverty remain a challenge especially in rural areas. According to the Uganda National Panel Survey (UNPS) data (2019/20), the share of households that experienced shocks during the last decade ranged from 30 percent to 40 percent, with rural and the poorest households affected the most. These shocks frequently resulted in a decline in income and assets. Globally, up to 26 million people fall into poverty annually due to climate shocks. Poor

¹⁶Uganda National Population Census, 2014

¹⁷UBOS 2019/20

¹⁸ Ministry of Education and Sports, 2017

¹⁹2018 data of ILOSTAT (dashboard), International Labour Organization, Geneva

households especially in the rural areas are more prone and have been severely affected by shocks. Because of their underlying vulnerability, shocks often push poor people into deeper poverty, displacement, loss of livelihoods, assets and as a result, they are forced to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as sale of remaining assets, cutting down on meals, taking children out of school thus negatively impacting on health, education, social and economic outcomes.

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers: Uganda hosts over 1.5 million refugees, making it the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world and the largest in Africa. Uganda is known as the world's best place for refugees because of supportive legislative and policy frameworks for refugees. Despite this, many barriers still hinder the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the country's social protection system. Refugees are faced with poverty, risk and vulnerability, presumed temporary status and unpredictable length of their stay and the low social protection coverage of the national host population are among the many reasons attributed to explain refugee's predicament.

In some of the country's refugee-hosting districts, refugees have access to social assistance through government programmes such as the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP). In other areas, however, they are often excluded from national social protection programmes such as SAGE. Even in the few situations where social assistance is available to the refugees, a key obstacle to access to the only available social protection programmes is lack of documentation and limited funding allocation and awareness regarding procedures and eligibility

requirements. It is also possible that some refugees face difficulties in accessing existing opportunities due to ambiguity or imprecision in programmes' rules being ambiguous or imprecise.

One exception to the lack of government-supported social assistance for refugees is the DRDIP, an IDA funded intervention under the Inter- Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). This is the key GoU programme extending social protection and self-reliance support to refugees and the hosting communities. This USD 200 million project aims to address gaps in social and economic infrastructure by promoting sustainable environmental management through Labour Intensive Public Works (LIPW); providing livelihoods support to both hosts and refugees; as well as promoting and fostering cohesion between the two communities. According to the design of DRDIP, Government allocates 70 percent of funds to hosting communities and 30 percent to refugees respectively, with the understanding that the latter already receive more significant support from humanitarian organizations while the hosting communities are more disadvantaged. However, the dwindling donor funding for refugee's support undermines such assumptions and calls for an urgent need to extend coverage of national Social Protection programmes to refugee communities.

2.5. Shock Responsive Social Protection

Uganda has a complex risk profile. Besides the country's rapid population growth (the second highest in the world)²¹ and post-conflict conditions in the North, soil erosion and degradation, the impacts of malaria, HIV/AIDS and more recently COVID-19 and Ebola crises, have all combined in

²⁰ World Bank, 2022

the past to exacerbate Uganda's stress factors and vulnerability. Trends in climate also reveal increased risk, with average temperatures having increased by 1.3°C since the 1960s, water scarcity and floods posing a growing threat and the country experiencing extreme weather events more frequently²². Mudslides, landslides and flooding, particularly for the country's mountain regions and related districts have, for example increased over the last 30 years. The combined effects of these crises are deaths and destruction, and an estimated 200,000 Ugandans are affected each year by the disasters.

In 2020, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics estimated the country's rural population to be 75 percent, a large proportion of this facing a poverty incidence rate which is more than two times that which urban areas experience (UBOS, 2020). With over 90 percent of the rural residents relying on rain-fed subsistence agriculture to sustain their livelihoods, the occurrence in the country of devastating drought events in the early 2010s caused severe food shortage, increased livestock mortality rates and consequently many people slipped into poverty. These events are mainly attributable to climate change, and if Uganda is to break the rural poverty cycle the country must invest in appropriate shock-responsive social protection for mitigating risks to agricultural and other related production. Some efforts have been made here though these are still insufficient.

The Uganda Agriculture Insurance Scheme (UAIS), established by the Government of Uganda in the financial year 2016/2017 with an objective of cushioning farmers from the risks associated with losses arising from natural disasters like

those described in the foregoing paragraph, was expected to help address this type of challenge. It was also envisaged that the scheme would attract financing to agriculture, encouraging commercial banks to lend to the sector on the assumption that the risk associated with agriculture would be mitigated through appropriate insurance cover. However, the scheme currently provides insurance coverage to only about 150,000 farmers – reaching less than 2% of the 8 million people active in the agricultural sector. Uganda's social protection systems, therefore, ought to be shock-responsive to address both systemic challenges and unforeseen events, and safeguards will be incorporated into the design or reform of social protection programmes and schemes to ensure that they can adapt quickly and easily to changing national circumstances. Shock responsive social protection is, therefore, proposed to enable existing social protection programmes to be adapted to prepare for, mitigate and respond to, mostly, co-variant shocks. This approach is especially important given Uganda's fragility, exposure to conflicts and violence.

CROSS CUTTING AND EMERGING ISSUES

This section explores some of the cross-cutting and emerging issues that need to be addressed through systemic and integrated social protection policy approaches.

i) Food and Nutrition Security

Food and nutrition security is the state of having reliable access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets one's dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life. Food insecurity has been exacerbated by frequent and

²¹According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics the country's projected population, as of March 2023, stands at 45.33 million and is projected to reach 63.8 million by 2030 (See Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Population Projects Reports, 2015 – 2050).

²²For a more detailed discussion of this see The World Bank. 2021. Climate Risk Country Profile: Uganda. The World Bank Group, 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433

persistent shocks and effects of climate change. Undernutrition is high with about 29 percent of children below 5 years of age being stunted while about 3.5% of all children below 5 years of age are faced with body wasting. Adolescent girls as well as pregnant and lactating women are also faced with malnutrition. Undernutrition of these categories affect the human capital development outcomes of the country.

Social protection can help people cope with shocks and stresses that affect food and nutrition security. It can also enhance people's productive capacities and livelihoods, enabling them to access, afford adequate and diverse food and it can also support the realization of the human right to food and social security, as well as other related rights, such as the rights to health, education, work and participation.

A study on the food and nutrition sensitivity of social protection programmes indicated that only two programmes (NUSAF 3 and DRDIP) were sensitive to food and nutrition security by design but not to maternal and child nutrition outcomes. With the changing food security landscape coupled with multiple challenges, there is need to expand responses and strengthen food security and nutrition actions, not only to these critical groups but across the lifecycle.

ii) Globalization

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the impact of globalization on individuals, communities and entire nations is profound. While globalization has brought about significant economic growth and technological advancement, it has also created new challenges including economic disparities, job insecurity and vulnerability to global economic shocks.

Globalization has led to greater volatility and uncertainty in the job market as well as creating

new forms of employment like the platform workers. As people increasingly move across borders in search of employment opportunities, they may find themselves in unfamiliar social and economic contexts. Furthermore, as global supply chains and trade networks become more complex, the vulnerabilities of workers and their rights need to be addressed. Globalization has intensified the need for effective social protection systems to provide a safety net, ensuring that individuals and families can access the support they need, regardless of their location or circumstances. It is important that the Government, international organizations and civil society work together to develop and implement comprehensive social protection systems that safeguard the well-being and rights of individuals and communities in a globalized world.

iii) Gender inequalities

Social Protection systems which address gendered risks over the lifecycle and provide support in situations of poverty, vulnerability or crisis, play a vital role in protecting women, men, boys and girls from poverty and income insecurity, helping them to cope with risks and recover from shocks and ultimately change to transform women's outcomes. Well-designed and implemented social protection interventions recognise and address gender specific issues throughout the life-cycle. At a young age, girls face barriers to quality education because of their involvement in domestic work. Adolescent girls are at risk of early pregnancy and school dropout. Women are more likely than men to work in precarious, low paid and informal jobs, shoulder greater burden of unpaid care and face interruptions and inequalities in paid work. These life-cycle vulnerabilities accumulate, increasing vulnerability in old age and result in gaps in social protection coverage across women's lives.

The human rights-based approach to social protection requires states to ensure that social protection programmes are designed, implemented and monitored taking into account the differences in the experiences of men and women. The impacts of social protection programmes are not gender neutral, social protection can contribute to a range of gender equality outcomes, as well as delivering different gendered results depending on design, implementation choices and context.

iv) Environmental and Climate Change

Uganda, like the rest of the world, is experiencing the effects of climate change with the country's otherwise mostly tropical climate now characterized by unpredictable rainfall patterns, severe droughts and environmental degradation. The population experiencing drought increased from 34% to 47% between 2015 and 2021; while those experiencing floods increased from 7% to 22% over the same period.

The World Bank estimates that about 200,000 Ugandans have been affected each year due to weather related disasters over the past two decades and that as many as 12 million people, or 11% of the population could be internally displaced by 2050, as a result of climate change. Rising temperatures and unpredictable rainfall contribute to water crises, declining soil productivity, livestock losses and ultimately a loss of livelihoods, forcing people to move. Conflicts over land and resources are common whenever people are forced to move due to climate related challenges, which in turn exacerbates poverty and fragility if unattended. Women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and the poor are the worst affected.

Well-designed social protection systems can enable fast response in case of extreme weather events, but also support the communities to minimize the occurrence of the climate changes and enable the affected communities get back on their feet quickly. However, response to climatic shocks have been limited due to a number of factors; inadequate funding to fast-track the Social protection needs due to climate change negative effects, limited capacity among the sub-national level staff to comprehend the link between climate change and social protection matters. Additionally, there are weak regulations and guidelines to address climate change and social protection challenges among the Government, private sector and other agencies and inadequate enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for adherence to climate change and Social Protection initiatives among Government, private sector and other agencies.

v) HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Chronic Diseases

Although there is tremendous reduction in new HIV infection rate in Uganda, the number of people living with HIV has increased to 1.4 million from about 1.2m. HIV prevalence among adults (15 - 49 years) is 5.4%, the prevalence is higher among females at 6.8% and males at 3.9%. Whereas interventions exist to address awareness, voluntary counselling and testing and provision of anti-retroviral treatment, access of ART is still limited to the level of Health Centre III. This means increased costs of transport to access the services. People living with HIV (PLHIV) experience various challenges including limited access to counselling and psychosocial support services with 60% reporting not accessing these services, food and nutrition insecurity, with 30% of the households of PLHIV reporting experiencing those challenges. Other challenges include adherence to ART and

HIV infected persons that contract Tuberculosis (TB patients) also experience similar challenges to those of PLHIV.

The Prevalence of chronic illnesses continues to rise. The UNHS (2019/2020) report indicated an increase in the percentage of persons having at least one of the three NCDs (Diabetes, high blood pressure and heart diseases) to 4.8% in 2019/20 from 3.7% in 2016/17. Additionally, an estimated 34,008 new cancers cases were registered in Uganda in the year 2020 alone. According to the report, about 33% of annual deaths are attributed to the five leading non-communicable diseases (NCDs) 40, namely: Cardio-vascular (10%), cancers (9%), diabetes (2%), chronic respiratory diseases (2%) and other NCDs (11%).

2.6. Rationale for Social Protection

Evidence on the importance and contribution of social protection at individual, family, community and national levels is widespread. At different stages, social protection plays a protective, preventive, promotive and transformative role as highlighted below;

a) Expanding choices: Some countries across the world are implementing various social protection interventions to support the poor and vulnerable build resilience to address poverty, risk and vulnerability. Over the past decade, there has been a significant shift towards prioritizing cash transfers to the poor and vulnerable. Evidence across Sub-Saharan Africa indicates that cash transfers are being implemented in several countries including South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Botswana and Malawi. The emphasis on cash transfers is because it expands choices and gives recipients the flexibility to use the transfers in accordance with their own needs and priorities

and they stimulate economic activities by injecting purchasing power into local markets. Evidence from these programmes and others across the world have indicated that social protection and cash transfers in particular play a protective, preventive, promotive and transformative role as outlined in the following paragraphs.

b) Alleviating multidimensional poverty: Social protection and in particular cash transfers have been shown to contribute worldwide to alleviate multidimensional poverty in a cost-effective way. Cash transfers have been increasingly adopted by countries worldwide as central elements of their social protection and poverty reduction strategies. A growing number of studies provide rigorous evidence on the impact of cash transfers and the role of specific cash transfer design and implementation features in shaping outcomes. Cash transfers contribute directly to increase income of beneficiaries and to decrease monetary poverty (poverty headcount), they increase household food expenditure and they can decrease income inequality (if transfers are of adequate size).

c) Increasing household productivity: Social protection enables recipients to invest in productive assets and diversify economic activities. The global review of the impact of social protection found strong and consistent evidence that 'cash transfers increase beneficiaries' savings, investment in livestock and agricultural assets.' Evidence from Zambia shows that cash transfers increased farmland by 36% and the use of seeds, fertilizers and hired labour. As more agricultural inputs were used, overall productivity increased by 36% and farmers engaged more in markets. In several other countries including Malawi

and Zambia, research finds reduction in casual wage and shifts to on farm and more productive activities.

d) Increasing local economic activity: Social protection programmes revitalize the local economy through expenditure by beneficiaries on goods and services produced or supplied within the communities where they live. A review of social protection programmes in Africa indicates that for every dollar transferred to the beneficiaries, the local economy has grown by 1.3 to 2.5 USD dollars. When programme beneficiaries receive money, they spend it in the local economy, increasing the cash flow into markets at the community level and driving the spending capacity of local actors. Hence there is a greater amount of income which is available to the community - the income multiplier effect. In addition, social protection strengthens linkage to local financial services such as VSLA and SACCOs. Participation to such financial services encourages a savings culture and contributions to social insurance programmes as well as increased access to credit.

e) Building resilience to shocks: Social protection such as cash transfers provides assistance to poor and vulnerable and protects assets which helps reduce their vulnerability to idiosyncratic or covariant shocks. For example, because of basic assistance, it enables them prevent distress sale of assets in times of crisis.

f) Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition: Impact evaluation of cash transfer programmes have indicated that food security has improved the poor and vulnerable use most of their transfers

to meet their food needs. The Evaluation of SAGE (Uganda, 2016) indicated that households experiencing little or no hunger increasing from 45% to 62% as household expenditure on food increased by 33%. Similar findings were noted in the evaluation of the Old Age Pension in Lesotho where almost half of pensioners reported they never went hungry after the introduction of the old age pension, compared to only 19% before²⁴. In the longer term, increased food consumption translates into better nutritional outcomes especially for children through reduced prevalence of stunting and wasting.

g) Increasing the impact of investment in other sectors: Social protection increases the impact of investment in other sectors such as agriculture, education, financial services, and infrastructure especially through the creation of a broader, more active economic base through the redistribution of income to the poorer members of society. Cash transfers have been well documented to reduce inequality and depth of poverty. The evaluation of SAGE found out that because of the grant, the poverty gap among beneficiary households had been cut by 11% and would fall by 20% if the grant targeted older persons aged 65 years²⁵. Furthermore, because of SAGE in the pilot districts, school attendance from beneficiary households improved by 14% between 2009 and 2014 compared to only 7% for non-beneficiary households. Further, investment in social protection enables households to avoid harmful coping strategies in the face of economic shocks, child labour and removing children from school²⁶. Besides reducing poverty and inequality, social protection enables recipients to make use

²³<https://odi.org/en/publications/cash-transfers-what-does-the-evidence-say-a-rigorous-review-of-impacts-and-the-role-of-design-and-implementation-features/>

of more government services including accessing markets and other economic opportunities thus enhancing human capital development.

h) Building and strengthening the social contract: By addressing some of the root causes of social exclusion and discrimination, social protection has played a key role in rebuilding the social contract between the state and its citizens and repositioned public policy within the realm of rights. This helps to create a strong social contractual relationship between the state and citizens.

i) Supporting economic growth: Investment in social protection is a core component of long-term, sustainable economic growth. Social protection enhances growth at local level through the multiplier effects of increased local consumption and improving labour market outcomes. It is also an effective tool that allows governments to bring about other economic reforms that have positive effects on economic growth, such as a reduction in inefficient commodity subsidies. Similarly, it enables the economy to cope with macroeconomic shocks by increasing demand and is now regarded by the IMF as a critical element in any national growth strategy.

2.7. Overview of Achievements

The Uganda Government has registered several milestones in the implementation of Social Protection, including development of the Social Protection Policy framework, approved by Cabinet in 2015. The policy gives an outline and agenda for delivery of the country's Social Protection System, stipulated in two pillars, namely social

security and social care and support services.

2.8. Social Security

The following are the achievements under the Social Security pillar:

(a) Pension reforms: To ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the management of pension in Uganda, the government has decentralized the processing and payment of pension in Ministries, Departments and Agencies and Local Governments. Using the recently established Integrated Personnel and Payroll System (IPPS) for processing salaries, pensions, and Gratuity payrolls and for management of establishments for Ministries, Departments, and Agencies, salary, pension, and gratuity management processes have been automated and controls are applied more efficiently and effectively.

(b) Social Security Reforms: The NSSF Amendment Act 2021 has been reviewed to allow for midterm access and for making voluntary contributions. Section 7 of the Act states that a member who is 45 years of age and above and who has made contribution to the fund for at least 10 years, is eligible to midterm access to his or her benefits of a sum not exceeding 20% of his or her accrued benefits. NSSF voluntary membership plan provides for employers and workers not compelled by the mandatory provisions of the NSSF Act the opportunity to voluntarily save for their retirement.

(c) Strengthening regulation of the pension sector: Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA) was established to regulate and supervise the establishment, management and operation of public and private retirement

²⁴Vincent and Cull (2009)

²⁵MGLSD, UNICEF 2016

²⁶ILO, 2020

benefit schemes, and to ensure prudential investments in the country. To date URBRA has piloted and licensed two informal sector pension schemes.

2.9. Direct Income Support

(a) The government has rolled out the Senior Citizens Grant to all older persons aged 80 years and above, providing regular and predictable monthly cash transfers to older persons. To date a total of 306,046 active beneficiaries have been reached. As a result of this intervention, there were improvements in schooling for some children with a reported increase in primary school attendance of 6–12 year old children from 68% to 71%, while the mean number of days missed in the previous 30 scheduled school days fell from 1.7 days to 1.1.

(b) Working through the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP) in the Office of the Prime Minister direct income support has been extended to the poor and vulnerable within refugee hosting districts in Uganda. The programme seeks to improve access to basic social services (health, education, water and sanitation), expand economic opportunities and enhance environmental management for refugee host district communities and settlements. This is currently being implemented in 15 Refugee hosting districts of Arua, Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani, Obongi, Madi-Okollo and Terego in the West Nile sub region; Lamwo in Acholi sub region; Hoima, Kikuube, Kiryandongo in the Bunyoro sub region; Isingiro, Kyegegwa and Kamwenge in the South-Western sub-region.

(c) Labour Intensive Public Works (LIPW) Programme were provided by NUSAF, Karamoja Livelihoods Improvement Programme (KALIP) and the Agricultural Livelihoods Recovery Programme

(ALREP) all benefiting around half a million people. Under NUSAF III, 173,535 beneficiaries were covered, which helped to smooth consumption, increase community assets and stimulate short term employment. However, these programmes ended in 2021 as no public funds were made available to continue with them.

2.10. Social Care and Support Services

(a) Withdrawal, rehabilitation and resettlement programme for street children: The Government through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is implementing a number of interventions to withdraw, rehabilitate and resettle street children. To date, 716 street children have been withdrawn, rehabilitated and resettled. Kampala City Child Protection Ordinance has been approved and gazetted to contain begging which is one of the pull factors for street children to the city.

(b) Care and support to GBV survivors: To date, 17 GBV safe shelters have been established to provide comprehensive GBV response. Over 15,000 survivors have received temporary shelter and psychosocial support and legal services through the GBV safe shelters.



persons: Over the past 5 years, government completed the construction of phase 2 of Kabale Regional Remand Home (one block of semi-detached staff house) and the renovation of Fort Portal and Mbale Regional Remand Homes. Masindi Regional Remand Home phase one was completed and operationalised in December 2021. The construction of Moroto Regional Remand Home is ongoing. Renovation works at Naguru Reception Centre were completed. In addition, renovation works in Ruti Vocational Rehabilitation Centre was completed while 3 new structures at Kireka Rehabilitation Centre were constructed.

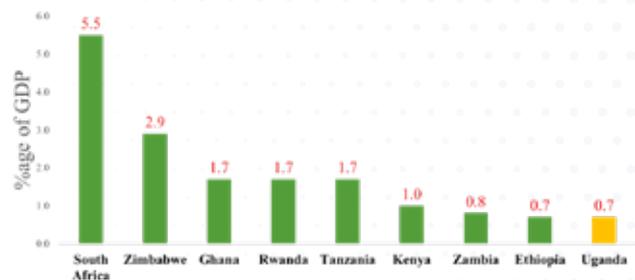
(d) Institutional support to vulnerable children, PWDs and Older Persons: Government rehabilitated 900 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) at institutional and community level and also supported 300 destitute older persons with food and non-food items and health care. In addition, Probation and Welfare Officers, have been trained in case management of juveniles in conflict with the law. The sector has also strengthened the capacity of Social Welfare Work force (SPWOs, CDOs and Para Social Workers) in all local governments to deliver child care and protection services and promote Community Based Care and Protection.

Arising from investments in social care and support, a number of positive outcomes have been witnessed including; resilience and productive capacity of vulnerable persons, increased protection of children against abuse, neglect and exploitation, enhanced policy coherence in the implementation of social protection, improved care and support to vulnerable children, PWDs and Older Persons.

2.11. Social Protection Financing

Expenditure on Social Protection in Uganda stands at 0.7% of GDP, which is one of the lowest compared to other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa as illustrated below.

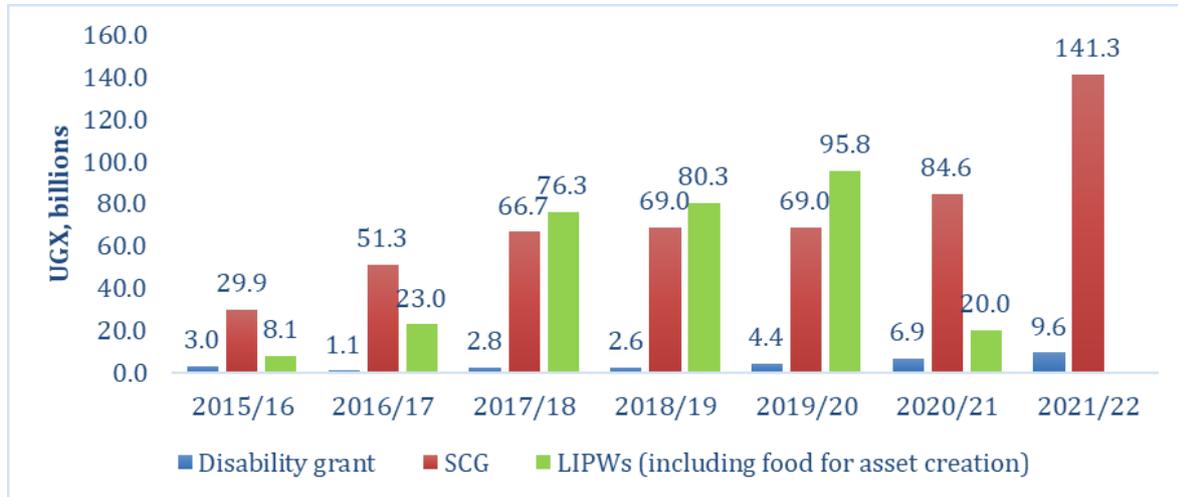
Figure 4: Expenditure on social protection in selected African countries



Before the third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21 – 2024/25 started to be implemented in FY2020/21, social protection actions were funded and implemented under the social development sector. In NDP III, social development is part of the Human Capital Development (HCD) programme. Social development and particularly social protection over the past 5 years FY2015/16 to FY 2021/22 ranks among the least funded areas. For example, the budget share of expenditures on the social development sector (excluding LIPWs and PSPS) declined from 0.74% in FY2016/17 to 0.48% in FY2021/22, while the budget for Public Service Pension Scheme which takes the largest share of Social Protection funding increased from 0.66% in FY2016/17 to 2.0% in FY2021/22 due to improved wage structures for public servants.

In terms of absolute amounts of funding, public financing for direct income support, either using tax revenue or loans and grants, increased from UGX 36 billion in FY2016/17 to about UGX 165 billion in FY2019/20 before the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, and the ending of NUSAF3 in June 2021.

Figure 5: Trends in public and donor-supported investments in Direct Income Support programs and the Disability Grant



The increase notwithstanding, the financing of the Direct Income Support (DIS) schemes is mainly by donors. Most of the government’s tax-financed spending is on PSPS and the SCG to which government assumed full financing in FY 2022/23. The LIPWs have been almost exclusively financed by loans, grants or donor support.

2.12. Challenges and Lessons Learned

While there has been progress registered in the provision of social protection, the following challenges continue to hamper further development of the social protection sub-sector in Uganda:

Thematic Areas	Challenge
Legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No overarching Social Protection Law • Fragmented laws. For example, there are separate laws governing the Public Service Pension schemes for traditional civil servants, teachers, armed forces and parliament
Thematic Areas	Challenge
Targeting Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Protection and Disaster management policies are not linked • Lack of a Social Registry makes it difficult to determine the eligible beneficiaries • Lack of MIS systems for some programmes • Limited interoperability of MIS systems cross programmes • Limited interlinkages with other core government information systems such as the National Identification and Registration Authority's (NIRA) database
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate operationalization of the National Single Registry that consolidates social protection MISs • Weak M&E system for tracking progress, investments and impact of Social Protection • Lack of clear reporting framework for social protection
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate financing for social protection • Lack of harmonized system for resource mobilization, planning and review
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of different administrative systems such as selection and identification, delivery, registration and/or monitoring and evaluation systems for each programme • Capacity of local government structures to implement social protection is weak
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional arrangements set out in the NSPP have not been fully implemented • Weak coordination among government structures • Lack of structures to coordinate social protection delivery in some local governments
Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of coordination for shock response between social protection, Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Management • Programs are fragmented and reach a small fraction of the population in relation to need • Uganda has a large population in the informal sector without social protection • Social insurance schemes reach only persons in the formal sector

The social protection strategy will therefore.

1

Provide a framework for building a comprehensive SP system rather than focusing on small, fragmented SP programmes.

2

Define medium- and long-term priorities for provision of social protection in Uganda.

3

Integrate shock responsive mechanisms in the delivery of SP interventions.

4

Strengthen stakeholder coordination and collaboration and reduce fragmentation.

5

Enhance linkages between social protection and other social/complementary services.

6

Provide a tool for resource mobilization for financing social protection.

7

Provide a mechanism for strengthening the institutional framework for delivery of social protection.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the strategic framework for the Uganda National Social Protection Strategy. It articulates the vision, mission, goal, strategic objectives and interventions of the NSPS for the period 2024-2029. The main directions for this strategy are determined by the country's Social Protection Policy (2015), the National Development Plan, evidence and analysis from reviews and studies that have been carried out in the course of implementation of the country's varied social protection interventions.

The Government of Uganda recognises that provision of social protection alone is not sufficient to enable the poor and vulnerable build resilience and will therefore through this strategy seek to enable linkages with other services and complementary interventions of Uganda in the fields of agriculture, health, education, employment, fi-

nance including the Parish Development Model among others.

3.2. Vision, Mission, Goal and Objectives

Vision: The vision of the social protection strategy is aligned to the vision of social protection policy that envisions a society where all individuals are secure and resilient to risks and shocks.

Mission: The mission of the strategy is to build a social protection system for the provision of comprehensive social protection services to build resilience and address risks and vulnerabilities.

The strategy will comprise the following key elements;

- i) A strong Monitoring and Evaluation system,
 - ii) Strengthened Legal and Policy Framework,
 - iii) Integrated Selection and Identification systems,
 - iv) Well-equipped and resources Administration and technical capacities at all levels,
 - v) Improved coordination among key stakeholders implementing social protection and other related services such as in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Risk Management,
 - vi) Well established governance structures and mechanisms at all levels for the implementation of social protection,
 - vii) Adaptive Management Information System that enhances effective targeting of social protection beneficiaries,
 - viii) Well established financing mechanisms for social protection.
- e) Holistic package of social protection interventions delivered through inter- and intra-programme linkages.
 - f) Increased resilience to socio-economic shocks through linked-up investments in human capital, economic empowerment and vital consumption support.

3.4. Guiding Principles

The implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy shall be guided by the following guiding principles which have been drawn from the National Social Protection Policy. These include the following:

- i) Individual, family and community involvement:** Government will ensure that communities, target groups and duty bearers shall at all times be actively involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection interventions.
- ii) Human Rights-Based Approach to service delivery:** Communities shall be empowered to know and claim their rights and demand accountability from duty bearers and institutions implementing social protection interventions.
- iii) Timeliness, reliability and sustainability:** Systems shall be strengthened to facilitate timely delivery of social protection services and generate reliable information for decision making
- iv) Universalism and inclusiveness:** Appropriate measures shall be put in place to protect every Ugandan from risks and shocks.
- v) Transparency and Accountability:** Openness and value for money shall be emphasized in the provision of social protection services.

3.3. Expected Results

The following are the expected results from the implementation of the strategy:

- a) Increased scope and coverage of social protection interventions in Uganda.
- b) An integrated social protection system that facilitates efficient delivery, coherence, coordination and harmonization of/ and between different programmes.
- c) Shock-responsive social protection programmes with inbuilt and scalable mechanisms.
- d) Strong government leadership and ownership reflected in coherent policy, commitment to financing and guidance of strategic direction.

vi) Gender Responsiveness: All social protection interventions shall address specific risks and vulnerabilities that affect boys, girls, men and women.

vii) Equity: Fairness and justice shall underpin the provision of social protection services across different demographic categories and geographical locations.

viii) Dignity: All beneficiaries of social protection interventions shall be treated with respect regardless of their sex, culture, religious and socio-economic status.

3.5. Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives for the National Social Protection Strategy for 2024-2029 include the following:

- i. To expand the scope and coverage of social security across the life cycle.
- ii. To scale up the provision of holistic social care and support services to socio-culturally vulnerable individuals across the life cycle.
- iii. To strengthen systems, policy and institutional framework for the effective delivery of social protection services.
- iv. To embed shock-responsiveness in all key social protection programmes and interventions.
- v. To generate evidence on the effectiveness, impact and efficiency of social protection and using this to inform public debate on social protection.
- vi. To strengthen linkages between social protection, complementary services and livelihood enhancement interventions.



3.6. Strategic Priorities and Actions

Objective 1: To expand the scope and coverage of social security for Uganda’s most vulnerable groups across the life cycle.

Life-course stage	Strategic interventions	Strategic interventions that cut across all life-cycle stages
0 -5 Years (Early Childhood)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement a Child Disability Grant • Expand provision of Integrated Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes • Gradually expand coverage of Nutri-Cash Programme across the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide social care and support to all the vulnerable across the life-cycle (rehabilitative, residential and home-based care, care and support (including provision of food and non-food items) • Rollout a National Health Insurance Programme to enhance access to essential basic health services especially for low-income individuals and households. • Develop a Social Registry to enhance identification and targeting of poor and vulnerable • Document and progressively revive traditional social support systems to complement formal social protection services for the
6-18 Years (School Going Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen case management system on child abuse, neglect and exploitation • Develop and progressively expand coverage of School Feeding Programmes especially for highly vulnerable areas such as Karamoja • Promote establishment and rollout of school garden models for school feeding. • Expand the Girls Empowering Girls Urban Social Protection Programme to other cities 	
19 – 30 Years (Youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support (livelihood, psychosocial, health, legal, etc.) to 	

Life-course stage	Strategic interventions	Strategic interventions that cut across all life-cycle stages
	<p>survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and provide incentives for youth skills training • Expand coverage of contributory social security to all persons in the informal sector • Roll out the urban LIPW cash transfer to all cities 	<p>poor and vulnerable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibility of relaxing of nationality and residence restrictions on national social assistance with a view to open/provide a window for inclusion of refugees in accessing social protection
31-59 Years (Working Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand coverage of contributory social security to all persons in the formal sector • Fast track the reform of Public Service Scheme to turn it into a contributory social security scheme for all civil servants • Develop and implement strategy for Extending Social Security to the Informal Sector • Design and progressively implement a National Labour-Intensive Public Works Programme which provides income security to the poor and vulnerable households while enhancing their livelihoods. • Advocating for bilateral and multi-lateral agreements on social protection to allow for portability of social benefits across the East African Community 	
60 Years and above (Old Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively lower the eligibility age for accessing SCG from 80 years to at least 75 years • Develop Policy and legislation on age retirement 	
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and gradually rollout a severe disabilities grant • Expand provision of rehabilitative and assistive devices for vulnerable persons especially persons with disabilities • Enforcement on development of disability friendly infrastructure • Develop waivers and incentives for persons with disabilities e.g. in 	

Life-course stage	Strategic interventions	Strategic interventions that cut across all life-cycle stages
	accessing public transport, employment opportunities etc.	

The following partnerships will be established and strengthened to achieve this objective;

- a) Strengthen collaboration between the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, National Planning Authority and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to leverage the broader potential of the child grant;
- b) Support the Ministry of Public Service to fast track reform of the Public Service Scheme to turn it into a contributory social security scheme for all civil servants;
- c) Further collaboration with Ministry of Health for establishment of a National Health Insurance Scheme to enhance access to essential basic health services all over the country, especially by low-income individuals and households. Opportunities shall be explored for inclusion of refugees in the social health insurance scheme alongside nationals of similar socio-economic status;
- d) Further collaboration with all key stakeholders to scale up implementation of Labour-Intensive Public Works Programmes;
- e) Work with the Ministry of Education and Sports to develop and progressively expand coverage of school feeding programmes especially for highly vulnerable areas such as Karamoja while promoting the establishment and rollout of school garden models for school feeding in other regions of the country;

f) Work with the Ministry of Education and Sports to increase universal access to early childhood development as a means of advancing education for all;

g) Enhance collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) to increase access to birth registration for all children especially children with disabilities;

h) Work with the Ministry of East African Affairs to advocate for bilateral and multi-lateral agreements on social protection to allow for portability of social benefits, for example through the East African Community social protection dialogue; and for the harmonization of immigration and social protection legislation to ensure migrant workers can access social insurance benefits.

Objective 2: To expand the scope and coverage of social care and support for Uganda’s most vulnerable groups across the life cycle.

Priority Interventions

- i) Implement the Operational Framework for Social Care System and the Strategy for Strengthening the Social Service Workforce;
- ii) Regulate social care and support services and the social service workforce;
- iii) Expand provision of Integrated Early Childhood Development interventions;
- iv) Strengthen family and community capacity to provide care for vulnerable individuals;

- v) Enhance access to specialized care for vulnerable individuals;
- vi) Strengthen the capacity of the social service workforce;
- vii) Strengthen case management and referral mechanisms for vulnerable individuals;
- viii) Expand support services (livelihood, psychosocial, health, legal, etc.) to survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and other forms of violence;
- ix) Expand access for rehabilitative and assistive devices for vulnerable persons especially persons with disabilities;
- x) Promote community-based response mechanisms for supporting vulnerable people.

Objective 3: Strengthening systems, policy and institutional framework for the effective delivery of social protection services.

Priority interventions

- i) Review the National Social Protection Policy and build consensus on enactment of a specific legislation for Social Protection/ Assistance;
- ii) Upgrade and operationalize the National Social Registry with a component for a dynamic Social Registry with key features to provide a continuous window for on-demand and continuous registration of beneficiaries. This will enable registration of all potential and actual beneficiaries of social protection programmes. We will engage relevant MDAs to ensure linkage of refugee databases to the National Social Registry, to support targeting and expanding coverage of SP programmes to refugees and more complementary, comprehensive and coordinated support;
- iii) Enhance interoperability of Management Information Systems for social

- protection programmes across government to the National Single Registry such as with National ID systems and other administrative databases of government;
- iv) Develop and pilot electronic payment systems for beneficiaries of social assistance to enhance accessibility and inclusion;
- v) Develop an integrated Monitoring and Evaluation framework, tools and procedures for reporting on delivery of social protection services;
- vi) Build capacity of key MDAs and Local Governments to design, monitor and deliver social protection interventions through trainings, exchange visits and leveraging on technology;
- vii) Establish and strengthen coordination mechanisms at national and local levels to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection service provision;
- viii) Establish mechanisms to strengthen accountability, complaints and grievance mechanisms;
- ix) In collaboration with MDAs and implementation units for national social protection programmes, develop harmonized guidance for key social protection sub-systems, for example targeting, registration, payments, complaints and grievances, monitoring and evaluation, management information systems and service delivery standards.

Objective 4: Embedding shock-responsiveness in all key social protection programmes and interventions.

Priority interventions

- i) Policy, legal and institutional framework:
 - a) Incorporate dedicated shock-responsiveness clauses in the Uganda social protection policy;

- b) Systematically include shock-responsive social protection approaches into local livelihood, resilience and development plans, especially in district and sub-county plans;
 - c) Review the recently adopted policy on mid-term access to NSSF benefits and explore options for replicating this in other social security programmes;
 - d) Work with the Office of the Prime Minister to enhance policy coherence between Disaster Risk Management and Social Protection;
 - e) Explore and outline alternative options and channels through which emergency financial assistance can be routed.
- ii) Design operations and coordination:
 - a) Review and assess existing social protection programmes to determine the feasibility of incorporating shock-responsiveness in their design and enhance vertical and horizontal coordination;
 - b) When fully established, use the social registry to capture information on household vulnerability to shocks and their capacity to cope and use this information to design and implement shock responsive social protection interventions;
 - c) Explore new options for introducing other cash payment mechanisms – such as ATM cards and mobile phone payment solutions – to provide SRSP recipients with flexible and accessible payment systems;
 - d) Establish mechanisms for enhancing coordination among MDAs in social protection, humanitarian response and disaster risk management;
 - e) Carry out periodic national risk and vulnerability assessments to profile potential triggers of shocks and to enable the development of relevant social protection-responsive tools;
 - f) Revise and expand all existing employment programmes, policies and guidelines to incorporate automatic adjustments for repurposing resource use for disaster risk reduction and response;
 - g) Make use of the contact data of various social protection programme recipients stored within the respective registries to provide mass early warning messages.
- iii) Financing shock-responsive social protection:
 - a) Engage relevant stakeholders and push for the establishment of a shock-responsive social protection fund to enable rapid and flexible response in the event of a shock;
 - b) Give guidance to all levels of government on the use of existing budget resources for sub-county, district and national disaster response efforts;
 - c) Define and seek the commitment of development partners for complimentary international disaster response and social protection financing;
 - d) Explore how to link the mobilization of disaster response funding with relevant weather and climate forecasts.
- Objective 5:** Generating evidence on the effectiveness, impact and efficiency of social protection, and using this to inform public debate on social protection.

Priority interventions

- i) Update the Investment Case for social protection to document impacts as well as the cost of not investing in social protection;
- ii) Develop a business case and fiscal space analysis for the establishment of a Child Disability Grant;
- iii) Develop and coordinate implementation of a multi-stakeholder research agenda on impacts, effectiveness and efficiency of social protection, and build capacity for undertaking research;
- iv) Build strategic partnership with the Uganda Parliament's Budget Committee, Parliamentary Forum on Social Protection, the Social Development Sector and Development Partners' Working Group on Social Protection to engage on policy and implementation issues;
- v) Work with other stakeholders to develop models for linking conventional and traditional social protection approaches;
- vi) Explore mechanisms for linking social protection interventions with agricultural production;
- vii) Build capacity on social protection across government. An internal capacity building assessment is being conducted and upon conclusion, it will enable development of a capacity building framework for social protection across government;
- viii) Generate evidence on shock-responsive social protection to inform policy and programme development and advocacy;

- ix) Undertake routine comprehensive policy analysis, research and evaluation of the impact of social protection interventions in Uganda.

Objective 6: Strengthening linkages between social protection and complementary services and livelihood enhancement interventions.

Priority interventions

- i) Establish formal channels to create institutional working relationships between actors directly responsible for SP and those that support complementary roles and interventions in other sectors such as health, education and agriculture;
- ii) Improve access of poor households enrolled in existing social protection programmes to complementary financial inclusion programmes such as PDM, vocational training and skills development as well as other relevant livelihood enhancement opportunities;
- iii) Engage Equal Opportunities Commission on best practices for enhancing access and equity of complementary services;
- iv) MGLSD in partnership with Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister will develop mechanisms to link social protection mother and child gains using experiences and lessons learned from NutriCash by raising awareness of immunization services among beneficiaries of NutriCash;
- v) Working with NIRA, support beneficiary households of social protection programmes such as SAGE, NutriCash, DRDIP, Girls Empowering Girls to access birth registration services;



IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out how the SP Strategy will be implemented. It articulates the roles of key stakeholders that contribute to attainment of the objectives of this strategy. In addition, it puts into context sustainability arrangement that will facilitate the realization of the strategic objectives.

To ensure the effective implementation of this Strategy, over the 5- year period of the plan, structures for social protection delivery will be built and/or strengthened across all the levels of Government (National to local level). The strategy will seek to build strong government leadership for social protection while at the same time enhancing coordination with other partners including; Development Partners, Civil Society, Private Sector, Academia and the general population.

Through harmonizing coordination of social protection across government and non-state actors, this strategy aims to:

- Limit geographical overlaps in the provision of social protection;

- Harmonize implementation procedures;
- Strengthen the capacity of Ministries, Departments and Agencies and local governments to implement social protection interventions;
- Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation and information and knowledge management for social protection.

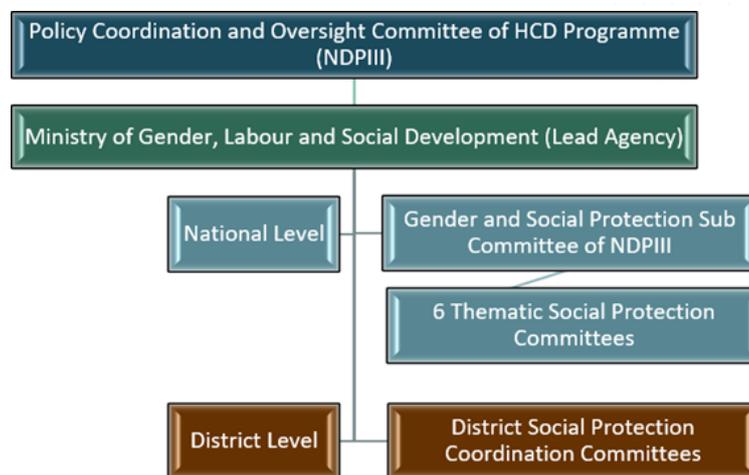
4.2. Building strong Government leadership for Social Protection

Policy Leadership by MGLSD: As indicated in the National Social Protection Policy, MGLSD is the lead agency for the coordination of the delivery of social protection in Uganda. Given this mandate therefore, implementation of this Strategy will be led by the Ministry in collaboration with other Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Local Governments, Academia, Civil Society and Private Sector among others.

The capacity of the MGLSD will be strengthened to lead the overall coordination and reporting on implementation of the strategy and attainment of its intended results. The MGLSD shall take advantage of the following existing programme coordination frameworks to enhance delivery of social protection.

- **Human Capital Working Group:** Is a body of key Ministries under the Human Capital Development Programme of the national development which contributes to the 4th objective of the NDP III; Enhancing the Productivity and Social Wellbeing of the Population. The programme goal is to increase productivity of the population through among others strengthening investment in social protection. The working group is chaired by the Ministry of Education and Sports and is responsible for coordinating resource allocation for the HCD Programme. Capacity of this working group will be built through training to understand and appreciate social protection as a core part of Human Capital Development.
 - Gender and Social Protection Sub-committee of Human Capital Development Programme;
 - ESP Steering Committee;
 - Social Protection Thematic Committee;

Figure 6: Social Protection Coordination Structures across government



Through this strategy, deliberate effort will be made to build and strengthen the capacity of these structures through training, exchange visits, mentoring among others. Linkages between these structures with other sectors such as agriculture and water and environment will be established so that targeting the vulnerable groups is better coordinated.

The following MDAs play a critical role in the implementation of Social Protection:

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
01	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership and strategic direction in implementation of social protection interventions; • Review and approve legal and policy reforms related to Social Protection; • Review and recommend resource allocation for social protection interventions; • Oversight, monitoring and supervision; • Performance review of Social Protection interventions.

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
02	Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and enact enabling legislation for social protection; Appropriate financial resources for delivery of social protection services; Monitor and provide oversight on delivery of social protection services; Mobilize communities for uptake of social protection services.
03	Office of the Prime Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide leadership for disaster risk management; Monitoring and evaluation of Social Protection programmes; Integrating social protection indicators in the National M&E Framework; Providing early warning to inform implementation of shock responsive Social Protection; Embed social protection in the local government assessment tools.
04	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate and coordinate the review of policies, plans, strategies, laws, frameworks, regulations and guidelines on social protection; Provide overall leadership and coordination of social protection interventions in the country; Provide national technical guidance on social protection implementation by MDAs, development partners, LGs, Civil Society Organisations and the private sector; Establish and institutionalize mechanisms for delivery of social protection services at national and sub-national levels; Set standards and guidelines for delivery of social protection services; Enforce standards and guidelines for delivery of SP services; Build the capacity of stakeholders in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection interventions in the country; Monitor and evaluate implementation of social protection interventions; Design and Implement social protection interventions and systems; Undertake research on Social Protection to inform policy and legal reforms, planning and decision making; Ensure mainstreaming of crosscutting issues in Social Protection interventions; Support mainstreaming of Social Protection in interventions of other stakeholders; Raise awareness on national, regional and international policies, laws, treaties, conventions, declarations and

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
		<p>protocols on social protection;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark, document and integrate national, regional and international best practices on social protection.
05	Ministry of East African Community Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure alignment of social protection within regional frameworks; • Coordinate participation of stakeholders on regional engagements on social protection; • Coordinate reporting on social protection interventions; • Provide a platform for sharing best practices.
06	The Judiciary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjudicate cases of violation of human rights; • Support development of guidelines and standards on child care and protection; • Provide legal services to the vulnerable groups to access social protection services; • Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws for vulnerable groups.
07	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilise, allocate and release resources for implementing social protection interventions; • Budget monitoring of the implementation of social protection interventions; • Review and approve social protection investment; • Strengthen synergies between social protection and public finance management.
08	Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate core social protection interventions in the annual work plans and budgets; • Provide basic and accessible health services for the vulnerable groups; • Establish and implement the health insurance scheme.
09	Ministry of Public Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the social protection schemes for the Public Service; • Take lead on reforming the social protection schemes for the public service; • Generate data and maintain a data base on social protection beneficiaries in the public service; • Support the establishment of appropriate institutional and human resource structures for delivery of social protection services.
10	Ministry of Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the decentralization policy and the Local Government Act to integrate social protection as a decentralized service; • Enforce compliance with Memoranda of Understanding on social protection, signed with local governments; • Support local governments to develop and enact ordinances and bye-laws for delivery of social protection services;

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate social protection interventions in district development plans, annual work plans and budgets; Integrate social protection service delivery in the minimum performance indicators of local governments.
11	Ministry of Works and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate social protection in the design, implementation, monitoring and supervision of public works programmes, especially infrastructure development and maintenance; Provide technical support on the appropriate design and maintenance of community infrastructure; Ensure adherence to social safety and health safeguards for vulnerable groups and communities in the design, implementation, monitoring and supervision of public works programmes.
12	Ministry of Water and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct environmental impact assessments and reviews of public work schemes; Build capacity for implementation of public works schemes related to environmental management; Provide technical support and quality assurance to public works schemes; Design appropriate systems for operations and maintenance of public works schemes to ensure sustainable management of environment and natural resources; Liaise with other institutions in the implementation of public works schemes.
13	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support beneficiaries to identify and practice good agricultural practices to ensure food and nutrition security. Specific roles of the Ministry will include:- Provide agricultural extension services to social protection target groups; Supply agricultural inputs to social protection target groups; Ensure proper post-harvest handling; Ensure that social protection target groups access high quality breeding and planting stock.
14	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review legislation on social protection; Review and advise Government on agreements with social protection actors; Support in the legislation of social protection services; Integrate social protection in policies, programmes and plans of the Ministry.

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
15	Ministry of Internal Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review legislation on social protection; Review and advise government on agreements with social protection actors; Support in the legislation of social protection services; Integrate social protection in policies, programmes and plans of the Ministry.
16	Ministry of Education and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate social protection in policies, programmes and plans of the Ministry; Integrate targeted interventions to overcome financial barriers to accessing education; Establish a position of school counselor and counselling in every training institution for social protection target groups.
17	Ministry of ICT & National Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide communication and advocacy for Social Protection; Support the operationalization of Social and Single Registries; Support digitalization of social protection delivery systems; Support interoperability of the MIS of various social protection programmes.
18	Ministry of Defense and Veterans Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure members receive adequate benefits in a timely manner; Provide reports and data on social security to respective committees and centers; Enroll all ex-servicemen for pensions/retirements benefits as the case may be.
19	National Planning Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize and Integrate Social Protection in the National Planning Frameworks; Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of the implementation of social protection programmes proposed in the National Development Plan; Integrate strategies for expansion of social protection in the National Development Plan (NDP); Identify and operationalize mechanisms for building synergies among the different MDAs with the responsibility of promoting access to social protection; Advocate for and support formulation of economic policies that will encourage informal sector economy workers to contribute for social security.
20	Uganda Bureau of Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate social protection indicators in national surveys and census; Provide data as may be required for analysis of social protection; Lead and participate in various researches as may be required.

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
21	National Identification Registration Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a universal, comprehensive and reliable system for registering and identifying beneficiaries; • Ensure that all eligible individuals, including vulnerable and marginalized populations, are registered and provided with identification documents; • Integrate registration systems with Social Protection Systems; • Update and maintain data to reflect individual's changing circumstances; • Support e-social protection services; • Support the process for establishment of the Social Registry.
22	Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise institutions which provide retirement benefits products; • License custodians, trustees, administrators and fund managers of retirement benefits schemes; • Approve an actuary or auditor of any retirement benefits scheme; • Protect the interests of members and beneficiaries of retirement benefits schemes including the promotion of transparency and accountability; • Create awareness and promote the development of the retirement benefits sector; • Ensure stability, security and integrity of the retirement benefits sector; • Ensure sustainability of the retirement benefits sector with a view to promoting long-term capital development; • Implement government policy relating to retirement benefits; • Provide reports to respective committees and centers; • Nominate representatives and participate in the identified social protection coordination committees.
23	National Social Security Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize and sensitize employers and employees on social security; • Register eligible members into the fund; • Collect and manage members' social security contributions in accordance with the law; • Disburse retirement benefits to members; • Ensure profitable and effective financial management of members' contributions for the benefit of the workers; • Ensure compliance with regulation on social security contributions by employers and employees; • Work with the MGLSD and other stakeholders to create annuity products in order to ensure members are able to earn a pension upon retirement; • Raise public awareness on the legal mandate of NSSF and the voluntary social security scheme of the Fund;

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the social security needs of the different segments of informal sector economy workers; Develop appropriate social security products for the informal economy workers.
24	Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate social protection in education curricula at tertiary level; Train professionals in social protection; Identify research areas and conducting relevant studies on social protection; and Harmonize the curricula for social workers.
25	Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate funding, advocacy and support to social protection interventions and policy implementation; Integrate social protection interventions into their Country Strategic Frameworks; Participate in the design, implementation and management of social protection programmes; Mobilize resources and finance social protection programmes in partnership with government; Provide technical assistance for social protection; Document and share experiences, lessons and best practices from other countries; and Harmonize the social protection interventions funded by different development partners.
26	Social Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in policy discussions, negotiations and the design of social security programs and advocacy; Participate in collective bargaining processes to determine the terms and conditions of social security benefits; Participate in adjustment and adaptation of benefits products and levels based on prevailing economic conditions; Participate in dispute resolution.
27	The Local Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and monitor all social protection programmes in the local government. Integrate social protection into local government development plans, budgets and programmes as per guidelines issued by central government; Enact by-laws and ordinances to facilitate the provision of social protection services; Identify vulnerable households and individuals in need of support; Regularly update relevant social protection management information systems; Mobilize resources for implementing social protection interventions; Supervise and coordinate CSOs and CBOs that are providing social protection services within the local

S/N	STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
		<p>government area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor social protection programmes; • Mobilize and sensitizing communities; • Implement social protection interventions, ensuring the intended beneficiaries are reached; • Link social protection beneficiaries to other programmes and services.
28	Workers, beneficiaries and citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for their right to social protection; • Meet their obligations in social protection.
29	Civil Society Organisations and Faith Based Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for social protection policies and legislation; • Mobilize resources and advocate for increased funding for social protection programmes; • Participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of social protection programmes; • Monitor compliance with international instruments on social protection in Uganda; • Sensitize the population on social protection; and • Develop and implement Social Protection programmes.
30	Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with government in financing and implementing Social Protection interventions; • Provide infrastructure and human resource for delivery of social protection services; • Incorporate social protection in corporate policies and practices; • Provide incentives and support entrepreneurships for vulnerable groups.
31	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care to vulnerable members of the family and the community; • Encourage individuals within the family and the community to contribute in cash or in kind for their social security; • Participate in identifying target groups to benefit from social protection interventions; • Initiate community level social protection interventions; • Participate in planning, implementation and monitoring of social protection programmes.
32	Traditional and Cultural Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and promote positive norms and values on traditional social protection mechanisms; • Mobilize the population for uptake of social protection services; • Mobilize resources for social protection programmes; • Develop and implement social protection programmes;

4.3. Delivery of Social Protection at Local Government Level

Delivery of social protection shall be rolled out through the decentralized structures of government. The Ministry will work with the District Local Governments at both technical and political level in the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the delivery of social protection. The specific roles of Local Governments will include:

- Integrating social protection into local government development plans, budgets and programmes as per guidelines issued by central government.
- Enacting by-laws and ordinances to facilitate the provision of social protection services.
- Identifying vulnerable households and individuals in need of support and profiling them through existing and other platforms to be established such as the social registry.
- Regularly updating relevant social protection management information systems and reporting on progress of implementation of social protection.
- Monitoring the implementation of the Direct Support interventions.
- Ensuring co-ordination of social protection programmes implemented at local level by government, NGOs and private sector.
- Implementing a district-wide communications strategy on social protection.

- Undertake capacity building for district stakeholders on social protection.

Social protection coordination committees will be established and strengthened at local government level (district, sub-county and village coordination committees). Existing development coordination bodies at these levels will be equipped with additional skills to also take on coordination of social protection interventions at those levels.

4.4. Role of Non-state Actors in Implementation of Social Protection

A wide range of non-state actors provide social protection services to various categories of vulnerable persons. This notwithstanding, there is no comprehensive database of who they are, what they do and packages provided in relation to social protection. The non-state actors include but are not limited to NGOs, faith-based institutions, private sector, traditional and cultural Institutions.

The MGLSD will undertake a mapping of the non-state actors providing social protection services effective coordination mechanisms established to link work of non-state actors at national and local levels.

4.5. Key Success Factors for Strategy Implementation

The success of this strategy will be underpinned by the following:

- Having good political commitment and leadership;

- Institutionalizing and providing regular financing for social protection programs;
- Establishing a clear Legislative and policy framework;
- Building sufficient capacity at national and local levels to implement social protection interventions;
- Mobilizing sufficient resources to finance the various earmarked interventions;
- Effective coordination of stakeholders including state and non-state actors

4.6. Strengthening Complaints and Grievance Mechanisms

Establishment of a functioning complaints and grievance redress and accountability mechanisms is critical for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the social protection system while at the same enabling building of better relations between citizens and the state thus strengthening the social contract and social trust.

Under the visiting social protection programmes such as SAGE, DRDIP, Complaints and Grievance redress mechanisms have been established and at the same time, the programmes have enabled access by various stakeholders to independent channels for redress, such as the Inspectorate of Government (ombudsman), audit institutions such as the Auditor General and audit committees of Parliament (PAC and LGPAC) and police and Barraza's under the Office of the Prime Minister. It is however important that the multiple channels for appeals and redress provides equal access to persons with disabilities, women, minorities and other vulnerable categories.

In rolling out this strategy, the following priority activities will be undertaken to strengthen complaints and grievance handling for social protection;

- Enhance access to information to enable citizens understand the eligibility requirements for the different social protection interventions, are aware of their entitlements, access to information in a manner that is accessible and appropriate to poor, vulnerable and marginalized;
- Undertake community scorecards, citizen report cards, and social audits on implementation of key social protection programmes;
- Improve Complaints and Grievance platform/system effectiveness to ensure complaints are resolved within 60 days;
- Strengthen the role of community monitors as the main interface for social protection programmes
- Mobilize and strengthen participation of the poor and vulnerable in community Barraza's



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter details how progress in the implementation of this strategy will be monitored, tracked and reported on. The objective of undertaking this is to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation system to undertake regular monitoring of progress against planned outputs and coordination of evaluations on social protection.

5.2. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of the Strategy

Assessing achievements of strategy implementation will only be possible if a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is in place to enable on-going review of performance, contin-

ued relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact of the strategy, and/to provide guidance on how improvements can be made.

The M&E social protection working group will spearhead the development of a mechanism to track achievements of targets set out in this strategy. Through the M&E Plan and system, every two years, a State of Social Protection report will be produced. This will be widely shared and validated and will help to provide baselines and progress of achievements of results.

The Ministry will develop a comprehensive M&E system with clear indicators for tracking social protection delivery as indicated below;

Table1: Process of Social Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism

National policies, strategies, and planning	Logical model levels		Purpose		Results areas	
	Monitoring monthly or quarterly	Impacts	Evaluate cumulative effects of programs over time	Prevent and reduce poverty, vulnerability and inequality	Cross-cutting principles	
		Outcomes	Assess intended benefits and targets against achievements	Human capital being developed, health status improved, productivity increased, and household economic position improved	Good Governance	
		Outputs	Monitor immediate results of direct services provided	Coverage expanded, service quality improved, access to care and benefits improved, household resources increased	Effective and efficient spending	
	Inputs	Monitor financial resources	Planned and actual investments, prioritization and investment gap.	Accountability		

Source: Adapted from Manual for the Social Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism. 2021. National Social Protection Council.

M&E of the strategy will be required at two distinct levels, namely of: (a) individual programmes; and (b) evaluation of impact of the social protection. Within the framework of a results-based approach, several indicators will be identified at each of these levels, targets established for each one, and M&E undertaken to track the achievement of results against each target. The monitoring of individual programmes will aim to collect, and aggregate information on performance indicators such as number of social transfer beneficiaries, number of benefits paid, and actual value of benefits. Tracking will also be made for the immediate effects of the programme. Another area that will require monitoring is the implementation of the overall strategy itself. This will ascertain if the strategy is reaching the intended beneficiaries; if it is generating the desired outcomes; the impact on the rest of the population; and if the allocated resources are being spent efficiently.

On the evaluation of the impact of social protection, specific studies shall be commissioned to be undertaken by independent stakeholders to assess the short and longer-term impacts of social protection in such areas as economic, social, educational, nutritional and other results areas.

5.3. Stakeholder Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

The MGLSD will be responsible for the overall monitoring and reporting on the delivery of this strategy. Social protection however being multi-sectoral, the ministry will collaborate with other MDAs to ensure data on social protection is

tracked, captured and reported on.

The Ministry will put in place an M&E Social Protection Working Group which will comprise representatives from the relevant MDAs and shall be responsible for the oversight of monitoring of all social protection programmes. In addition to the monitoring of activities set out in this strategy, it will also monitor progress in social protection programmes in other sectors and Ministries. The M&E Social Protection Working Group will hold regular meetings on a quarterly basis.

The Ministry will ensure that the various institutions implementing social protection programmes develop Management Information systems and link them to the National Single Registry to enable effective monitoring. All data capture will be disaggregated by sex, disability, age, household composition and it will be possible to indicate coverage of specific vulnerable groups such as older persons, persons with disabilities, children and other vulnerable groups among others.

Capacity building for the Ministry and members of the M&E Social Protection Working Group shall be built in various areas including the following:

- i) Developing reporting templates and other M&E instruments;
- ii) Receive, analyze, summarize and consolidate reports;
- iii) Develop midterm, end term and any other ad-hoc evaluations.;
- iv) Report on performances.

5.4. Data collection maintenance and management

Monitoring implementation of the strategy shall be carried out on a regular basis using the indicators developed in the detailed M&E Plan. Strategy goals shall be evaluated at the mid-term and after five (5) years to assess lessons, impact, gaps and challenges. This process will involve a cross-section of stakeholders from the Government, Academia, Departments and Agencies, Private Sector and Civil Society. Working alongside the NDP, MGLSD will develop a comprehensive M&E system which subscribes to the enumerated objectives, the other institutions with a role in M&E including Parliament, the Presidency, Cabinet, OPM, NPA, MFPED, UBOS, MDAs, LGs and Non-State Actors.

During implementation of the strategy, attention will be paid to:

- a) Tracking the implementation progress of scheduled social protection activities.
- b) Ascertaining whether resources earmarked for implementation of the scheduled social protection activities suffice and are delivering what was planned.
- c) Assessing whether the planned outputs and expected results are realized.
- d) Reviewing the institutional capacity in terms of logistics, human and financial resources that are propelling the institution towards realization of its strategic objectives and mission.
- e) Establishing whether there are any un-anticipated challenges that might emerge and seek best options to address them.

- f) Strengthening SP M&E unit capacity within the MGLSD and other relevant MDAs.

5.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Outputs

The following are the proposed M&E outputs to be achieved by the end of this strategy in 2029:

- Strengthen SP M&E capacity within MGLSD and MDAs involved in implementing social protection programmes under the Strategy;
- Develop a clear, transparent, effective and sustainable SP M&E system for social protection within MGLSD with clear standards, rules, operations manual and procedures;
- Equip SP M&E staff within MGLSD with tools, instruments, skills and accountability for timely and quality report-sharing protocol.
- Coordinate and standardize all data collection and reporting on social protection from the relevant MDAs to inform production of a State of Social Protection Report.
- Conduct regular joint monitoring activities and undertake independent evaluations and impact studies on social protection provision to inform learning and improvements.



COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Communications and advocacy for the Social Protection Strategy will be guided by the overall social protection communications and advocacy strategy. The objective of the communications and advocacy strategy is to create awareness about social protection and disseminate evidence on the impact of social protection, including results from analytical work, monitoring and the impact evaluation.

The A communications and advocacy plan will be developed with the goal of raising awareness about the objectives, approaches, expected results, and roles of different stakeholders in the National Social Protection Strategy. The plan will also outline the important social protection strategy messages for different audiences including the public, policy makers, development partners, local governments, private sector, media, academia, and other state and non-state actors. The communication plan is expected to adopt a multi-throng approach, taking advantage of existing channels of communication contained in the Social Protection Communications and Advocacy Strategy.



FINANCING OF THE STRATEGY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the financing mechanisms and arrangements for the implementation of the national social protection strategy. It highlights the approaches that will be employed to mobilize resources for implementing the actions that have been set out in the plan. Adequate financing of Uganda's social protection systems is essential not only for achieving the social protection goals spelt out in the National Development Plan III, but also for catalyzing developments in the country's other development sectors.

Financing of social protection measures outlined in the strategy involves a range of modalities including the government and private sector stakeholders, the family and community structures, NGOs and support from international development partners. At the outset it must be noted that expenditure which is required to finance Uganda's social protection strategy systems is a

long-term investment in people, and that without this investment the country is bound to face significant costs associated with the absence of a productive, healthy, and resilient population. Social protection expenditure in other countries facing similar circumstances as Uganda suggest that funding a basic social protection floor is not only affordable (many basic packages represent only a small part of government revenue) but that it is also possible to start small, and to progressively expand coverage and increase benefit amounts as strategy implementation unfolds.

Owing to the high number of people living below the poverty line in Uganda, and the consequently large proportion of those who are vulnerable to shocks, the resources that are needed to finance social assistance for the country, as a proportion of GDP, are quite significant. A study commissioned in 2013 by MGLSD/ESP to develop options for medium- and long-term sources of financing and financing mechanisms for the Senior Citizen' Grant (SCG) programme came up with several

²⁷ Tim Cammack, T. and Twinamatsiko, F. 2013. Uganda Social Protection Financing Options Programme for the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development. Expanding Social Protection Programme, Final Report, May 2013.

findings that are also applicable for the wider social protection sector²⁷. The study observed that the inclusion of social protection in political manifestos and the National Development Plan plus political commitment to social protection expansion were simultaneously being mirrored by a sense of optimism, spurred in part by the prospect of oil revenues. This notwithstanding, the study also revealed that Uganda had a persistently low tax to GDP ratio, of between 11.7% and 12.7% of GDP, a major concern of MoFPED. Ten years since the study was undertaken, and with uncertainty regarding actual onset of flow of oil revenues (or even how the revenues would be allocated once the oil begins flowing), there is concern that mobilizing additional resources to finance an expanded social protection sector will continue to be a challenge. Yet the 2013 study still arrived at some key conclusions, for example that:

- “If government chooses, social pensions can be rolled out in Uganda to every senior citizen (65+) without re-prioritizing existing spending”.
- “Cost-effective financing of social transfers, including public works, requires strong government leadership and effective coordination of social protection initiatives”.
- “A system of predictable and permanent social transfers requires a long-term, predictable and permanent funding source if it is to be fiscally sustainable”.
- “Social protection in Uganda currently receives a very low share of government funding, with the exception of the provision of public sector pensions”.
- “Improved coordination is a key requirement for effective financing”.

6.2. Financing Options

6.2.1. Maintaining Government Financing

The Strategy advocates for greater prioritization of social protection in the allocation of state resources, and will use evidence adduced from research, evaluations, and comparative studies to highlight the critical role that social protection plays in realizing the human right to social security, reducing poverty and inequality, and promoting the building of human assets. An advocacy strategy focuses on engaging a cross-section of stakeholders, especially those who are involved in resource allocation. Currently the country spends only 0.7% of its GDP on Social Protection, well below the sub-Saharan average of 2.1% and the continental average of 3.8% and covering only 2.8 % of the population with at least one social protection benefit²⁸. The aim is to move the levels of spending from the current 0.7% of GDP to at least 2% by 2028. To achieve this MGLSD will work with Parliament to have in place a comprehensive law on social protection which, among other things, will also stipulate the minimum proportion which Government must allocate for social protection expenditure.

Government will be engaged on possible avenues of generating resources for social protection including but not limited to:

- Increasing general taxation especially on wealthier members of society e.g. through property taxes (otherwise referred to as a ‘solidarity surcharge’)

- Undertaking budget reallocation and re-prioritization.
- Leveraging on oil revenues to finance social protection.
- Institution of consumption (sin) taxes such as consumption tax on alcohol, gambling, cigarettes etc.
- Use of loan funds or grants from international sources.
- Freeing up Uganda's resources through debt cancellation by international (and domestic) creditors and using savings to finance social protection.
- Mobilize external resources under the umbrella of climate financing

6.2.2. Shifting Investment from Non-Contributory to Contributory Schemes

To create fiscal space for financing social protection, we will work with the Ministry of Public Service to review and turn the current Public Service Pension Scheme into a contributory scheme for all civil servants. Similarly, we will engage the government to ensure that the National Health Insurance scheme is contributory with the employer and employee making contributions with a mix of payments by government out of general tax revenue for the poor and vulnerable while in the case of persons in the informal sector, flat rates contributions could be explored.

6.2.3. Reviving the Role of Family and Community Structures

The strategy will seek to build partnerships between the state and non-state actors such as NGOs, family, religious institutions and community structures. Relevant institutions such as religious institutions through the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) and family institutions will be engaged to build their capacity on social protection and work with them to revive the traditional social protection support mechanisms.

6.2.4. The Role Played by Development Partners

Uganda's development partners have in the last two decades played a key role in building evidence, policymaking, piloting programmes, and establishing systems for the design and implementation of social protection programmes. On the side of financing, donors have committed financial and technical resources that have enabled this nascent sector to take off. For example, since 2010, the UK's Department for International Development and the Embassy of Ireland- Irish Aid have provided about £ 128 million towards implementation of the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) programme. Similarly, The World Bank provided concessional credit to implement the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF). Since 2019, average development partner investment in Uganda's social protection sector has been approximately UGX 243 billion, or about 64% of total investment in the sector, with the balance of 36% coming from government. The development partners will continue to be key

²⁸ See International Labour Organization. 2021. World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future. International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2021.

players in the social protection arena in Uganda and deliberate efforts will be made to engage and collaborate with them on the delivery of social protection.

We will also seek to leverage the future Global Fund for Social Protection: In 2021, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights proposed that a Global Fund for Social Protection should be set up to increase the level of support to low-income countries, and to help them to establish and maintain social protection floors in the form of legal entitlements, and to improve the resilience of social protection systems against shocks. This will be as a new international financing mechanism to complement and support domestic resource mobilization efforts and to help achieve universal social protection.

6.2.5. Financing Social Protection Expansion through the Informal Sector

Expanding social protection by enabling better inclusion of the informal sector is the new frontier in dealing with risk and vulnerability for currently unprotected groups. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2014), over 50% of Uganda's GDP is attributed to the informal sector, and more than 80% of the labour force work is in this sector.

Persons in the informal sector will be mobilized to develop and adopt systems that are based on solidarity and collective financing. This will support the building of a strong financial base to fund informal sector social protection provision.

6.2.6. Next Steps

Using a consultative process that includes relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies as well as stakeholders, the Government of Uganda will decide on the best ways to prioritize resource allocation in favor of social protection interventions, in part drawing from recommendations that have been made by the most up-to-date Public Expenditure Reviews. The process for operationalizing this will have to be agreed on by all key stakeholders in the first six months of the strategy's implementation. In addition to this GoU and her development partners will need to agree short- and medium-term financing commitments, mindful that the new strategy is expected to be more encompassing than the Senior Citizens Grant and other single-focus interventions. Consistent with this GoU will develop a detailed and more comprehensive financing strategy which is in sync with the strategy and with the NDP vision on social protection. To achieve the above it will be vital that there is effectiveness and efficiency in the coordination of all key interventions.

²⁹Estimates provided by Social Protection Development Partners Group (SPDPG).

Table 2: Advantages and Disadvantages for Financing Options for Social Protection

Source	Advantages	Disadvantages
General taxation revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large and stable tax base Progressive incidence (income tax) Sustainability and legitimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distortion of labour Supply, saving & Consumption behaviours Regressive (VAT) Procyclical (income tax)
Payroll taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected in the budget Linked to benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regressive Labour market segmentation Procyclical
Earmarked consumption (sin) taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politically viable Tax may be desirable in its own right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually yields limited revenues
Cross-Subsidization (i.e. differential payment charges related to ability to pay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistributive effect within a programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives for over consumption Lack of fiscal transparency Potential for contingent fiscal liabilities
Loan funds or grants from international sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase availability of funds Finances investment in productive activities in countries with low public savings Finances temporary expansion of programmes during crises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inflexibility in use of funds Instability of funding Donor coordination issues Government autonomy issues High debt service burden Debt overhang impact on growth Vulnerability to a solvency crisis
Civil Society partnership and charities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases social cohesion Reduces the burden on the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential lack of accountability Potential lack of overall coordination

National Social protection strategy Cost Matrix (UGX Billions)

Intervention	Annualized Costs (US\$ Billions)						TOTAL
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028		
Senior Citizens Grant	121.20	192.70	216.08	216.08	316.49		1,062.55
National LIPW Programme	205.38	205.38	205.38	205.38	205.38		1,026.90
Public Service Pensions Scheme	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00		6,000.00
Public Service Pensions Fund	0.00	0.00	6,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00		36,000.00
National Health Insurance Scheme	996.00	1,405.00	1,845.00	2,198.00	2,685.00		9,129.00
Informal Economy Social Security	150.00	165.00	181.50	199.65	219.62		915.77
Regulation of Social Security Schemes (URBRA Budget)	14.59	16.82	19.44	22.38	25.82		99.05
SCSS Operational Framework	110.77	168.13	186.26	199.20	200.89		865.25
TOTAL	4,821.94	5,378.03	11,879.66	21,267.69	21,881.2		55,098.52

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