
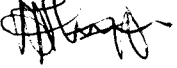


**OFFICE OF THE  
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

**ALTERNATIVE MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT  
GENDER, LABOR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
FY2022/23**

**PRESENTED BY;**

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**MARCH 2022**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development is mandated under Chapter 4 Articles 31-40 and Chapter 16 Article 246 of the constitution to protect and promote the rights of vulnerable population, to address gender inequalities, to ensure cultural growth, labor and employment as well as community mobilization and empowerment.

This Alternative Policy Statement is presented in response to the Ministerial Policy Statement for FY2022/23 presented to Parliament by Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Hon. Amongi Betty Ongom. The analysis under this policy statement utilized data from the National Budget Framework Paper FY2022/23; the Third National Development Plan (NDP III 2020/21-2024/25); the second budget call circular among others.

Gender sector currently has many running programs and target groups; but we shall prioritize the; Women; Youth and children; older persons; workers; and those employees in the Arts, culture and Creative sub sector. In the current program budgeting, the sector contributes to three programs of the NDP III namely; Human Capital Development; Community Mobilization and Mindset change; and Administration of Justice.

Therefore, in accordance with Section 6E (4) of the Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Act (2006), Rules 14(4) and 147 of the Rules of Procedure 2021, this Alternative Policy Statement for Gender, Labor and Social Development highlights policy directions of the Office of the Leader of Opposition.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

APS	Alternative Policy Statement
BFP	Budget Framework Paper
CHESASE	Chemical Safety and Security
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
ESP	Expanding Social Protection
FY	Financial Year
GBV	Gender Based Violence
LG	Local Government
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development
MPS	Ministerial Policy Statement
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NBFP	National Budget Framework Paper
NDPIII	Third National Development Plan
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
PWDs	People with Disabilities
SAGE	Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment
SCG	Senior Citizens Grant
UGX	Uganda Shillings
URBRA	Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority
UWEP	Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme
YLP	Youth Livelihood Program

## **Key Emerging Issues**

- i. The non-existent public service pension scheme
- ii. Implementation challenges of the Senior Citizens Grant
- iii. Policies addressing social protection are generally blind to the informal sector
- iv. Lack of a minimum wage for public officers
- v. Human Organ trafficking and unregulated, poorly managed labour externalization
- vi. Struggle for PWDs to access special needs education
- vii. Post COVID-19 recovery plans exclude the culture and creatives sector
- viii. Inadequate resource allocation to the sector
- ix. Lack of a separate ministry for culture

## **Key Alternative Policies**

- i. Liberalization of the pension sector
- ii. Develop a supplementary budget to offset SAGE grant arrears
- iii. Adjusting the existing programs, policies and mechanisms to the informal sector
- iv. Table a sectoral Minimum Wage Bill, 2022 with a specific sector review or focus
- v. Develop the Anti-Human Organ Trafficking Bill, 2022
- vi. Establish a national strategy on identification, tracking and referral of human organ trafficking and illegal labour externalization victims
- vii. Develop and popularize comprehensive safe migration policies in Uganda
- viii. Equip existing schools with facilities for children living with disabilities
- ix. Incorporate post COVID-19 recovery plans to the culture, arts and creatives sector
- x. Ensure adequate resource allocation to the arts, culture and creatives sub sector to match its contribution to the national GDP contribution
- xi. Government to create a separate and well-resourced ministry of culture

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## CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO ALTERNATIVE POLICY STATEMENT

### 1.1 Legal Provisions for Presenting the Alternative Policy Statement

In accordance with Section 6E (4) of the Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Act (2006), Rules 14(4) and 147 of the Rules of Procedure 2021, this Alternative Policy Statement for Gender, Labor and Social Development highlights policy directions of the Office of the Leader of Opposition.

### 1.2 Sector Overview

Gender sector currently has many running programs and target groups; but we shall prioritize the; Women; Youth and children; older persons; workers; and those employees in the Arts, culture and Creative sub sector.

Aware that majority of Uganda's population are young people<sup>1</sup>; with 400,000 Graduates per year; 83% of Uganda's young people are unemployed<sup>2</sup>. This should have been a very worrying issue worth prioritization but that is not the case. Unfortunately, there is withdraw or transfer of the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) Funds and Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) from Gender to the Parish Development Model (PDM); and even the few proposed programs like the Graduate Volunteer scheme and Green Jobs are not inclusive enough to have a wider coverage that depicts the national picture.

Whereas the 2015 National Social Protection Policy recognizes state's obligation to protect persons across the life cycle (children, youth, adults and elderly); there is lack of a holistic approach to social protection as it is covered in piece meals. SAGE for Older persons still has issues where; (i) 270, 203 beneficiaries still demand their SAGE arrears worth 36.2 billion for the fourth quarter of FY 2020/2021 that has not been prioritized; (ii) lowering the age of beneficiaries from 80 years to 60 years has not been rolled out.

Whereas a Cabinet paper was developed on implications of lowering the age; it has never been presented to Cabinet<sup>3</sup>. Additional 404.2 billion is required to cover 1, 509, 300 older persons above 60 years from the current 147.6 billion for the 358,420 older persons aged 80 years and above<sup>4</sup>. 54,559 older persons are not yet covered under SAGE because 11,000 are not registered under NIRA; and 43,559 are registered but have errors with their National IDs is a government weakness. 25, 000/= is also insufficient to meet the basic needs currently. The

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<sup>1</sup> UBOS Statistical Extract, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank Youth Status Report, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Social Protection, 2022. Position paper on Social Protection Financing.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, 2022. Updates on the progress of implementation of Expanding Social Protection.

consistent funding gaps towards SAGE and poor release performance has presented some implementation challenges. Currently, there is a total of sh38bn in arrears for the FY2020/21.

Under Culture, Arts and Creative sub sector; there is still *lack of a national database for all artists in Uganda; lack of proper structured economic empowerment/ talent development programs; and lack of regulations and mechanism for implementation of the Copy right law 2006.* In addition, the Budget allocation for FY2022/23 according to the MPS for the sector shows allocations only for the traditional leaders, yet the sector in its own is bigger than the traditional leaders.

*PWDs Act 2020 was passed in Parliament but the Ministry has never done the statutory Instrument or regulations to have this law implemented* which limits accessibility to equal opportunities to PWDs like in jobs as provided for by Sec. 9(6) of the same Act. In addition, due to the emerging vulnerabilities as occasioned by the coronavirus pandemic left many for example the informal sector workers and players in the creatives industry requiring deliberate interventions to make them more resilient against shocks and vulnerabilities.

*Children with disabilities education continuity strategy has not been outlined in the MPS plans for FY2022/23 where the children with special needs like the deaf lack schools to continue their education.* Access to Labor Justice has continuously topped the list of unfunded priorities in the sector where many workers are unlawfully terminated, NSSF not remitted, Medics get COVID19 or even die at work but not compensated, with others losing body parts but not compensated.

## CHAPTER 2: SITUATION ANALYSIS OF MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT

### 2.1 Budget Analysis

#### Vote 018: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development

The total approved budget for Vote 018 Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development sector for the current FY2021/22 was UGX 211.01 billion showing a 28% increment from the previous FY2020/21. The increment in the sector budget is mainly attributed to the supplementary expenditure of 53.4 billion<sup>5</sup> provided to the ministry as COVID 19 relief

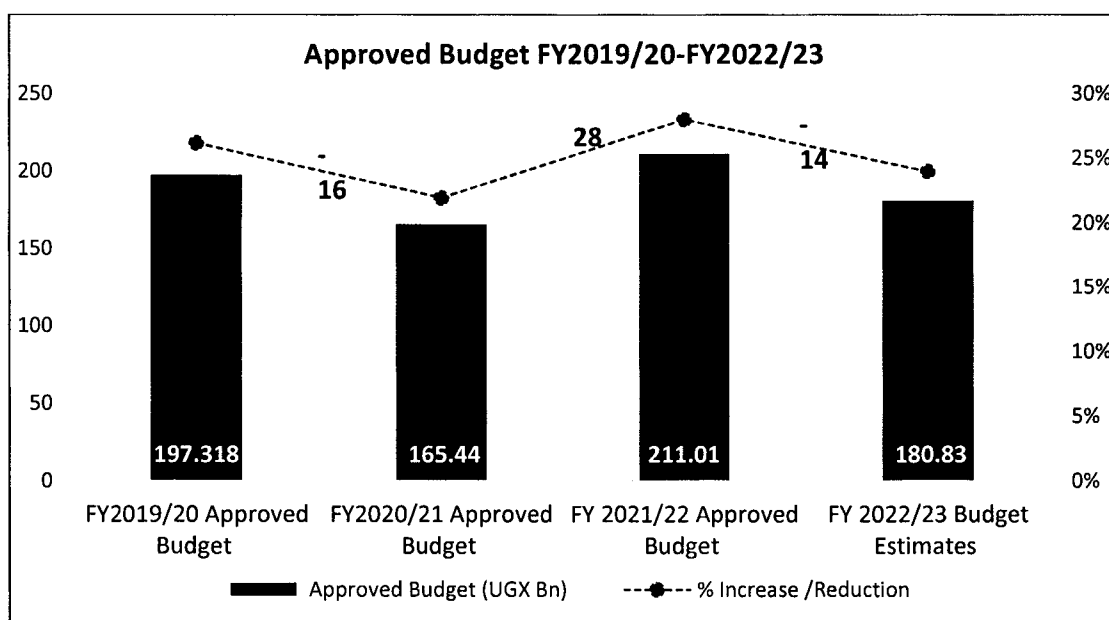


Figure 1: Approved Budget for Vote 018 MGLSD FY2022/23

Table 2 below shows that according to the MPS FY2022/23 the budget ceiling for the MGLSD has been reduced from UGX 211.01Bn in FY2021/22 to UGX 180.84 billion representing a reduction percentage of 14%; this budget cut was applied to Chemical Safety and Security (CHESASE), YLP and retooling components of the Budget. On the YLP program, a budget cut was instituted on all the Ugx 3.3 billion<sup>6</sup> provision in the current budget of FY2021/22. In addition, a budget cut on CHESASE was instituted on all the Ugx 1 billion provision in the current budget FY2021/22

No funds were allocated to cover the Ministry arrears obligation. The above notwithstanding, additional resources totaling Ugx. 5.47 billion<sup>7</sup> was added to the

<sup>5</sup> MPS Vote018 Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development FY2022/23

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid



ministry MTEF under community mobilization and mindset change. It should further be noted that much as the detailed additional allocation amounts to Ugx 7.8 billion, only Ugx 5.47 billion was provided in the MTEF thus a shortfall of Ugx. 2.33 billion

**Table 2: Snapshot of Budget Allocations for Vote 018 FY2022/23 by Program**

Category	Approved FY	FY 2022/23	% Change
	2021/22 (Ushs. Bn)	MPS (Ushs. Bn)	
<b>Program: Community Mobilization and Mindset Change</b>			
Wage	1.96	1.96	0%
Non-wage Recurrent	18.49	23.96	30%
Dev't	7.49	1.92	-74%
Sub-Total	27.93	27.84	0%
<b>Program: Human Capital Development</b>			
Wage	1.53	1.53	0%
Non-wage Recurrent	175.56	146.49	-17%
Dev't	1	0	-100%
Sub-Total	178.09	148.02	-17%
<b>Program: Governance and Security</b>			
Wage	0.1	0.1	0%
Non-wage Recurrent	4.88	4.88	0%
Dev't	0	0	0%
Sub-Total	4.98	4.98	0%
Overall Total	211.01	180.84	-14%

**Source: MPS for Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development for FY2022/2023**

In addition, there is a considerable reduction in the non-wage category of the ministry budget from UGX 198.83 billion approved in FY 2021/22 to UGX 175.33 billion for the MPS FY2022/23 representing a percentage reduction of 11%.

### 2.1.1 Sector Unfunded Priorities and Allocations

There are a total of Ten unfunded priorities presented in the MPS 2022/23 with a combined annual budget total amount of UGX 288.875 billion, available funds MTEF of UGX 140.34 billion and a funding gap of UGX 148.535 billion. The biggest

two unfunded priorities are strengthening social assistance to older persons (UGX 62.075 billion) and community mobilization and mindset change (UGX 15 billion)

**Table 3: Sector Unfunded Priorities and the Funding Gaps**

Key priority	Annual Budget (Shs bn)	Available Funds (MTEF) Shs bn	Funding Gap (Shs bn)
Community Mobilization and Mindset change	16	1	15
Strengthening Livelihood of Women and Youth	10	0	10
Support to Traditional Leaders	21.2	0.84	20.36
Externalization of Labor	9.85	0	9.85
Strengthening Social Assistance to Older Persons	182.775	120.7	62.075
Green Incubation	5	0	5
Enhancing livelihoods of PWDS	14	9.6	3.4
Enhancing livelihoods of Older Persons	10	3.8	6.2
Strengthening Occupational safety and health	1.65	0	1.65
Strengthening Institutional capacity	18.4	4.4	14
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>288.875</b>	<b>140.34</b>	<b>148.535</b>

Source: MPS FY2022/23

Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) remains an unfunded priority in the ministerial budget. It should be noted that beneficiaries of the SAGE grant have not been paid for 8 months, while arrears for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the FY2020/21 worth Ugshs36.08 for 270,203 beneficiaries remain uncleared by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development.

In addition, the externalization of labour program remains unfunded however, through illegal labor export and transplant tourism or human organ trafficking, many Ugandans especially (girls and women) have faced many consequences like; loss of lives; sustained permanent internal and external scars; psychological problems due to the torture among others.

### 2.1.2 600: Local Governments

MGLSD's approach is to deliver its services through a decentralized approach. The ministry provides the policy guidelines whereas the Local Governments play a key role in implementation especially at delivering community-based services. However, Vote600 LG for FY2022/23 budget estimates show only UGX 7.640 billion which is insufficient for community mobilization and human capital development mandated by the Local Government. The vote has a funding gap of Ugx 24.75 billion out of the requested Ugx. 32.388 billion.

It should be noted that resources have remained the same at the LG level where the bulk of work is concentrated yet community development officers are unable to effectively monitor Government programs such as YLP, SAGE and UWEP due to limited staffing levels

### 2.1.3 Sector compliance to the NDPIII

**Table 4: Budgetary Alignment of Policy Statement to National Development Plan**

Contributing Programs	NDPIII PAIP Projections FY2022/23 (UGX Billion)	MPS Allocations FY2022/23 (UGX Billion)	Variance (UGX Billion)
Administration of Justice	6,699	0	(6,699)
Agro-industrialization	0.3	0	0.3
Community Mobilization and Mindset Change	24,281.00	27.84	(24,253.16)
Development Plan Implementation	100	0	(100)
Governance and Security	3,319.00	4.98	(3,314.02)
Human Capital Development	731,875.70	148.02	(731,727.68)
Private Sector Development	750.00	0	(750)
Regional Balanced Development	870.00	0	(870)
Sustainable Energy Development	6.00	0	(6)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>767,901.00</b>	<b>180.84</b>	<b>-767,720</b>

Source: NDPIII & MPS FY2022/23

Based on the allocations in the MPS none meets the NDPIII PAIP projections for FY2022/23. The ministry is supposed to contribute to Nine (9) programs of the NDPIII, however only 3 (three) programs in the MPS FY2022/23 have been allocated funding. Noticeably even the programs in the MPS allocations for FY2022/23 do not meet the NDPIII target for FY2022/23

## CHAPTER 3: EMERGING ISSUES AND PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

### a) The Non-existent Public Service Pension Scheme

The current Public Service Pension Scheme is a non-contributory, pay-as-you-go retirement benefit scheme financed directly by the tax revenues from the consolidated fund<sup>8</sup>. The pension arrangements are computed on the basis of length of service and the salary at the time of retirement.

Aware that the current scheme, is fully funded by the tax revenues, Employees of Government have no known pension saving in a Fund or Scheme anywhere. Their respective benefits paid out at retirement are generated from the budget of the year they retire in. Future tax payers have the burden of raising pension funds for retiring public officers. This reduces the fiscal space for future spending on other priorities of Government.

Cabinet in July 2020 approved the creation of the Public Service Pension Scheme on similar terms like the National Social Security Fund. Employees of Government would begin contributing 5% of their salaries while their employer (Government) would contribute 10% for each employee's salary to the scheme. The plan was to implement this Cabinet decision effective FY 2021/22. Unfortunately, this scheme has not yet been established. The Ministry of Public Service has not introduced the Contributory Pension Scheme Bill to parliament to enable the establishment of the scheme as directed by Cabinet.

#### **Proposed Alternative**

##### ***Liberalization of the Pensions Sector:***

*While the URBRA Act 2011 provides for multiple pension schemes, there has been limited employees' access, lack of liberty to join and monopoly of some schemes like NSSF over the private sector employees, and public pension scheme over civil servants. Some category of employees like civil servants has no scheme. The limited options given to workers with monopolistic tendencies by the schemes have continuously suppressed and exploited the workers views on how to manage their savings*

*Therefore, Government is tasked to establish a Public Service Pension Scheme that would enable civil servants to start making monthly contributions just like NSSF contributors. This requires Government to first raising salaries of all civil servants to a level where after deducting 5% from their salaries, each employee retains at*

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<sup>8</sup> The National Social Protection Policy 2015

least the same take home as that before establishment of the scheme. Accordingly, Government should compute all outstanding pension for each employee at the time of migration to a contributory scheme. This computation should cover the period of service from date of 1<sup>st</sup> appointment and the pay scale that the officer currently is ranked in. Government should set a multi-year plan of paying these pensions into the accounts of the employees in the new scheme. This would help grow the pension sector in terms of liquidity and financial depth.

### **b) Implementation challenges of the Senior Citizens Grant**

In November 2018, the Government made a decision to roll out the Senior Citizens Grant to all districts in the country starting with people who are 80years and above. The national roll out is currently on going and a total of 358,420<sup>9</sup> older persons have been enrolled on the program. It was agreed that over the next few years, this age threshold will be brought down gradually<sup>10</sup>, until all older person who are 65 (60 for Karamoja) years and above are reached which has not been actualized yet.

In addition, there is inadequate budget provision where total government provision according to the MPS for the FY2022/23 is only Ugshs120.7 billion out of the required Ugshs 182.775 billion. This leave a shortfall of Ugshs 62.075 billion and if not addressed some beneficiaries will not be not be paid all their grant in the year.

Similarly, Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) remains an unfunded priority in the ministerial budget. It should be noted that beneficiaries of the SAGE grant have not been paid for 8 months, while arrears for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the FY2020/21 worth Ugshs36.08 for 270,203 beneficiaries remain uncleared by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development.

### **Proposed Alterative**

#### ***Develop a supplementary budget to offset SAGE grant arrears***

*For over 8 months, older beneficiaries of the SAGE grant have not been paid resulting into a huge funding gap by the MFPED. The arrears were accumulated during the 4th quarter of Financial Year 2020/2021. They were meant to be paid out to 270,203 older persons across 146 districts in the country. The finance ministry proposed in the budget framework paper to push the supplementary budget to FY2022/23 as domestic arrears which proposal was dropped by the budget call*

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<sup>9</sup> ibid

<sup>10</sup> Uganda parliamentary Forum on Social Protection 2021 Annual Report; Beyond the Senior Citizens Grant

circular. Failure to offset these arrears is a violation of older persons rights and entitlements which must be provided for by the government.

Therefore, Parliament needs to task the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development to urgently address the payment arrears of Ugsh36.08b through a supplementary funding. In addition, there is need to ensure that the Ugshs62.075 billion funding gap reflected in the ministerial policy statement FY2022/23 for vote 018MGLSD be covered before passing of the budget. This is so crucial since donor funding to the program ends in June 2022.

### **c) Policies addressing social protection are generally blind to the informal sector**

The National Social Protection Policy 2015 identifies expansion of contributory social security schemes to the informal economy as one of its priorities but with no stated paths on how to implement these. In addition, the proposed amendments of the Employment Act, 2006 only focuses on domestic and casual workers thus leaving out other informal sector occupations outside these two categories. Similarly, NSSF, the largest social security scheme is limited to the formal economy and covers employees who work in firms employing a minimum of five (5) workers<sup>11</sup>. Worse still, private social security schemes are few and do not reach many of the individuals in the informal sector

Aware that majority of the Government programs implemented to social protection directly or indirectly to the informal sector are limited in coverage. For instance Social protection programs such as the third Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF 3) has prioritized labor intensive public works and financial input in support to selected agricultural related programs. Private non-statutory social security schemes being regulated by Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA) such as MAZIMA retirement plan and KACITA provident fund directly work with informal sector participants. These programs are, however, limited in coverage and hampered with inadequate data in terms of knowing who the vulnerable are and where they are for better targeting

### **Proposed Alternative**

#### ***Adjusting the existing Programs, Policies and Mechanisms to the Informal Sector***

*The Expanding Social Protection (ESP) is somewhat a step towards broadening the coverage of social protection schemes but there is a need to build on this by*

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<sup>11</sup> Madina M G, 2020; How Inclusive is Uganda's Social Protection Legal and Policy Framework in relation to the Informal Economy? Policy Brief

expanding coverage without formalization and reconceptualizing the role of formalization. This can be done better by using effective social protection as an incentive tool to encourage formalization<sup>12</sup>.

Noting therefore, that a detailed impact evaluation of the existing policies and programs on social protection would inform future initiatives (programs and policies) targeting the informal sector. In this impact evaluation, there is need for detailed evidence in terms of baseline, midline and end-line comparisons of existing informal schemes. For this to be achieved social protection initiatives need to have an in-built impact evaluation measurement component.

#### **d) Lack of a minimum wage for public officers**

Due to Uganda's lack of an established minimum wage for all sectors in this country, there has developed a continuous tendency of manipulation of workers as seen in the various salary disparities in the public service<sup>13</sup>; even when the employees have the same level of education, qualification and experience. Different public officers are paid different salaries from different Ministries, Departments and Agencies yet are at similar levels of education qualifications and experience; with some being highly and timely paid while the others are lowly and delayed paid; thus, being unfairly remunerated. This not only demotivates the officers on low salaries; but also affects quality of service delivery; creates conflicts among employees; increases corruption tendencies; and also affects employee performance that in turn leads to poor quality service delivery.

#### **Proposed Alternative**

##### **Table a Sectoral Minimum Wage Bill, 2022 with a specific sector review or focus.**

We propose to table a Private Member's Bill titled "Sectoral Minimum Wage bill, 2022" that will regulate and propose mechanisms for periodic reviews and regulation of a minimum wage of Labor per sector depending on the existing financial circumstances, economic situation or even considering the country's GDP putting in consideration of other government programs like the National Development Plan, its Sectoral priorities and ultimate country's development goals. This minimum wage will differ per sector; and be reviewed periodically to match the existing economic situation.

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<sup>12</sup> Madina M G, 2020; How Inclusive is Uganda's Social Protection Legal and Policy Framework in relation to the Informal Economy? Policy Brief

<sup>13</sup> Equal Opportunities Commission, 2018. Study Report on Salary Disparities in the Public Service.

*This Bill will guide Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies; non-state actors, Parastatals, private sector, and Local Governments on what criteria to use to determine an employees' minimum wage at a given point in time thus reducing on unreasonable salary disparities<sup>14</sup>. This Bill will propose a specific committee to be setup to review all these processes and establish timelines upon which this wage is effected and how enforcement will be done together with the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development. This will not only reduce on employee manipulation; poor employee performance; but also promote timely qualitative service deliver and fulfillment of international labor standards.*

#### **e) Minimal Government involvement in key interventions to address Gender Based Violence**

While Government through the MGLSD acknowledge the fight against GBV, there is minimal Government involvement especially in the most affected areas of Karamoja region, Northern Uganda<sup>15</sup> among others. The bulk of work regarding interventions and documenting cases of GBV falls mostly on the work of CSOs and other Development partners. In addition, provision of shelters for victims and survivors of GBV is a critical role that Government is mandated to do of which greater responsibility currently lies on interventions by CSOs. In the areas most affected with GBV, CSOs set up a number of shelters which they fund and manage.

#### **Proposed Alternative**

##### ***Create synergies for collaboration than just regulation***

*We therefore recommend that Government through Ministry of Gender establishes independent well-funded programs specifically targeting resolving GBV cases throughout Uganda. Government should also first conduct comprehensive research about the causes, prevalence and possible solutions to the GBV that will inform the programming and interventions. It should also support, work with and collaborate with CSOs handling GBV; protect their space while regulating their operation in a friendly working environment.*

*Furthermore, although the Committee on Gender recommends that Government provides UGX 10bn<sup>16</sup> through the Ministry of Gender in FY 2022/23 to establish and operationalize shelters for GBV victims; the report however does not mention*

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<sup>14</sup> Equal Opportunities Commission, 2018. A Study Report on Salary Disparities in the Public Service.

<sup>15</sup> Report of the committee on Gender, Labour & social development on Gender Based Violence in the Districts of Moroto, Amudat, Kapchorwa, Kween, Tororo & Jinja March 2022

<sup>16</sup> ibid



whether proper accountability of the initially allocated resources to GBV shelters was given. We therefore recommend that a comprehensive audit be conducted to establish the value for money that was allocated to handling GBV especially to the Shelters before the re-imbursement of 10BN requested for by the Ministry.

**f) Human Organ Trafficking and unregulated, poorly managed Labor Externalization**

The ever-increasing poverty and unemployment levels coupled with under employment, low and delayed pay especially among women and young people in Uganda has exposed them to human organ trafficking as they search for greener pastures overseas in a bid to have high paying jobs with lucrative paychecks and benefits; good working conditions; instant solutions to home problems. While it is estimated that the illegal organ trade conservatively generates approximately \$840 million to \$1.7 billion annually<sup>17</sup>; this has come at the expense of innocent poor Ugandan organs trafficked due to Uganda's lack of employment opportunities; lack of balanced and affordable diverse investment opportunities and limited discriminative access to resources that has left young Ugandans vulnerable to exploitation as they search for casual work for survival<sup>18</sup>.

Through illegal labor export and transplant tourism or human organ trafficking, many Ugandans especially (girls and women) have faced many consequences like; (i) loss of lives; (ii) sustained permanent internal and external scars; (iii) psychological problems due to the torture; (iv) become drug addicts/users; (v) live at the mercy of traffickers that hold their travel documents and sell them into bondage; (vi) others forced to donate their organs in exchange for life; and affected our country's international relations and GDP; thereby warranting urgent sustainable interventions.

**Proposed Alternatives**

**i. Develop the Anti- Human Organ Trafficking Bill, 2022**

We propose tabling a Private Member's Bill 2022 titled "The Anti- Human Organ Trafficking Bill, 2022" that will set up different laws, regulations and procedures on how illegal organ trade or transplant tourism and will be prevented and handled in Uganda; how it can be detected; how victims or survivors are handled here and abroad; how countries will negotiate with victims' country to rescue and protect the citizens; how migrant workers' social protection will be handled;

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<sup>17</sup> Global Financial Integrity, 2017. Transnational Crime and the Developing World.

<sup>18</sup> The Borgen Project, 2019. Human Trafficking in Uganda.

protection, prosecution procedures and citizen protection strategies against organ trafficking; and how proper funds allocation to Anti- Human Organ Trafficking efforts for the fight against illicit organ trade in order to attain justice for victims of human organ trafficking and illegal Labor export will be attained.

**ii. Establish a National Strategy on Identification, tracking and Referral of Human Organ Trafficking and illegal Labor externalization Victims**

We propose establishment of a domesticated National Strategy on Identification and Referral of Victims of Human Organ trafficking in Uganda by a well facilitated and functional Labor function in Ministry of Gender; in tandem with the 2000 UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol. This will be a formal national and international mechanism that is systematically responsible for; (i) establishing systems and structures for identification, tracking and referral of victims within and outside the country; that automatically relates with other countries' policies; (ii) provide for training of Ugandan Embassy staff in different countries in assist in victim identification; trafficking; providing temporary shelter or identifying local NGO shelters for victim referral; (iii) facilitating victim repatriation; (iv) coordination of a referral mechanism; (v) guide on how to prioritize and increase efforts to investigate organ trafficking cases, prosecute alleged traffickers; and allegations of official complicity in trafficking crimes and prosecute and convict complicit officials in a bid to attain justice.

**iii. Develop and popularise Comprehensive Safe Migration Policies in Uganda**

We propose development and popularization of Comprehensive Safe Migration policies in Uganda that guides on; (i) safe and unsafe countries; (ii) prioritize qualitative investigating and prosecuting traffickers who exploit girls, youth and women in illegal organ transplant; (iii) provides for implementation of strong regulations and oversight of recruitment companies; (iv) increase bilateral negotiations with destination country governments on migrant workers' rights; (v) safe release and repatriation terms of Ugandan migrant workers exploited by employers abroad, and mutually enforceable standard contracts; (vi) how to proactively investigate and punish labor recruiters who fraudulently recruit Ugandans and eliminate all worker-paid recruitment fees; (vii) increase national anti-human organ trafficking awareness raising efforts, specifically to teachers, parents, and community leaders; (ix) establish safe proper coordination between law enforcers and prosecutors; and (x) provisions for conducting safe prosecution-led investigations and systematic case referral to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

*This does not mean that we don't appreciate the need to save lives through safe organ donation since 21 people die waiting for an organ every day and more than 107,380 men, women and children await life-saving organ transplants every day in the US<sup>19</sup>; however, this must not be used as an excuse to expose our girls, youth and women to travel under unsafe travel/ migration policies in a bid to engage them in illicit organ trade.*

**g) Merger of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Program (UWEP) to finance the Parish Development Model (PDM)**

The UWEP is a rolling government program that is aimed at improving access to financial services by women and equipping them with skills for enterprise growth, value addition and marketing of their products and services. Cumulatively, the program has reached a total of 16,542 women groups with 191,476 members supported with credit and entrepreneurship skills as of December 2021<sup>20</sup>. However, Cabinet meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 approved amalgamation of 8 wealth creation funds including UWEP into a single pool to be implemented under the Parish Development Model. This if effected will create situations where majority of the women would rather be financially excluded because the approach is not inclusive to the nature of women as a special interest group. The merger of UWEP with other funds to fund PDM erases efforts made towards economic empowerment of women since this will also create discrimination on who accesses the financial credit; more regulations would pull some women away.

**Proposed Alternative**

*While UWEP has had its challenges, the programme has registered tremendous successes for women. UWEP acknowledges that women are not a homogenous group and that some categories face multiple vulnerabilities with regards to entrepreneurship development. The Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Program must be maintained as an independent, women-centric initiative under the supervision of the MGLSD; Increase the resource allocation and technical support under the programme to allow the programme to meet the overwhelming demand; Increase resource allocation to the UWEP fund to have a wider coverage that will benefit more women groups. Government to strengthen the monitoring unit to address the corruption tendencies associated with those managing the fund; Re-evaluate the implementation of the proposed Parish*

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<sup>19</sup> US Cleveland Clinic, 2021. Organ Donation and Transplantation.

<sup>20</sup> MGLSD Statement to Parliament on the occasion of commemorating the international women's day 8<sup>th</sup> March

*Development model to increase its gender-responsiveness for the plan to have transformative impacts on the lives of intended beneficiaries.*

## **YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS SUB SECTOR**

### **a) Youth Unemployment; Skills mismatch and implementation challenges of the YLP**

Youth unemployment is one of the biggest problems Government of Uganda has been grappling with over the years. According to the Uganda National Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate for young people between 15–24 years constitutes 83% posing a serious political, economic, and social challenge to the Country and its leadership. To date, academic institutions produce graduates whose skills do not match what the market requires. Over 400,000<sup>21</sup> youths are released annually into the job market to compete for approximately 9,000 available jobs. This mismatch makes it harder to tackle youth unemployment.

Furthermore, unemployed youths continue to migrate from rural to urban areas for work, which negatively impacts on the social services sector in urban centers. Ugandan youths shun the agricultural sector, one of the biggest employers in rural areas, preferring to work in service sector jobs like riding motorcycle taxis or as low-wage laborers in industries.

The government response has been to issue soft loans and youth grants through programs like the Youth Livelihood Programme, National Youth Venture Fund, among others which have been instrumental in helping a cross section of the youth however with registered challenges like Corruption, Lack of enough training, presence of ghost groups, sharing of money by group members, lack of a common understanding and low supervision of the groups by technocrats among other bottlenecks. These challenges drive to a conclusion that the program despite being a good initiative needs to be reviewed and redesigned if it is to change the livelihoods/economic status of the youth.

#### ***Proposed Alternative***

*Encourage the youth to investment in skills-based projects. MGLSD needs to make investment in skills-based projects appealing to the youth. It could ring-fence the allocation for skills development. It could also give more incentives to groups that request for skills-based funding, for instance more funding allocation, longer gestation period for repayment, lower interest, among others. In addition, Government should insist on supporting the youth with complementary services*

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<sup>21</sup> 2 Report of Proceedings of the 49th Session of the State of the Nation Platform

beyond the revolving fund. This will enable them learn business ethics such as balancing consumption and investment expenditure.

In order to address the youth unemployment scourge, we propose integration of at least 30% of youths in every organization. This will increase chances of these youths gainfully employed and utilizing the skills obtained while in school/formal and informal training.

In addition, Government should boost and utilize online youth ventures like e-business (online business) by reducing the costs of internet in order to create a platform for youths to innovatively and creatively advertise their businesses and thus boosting their source of livelihood,

### **b) Struggle for Children with Disabilities to access special needs education**

Children with Disabilities and other special needs category; especially the deaf, and the blind struggle to access schools with their facilities either because they do not completely exist in their localities or are far away located with one school per region or sub region. This has made these children lose hope for a better future; violates the equity principle of education for all, but also discriminates these children making it non-inclusive, increasing the 2 out of every 10 people who are more likely to openly discriminate and stigmatize PWDs who are 4.4 million Ugandans<sup>22</sup>; and makes it expensive (unaffordable) for them to access education hence denying them their constitutional right to education. The National Special Grant for Disability funded in the FY 2022/2023 Budget Framework Paper is insufficient for PWDs<sup>23</sup> and also leaves out the education continuity component for PWDs from either primary to secondary or secondary to University as advised in the four key principles of education; (Equity, Affordability, inclusiveness and accessibility).

#### **Proposed Alternative**

##### **Equip existing schools with facilities for children living with disabilities**

We propose that Ministry of Gender together with the Ministry of Education lobby Government through MFPED to table a Supplementary budget before Parliament to allocate resources to equip at least one primary and secondary school per district and at least one University per region with facilities required for children and people living with disabilities to continue with their education at all levels.

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<sup>22</sup> National Union for Disabled Persons (NUDIPU) Poll Survey, 2019.

<sup>23</sup> Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), 2022. CSO Position Paper on the Community Mobilization and Mindset Change Programme in response to the National Budget Framework Paper FY 2022/2023.

*These may include brail machines, qualified teachers with skills in special needs education, and a practical curriculum for children with special needs and continuity programs like skilling for those PWDs that dropped out or cannot afford university education. This will not only enable them continue with their education, make education accessible and affordable for them, but also reduce on their vulnerability and risks; promote education inclusivity; help PWDs get employed and compete favorably in the job market with people without any disabilities; as well as help them achieve their dreams.*

### **c) The rising cases of teenage pregnancy**

A study by UNFPA 2021, found that a total of 354,736 teenage pregnancies were registered in 2020, while 295,219 teenage pregnancies were registered between January 2021 and September 2021<sup>24</sup>. This implies according to the same report that on average, over 32,000 teenage pregnancies are recorded per month. These numbers were escalated by the outbreak of COVID-19 which had led to the closure of schools. Majority of girls who were pregnant didn't go back to school due to stigma and strict laws. In a bid to address this hasty action of teenage pregnancy, government proposed a directive for all schools to allow pregnant girls to return to school adopting a prenatal approach which was not adequate, planned, prepared, well thought and safe for the girls.

#### **Proposed Alternative**

*We propose; Provision of a comprehensive school-based counselling, rehabilitation, psychosocial support and mentorship program; Provide girls with formal flexible school programs with choice of studying either morning, evening or weekend at all levels of education; Establish Nurseries or Early child hood development centers at or close to schools to accommodate the babies of the teenage mothers as they go to study; Provide special accommodation for young mothers at school like a crèche or improve the existing school clinics for break, breast feeding and attend to babies when they are sick and to Provide social and financial support for all teenage mothers to access free education and 50% scholarships paid up by government in their recent schools.*

#### **CULTURE, ARTS AND CREATIVE SUB SECTOR**

Culture is still a low priority in the national vision and national development programming and financing for heritage development across almost all priority areas with the exception of museums and cultural leaders. Whereas the creative

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<sup>24</sup> UNFPA Fact sheet on Teenage Pregnancy November 2021

Arts sector is dominated and best known for music, the sector has a wide scope of actors like the musicians, dancers, dramatists, poets, instrumentalists, producers, graphic designers, photographers, fashion designers, fine artists among others. This is in addition to the fact that the sector has largely been funded and sustained by individual stake holders whose incomes cannot favor the global market targets that we aim to achieve.

Below are some of the emerging issues and proposed alternatives to the sub sector;

**a) Post COVID-19 Recovery Plans exclude the wider culture, arts and creatives sector**

Covid 19 affected the culture, arts and creative sector in many ways. According to the Uganda Performing Right Society Annual Report 2021, the total revenue of the recorded music industry increased by 7% to 23.1 billion U.S. dollars: 56% of this was from Streaming made however, royalty collections fell from Shs.660 million to Shs. 225 million representing a 66 % decline. How the government responded to offer social protection, like handouts to musicians without proper guidelines, to sections of people in the creative industry during this crisis and its impacts could have far reaching consequences on the sector, the livelihoods of artists, event promoters, arts organizations, cultural centers and the future prospects of the creative industry once the virus recedes.

**Proposed Alternative**

*Establish a National Artists cooperative union to solve the unguided and undocumented handout monetary instances that are not sustainable. This cooperative will help to regulate the activities in the sector through policies and guidelines on the sector financing mechanisms, developing a database for the industry, resource allocation, planning and performance evaluation.*

*In addition, there is need to ensure that the support to cultural organizations reaches artists and other creative professionals. In this regard, there is need for an immediate forensic audit of the Ugx 10 bn COVID-19 relief fund and the Ugx 7.5 bn for the supplementary budget meant for the E-Concerts*

**b) Inadequate Resource Allocation to the sector**

Despite an increase in the national budget from Uganda Shillings 41.2 trillion to 44.7 trillion in 2020/21 and 2021/22 FY respectively<sup>25</sup>, and despite the potential

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<sup>25</sup> Deloitte June 2021: Uganda Budget Highlights; Navigating new realities

contribution of cultural activities, including cultural tourism, to the Gross Domestic Product of Uganda, and notwithstanding the Universal Periodic Review, UPR 2011 encouragement for Uganda "to consider allocating adequate resources to culture, including to local bodies in order to promote cultural activities and to ensure protection of traditional knowledge and skills in particular for women," financial allocation to the culture sector has remained at a pitiful 0.003% of the National Budget<sup>26</sup>. Many cultural heritage resources in Uganda are at risk because individual owners and cultural institutions suffer from financial constraints and cannot provide adequate protection to the cultural resources. The Budget allocation for FY2022/23 according to the MPS for the sector shows allocations only for the traditional leaders, yet the sector in its own is bigger than the traditional leaders.

### **Proposed Alternative**

*Uganda has a young population of over 50% creating a demographic dividend, which has not been harnessed to propel economic growth. The culture and creatives industry contributes to not only the social well-being of people, but also to the social and economic development of countries. In Nigeria for instance, the creative industry contributed approximately US \$ 18 billion to GDP. According to UNDP, in Uganda's context the creative arts are estimated to generate approximately UGX 3.18 trillion (approximately USD 850m) to the economy in total business income based on analytical estimates. This income was approximately 3% of Uganda's total GDP of 27.6 billion in 2017.*

*Therefore, increase in budget allocation will generate more revenue and tap from the benefits in the sector. If the Government invests in the following creative areas, the creative industry shall manage to compete favorably globally; Putting up modern regional recording studios; Regional cultural centers to promote local talents and also be able to promote regional cultures; Furnishing creators and stake holders in terms of capacity building; Organisation of Annual national cultural festivals to attract players from different regions, countries to exhibit and show case their art products and culture. This fosters Cultural tourism; Revisiting schools/ institutional syllabus. There is need to have Music Dance and Drama activated in schools; Funding a data base for all the creative arts stakeholders.*

### **c) Lack of a separate ministry for Culture**

Currently there is neither a substantive government Ministry to promote cultural activities, nor a separate budget/vote for cultural activities in Uganda. The

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<sup>26</sup> ibid



development and promotion of cultural activities are divided in two ministries, that is, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development which houses the Department of Family and Cultural Affairs, and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities which houses the Department of Museums and Monuments. Separating efforts to promote cultural heritage activities weakens coordination and management of cultural resources, thus compromising the realization of cultural rights for the people of Uganda.

### ***Proposed Alternative***

#### **Creation of a separate Ministry for Culture**

*We recommend that the Government should create a separate and well-resourced Ministry for Culture to manage Uganda's tangible and intangible elements of culture, develop relevant policies and legislation in support of cultural rights and lobby for adequate funding. The Ministry of Gender looks at many departments thus giving less attention to a very precious sector that has globally been recognized and appreciated. There is need for a ministry that houses all talent related activities to enable its development and marketing to the global market. This sector if well-furnished can be among the country's best export and an answer to the unemployment question.*

## **CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION**

The crucial role played by the Gender sector in strengthening human capital development, community mobilization and mindset change and improved governance through promoting the rights of the vulnerable persons and catalyzing through promoting the rights of the vulnerable persons and catalyzing communities' participation in wealth creation is recognized.

The acknowledgement of this role has however not been supported by adequate government prioritization in resource allocation over the years. The sector remains among the least funded. Without proper resourcing for this sector the country runs a risk of achieving superficial development that increases existing inequalities and excludes the most vulnerable and marginalized citizens. It is essential that no citizen is left behind as the country realizes its vision.