YOUTHMAP uganda

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES. CHARTING HOPE.

A Cross-Sector Situational Analysis on Youth in Uganda

Volume 1: Main Report

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FOREWORD

It is vital that we engage today's youth in designing and implementing effective and sustainable programs, so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the conditions they are facing and ensure that the programs we develop are relevant to their needs. For the past twenty years, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) has pioneered an approach that not only identifies young people's needs and opportunities in a particular community, country, or region of the world, but also actively engages local youth in identifying those challenges and charting their own futures. *YouthMap* is a four-year USAID-supported initiative that offers IYF and our local partners the chance to apply that comprehensive approach in Sub-Saharan Africa.

With 60 to 70 percent of Africa's population under the age of 30, it is of critical importance that we learn how to tap into the vast resources that these young people can offer. Africa's youth have the ability and the capacity to drive positive social change and economic growth—when given the appropriate resources and opportunities. The magnitude of this younger generation and their nations' current challenges simply demand that youth themselves take a leading role in shaping their futures.

Through the *YouthMap* initiative, IYF goes directly to African youth and the organizations serving them to learn first-hand how young people in each of the target countries live, work, and learn. We ask youth to describe their daily lives, their challenges, and their aspirations and dreams for the future. We then place their answers in the context of data available from our many partners in the region, highlighting the gaps between young people's needs and available resources. In short, we help identify the terrain and erect signposts for the road ahead, with an emphasis on engaging youth in the process. Indeed, we see young people not just as a focus group, but as protagonists in their own development, as well as the development of their nations.

Navigating Challenges. Charting Hope. A Cross-Sector Situational Analysis on Youth in Uganda maps existing youth-related conditions and opportunities across the country. This is the second of up to eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to be studied as part of this initiative. We believe this report, with vital input from Ugandan youth, lays a realistic foundation for building a more stable, prosperous, and hopeful future for Uganda and its young people.

William S. Reese
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International Youth Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (VOLUME 1)

ANNEXES (SEE VOLUME 2)

1: YOUTHMAP UGANDA FRAMEWORK AND FINAL SCOPE OF WORK

2: USAID/UGANDA SCOPE OF WORK

3: ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

4: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED, BY REGION

5: YOUTH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS, BY REGION

6: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR YOUTH FGD PARTICIPANTS

7: ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL & REGIONAL SURVEY DATA ON YOUTH IN UGANDA

8: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON YOUTH FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

9: COMPARISON OF FGD PARTICIPANTS WITH 2010 UNHS POPULATION DATA

10: YOUTHMAP MARKET SURVEY RESULTS

11: USAID IMPLEMENTING PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

11B: USAID/UGANDA IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS WORKING WITH YOUTH

12: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

13: FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

14: BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACRONYMS

ABC	Abstinence, be faithful, use condoms
ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
ABIT	Agribusiness Initiative Trust
ACKT	Alternatives to Conflict in Karamoja and Turkana
ARD	Associates in Rural Development
ASRH	Adolescent sexual and reproductive health
AYDL	Africa Youth Development Link
AYF	African Youth Forum
BCC	Behavior change communication
BPO	Business process outsourcing
BTVET	Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community based organizations
CBR	Centre for Basic Research
CDO	Community Development Officer
CEW	Citizens Elections Watch
CKW	Community knowledge workers
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CLA	Collaborating, learning and adapting
CSO	Civil society organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DG	Democracy and governance
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DISH	Delivery of Improved Health Services project
DMPA	Depo-Provera
DSIP	Development Strategy and Investment Plan
EC	Electoral Commission
EG	Economic growth
EU	European Union
FG	Focus group
FGD	Focus group discussion
FHI 360	Family Health International
FP	Family planning
FTF/FtF	Feed the Future
GBV	Gender-based violence
GER	Gross enrollment ratio
GOU	Government of Uganda
HC	Health centers
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDP	Internally displaced people
IEC	Information, Education and Communication

ILO	International Labour Organization
INTRAH	International Training for Health
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRI	International Republican Institute
IUD	Intra-uterine device
IYF	International Youth Foundation
KI/KII	Key informant/Key informant interview
LEAD	Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MCP	Multiple concurrent partners
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MP	Member of Parliament
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Center
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDP	National Development Plan
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NER	Net enrollment ratio
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NURP	Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
NYC	National Youth Council
OPM	Office of Prime Minister
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PIASCY	Presidential AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth
PRDP	Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
PSF	Private Sector Foundation
PWD	Persons with disabilities
RDP	Recreation for Development and Peace
RH	Reproductive health
SACCO	Savings and credit cooperative organization
SIG	Special Interest Group
SME	Small and medium enterprise
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STD/STI	Sexually transmitted disease/infection
ST(F)	Straight Talk (Foundation)

SWAY	Survey of War Affected Youth
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force
UPE	Universal primary education
UPPET	Universal post-primary education and training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USE	Universal secondary education
USG	U.S. Government
Ush.	Ugandan shilling
UYAAS	Uganda Youth Anti-AIDS Association
UYDEL	Uganda Youth Development Link
UYONET	Uganda Youth Network
VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
VT	Vocational training
WDR	World Development Report
WFP	World Food Program
YAU	Youth Aid Uganda
YFS	Youth-friendly services
YOP	Youth Opportunities Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YouthMap, a program of the International Youth Foundation (IYF), is a four-year initiative supported by USAID to assess youth circumstances and support promising youth development programs and practices in eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Building on the **theoretical framework** introduced in the World Bank's 2007 *World Development Report: Development and the Next Generation*, these holistic assessments focus on **transitions from adolescence to adulthood in the areas of education, work, health, family formation, and citizenship.** Each assessment includes research questions tailored to specific youth circumstances and concerns in each country and a set of common research questions to allow cross-country comparisons and regional learning.

Uganda has the world's youngest population with over 78 percent of its population below the age of 30. With just under eight million youth aged 15-30, the country also has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although Uganda is making strides economically, it faces significant challenges in meeting its young people's needs today and their challenges tomorrow as its population continues to grow at a rate of 3.2 percent annually.

To assist the U.S. Government in directing youth program investments effectively in the face of these challenges, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) in partnership with FHI 360 and the Centre for Basic Research (CBR), a Ugandan research institute, launched *YouthMap Uganda* in April 2011. This holistic, cross-sectoral youth assessment covered urban, rural, and peri-urban areas in **twelve districts**: Butaleja, Gulu, Kabale, Kampala, Kamwenge, Kotido, Luwero, Masindi, Mbale, Nakapiripirit, Namutumba, and Nebbi.

The assessment focused on USAID/Uganda's strategic priority areas articulated in the Mission's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS): fostering the employability of and economic opportunities for youth, especially related to the Mission's new Feed the Future initiative; assessing and strengthening youth-focused interventions in the area of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) to address Uganda's extremely high population growth; and engaging youth constructively within civil society and the governance and political life of Uganda. Youth, population growth, and the emerging oil sector are considered "game-changing" issues in the CDCS.

The assessment addressed key questions identified by USAID:

- What are the opportunities, issues and challenges facing youth in Uganda as they cope with major life transitions?
- Who are the youth populations most at risk in Uganda, and what are their unique needs?
- How effective are existing programs in addressing young people's current needs and maximizing their future potential?

> ***An Assets-Based Approach***
> YouthMap recognizes youth as potential and actual problem-solvers rather than problems to-be-solved. Through YouthMap, IYF engages youth in assessing their current circumstances and charting their future directions.

To answer these questions, the *YouthMap* assessment team, including local and international researchers from IYF, FHI 360, and CBR as well as Ugandan youth, undertook the following:

- Conducted **97 focus group discussions** (FGDs) involving a total of **1,062 young people** between the ages of 15 and 30.
- Interviewed **182 key informants** from public, private, civil society, and donor organizations.
- Assessed **18 health facilities** for youth-friendly service components.
- Conducted a local market survey in selected districts, interviewing 25 local leaders to identify needed businesses, training, and skills.
- Examined existing socio-economic data, literature, policies, and program documentation.

> **About Uganda's youth:**
> - The youth literacy rate (ages 15 to 24) is relatively high at 87%.
> - They constitute 80% of the nation's unemployed.
> - 70% live on less than US$2 a day.

Summary Conclusions

This Executive Summary synthesizes information gathered in the *YouthMap Uganda* assessment with a particular focus on the first-hand observations of Ugandan youth. In those observations, youth focused on the many challenges they face. Yet they also expressed their dreams for meaningful lives, security, and a chance to contribute to their communities. It is with the hope of facilitating those dreams that IYF, FHI 360, and CBR present this assessment.

Education

"We need to provide education and necessary protection to protect youth from various issues. Otherwise, these vulnerability factors push them down the drain. With no knowledge, they have no information. When they are within school settings, it is easier to get information. The more they move away, they have fewer opportunities to access information. Education is key."

— Donor organization representative

Since the introduction of universal primary education (UPE) in 1997, the GOU has significantly improved primary access. Today 85-95 percent of villages in three of Uganda's four regions have access to primary schools. The northern region lags far behind with just over 50 percent primary access. Introduced in 2007, universal secondary education/post-primary education and training (USE/UPPET) has not yet achieved the same level of success, with more limited coverage of schools and the highest level of access at just over 30 percent in the central region. While USE has increased transition rates from primary to secondary school, the net enrollment ratio at the secondary level remains low. A large number of Ugandans still live too far away to access a USE/UPPET school; approximately 50 percent of students attend private secondary schools.

Uganda faces challenges in both the quality and relevance of formal education. With increased demand, UPE/USE/UPPET have led to high student/teacher ratios and overcrowded facilities. Stakeholders and youth alike questioned the practicality of the curriculum given high unemployment and labor market needs. The GOU is working to address these issues by: revising the secondary curriculum (scheduled for 2012); piloting an entrepreneurship curriculum in 100 schools; extending life skills training to secondary schools; constructing classrooms, schools, libraries, and laboratories with support from various partners; and making internships mandatory in tertiary institutions.

> Uganda's formal education system includes seven years of primary education, four years of ordinary secondary education, two years of advanced secondary education, and tertiary education. BTVET is provided by 133 public institutions, about 600 private training service providers, and 17 apprenticeship and enterprise-based training programs.

Given high youth unemployment even among university graduates and concerns about the practicality of the formal education curriculum, both Ugandan youth and their elders increasingly view vocational training as a viable option despite traditionally more negative attitudes toward vocational education. *YouthMap*'s review of recent literature suggests that BTVET programs have had positive economic and social impacts on youth, as indicated by improvements in incomes, savings, and social status in communities, as well as reductions in aggression among young men. Uganda's Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) efforts are however hampered by a lack of close coordination with the private sector and a lack of resources and equipment to provide the training most in demand by the labor market. Training consequently often focuses on low-cost skill training mismatched to current and emerging labor needs.

In FGDs, youth discussing education and training noted:

- Most youth leaving formal education do so unwillingly, with the cost of school fees and transportation the most commonly cited reason among all youth.
- Girls often drop out due to pregnancy, distance to schools, parents' attitudes toward girls' education, and inaccessibility of vocational training due to cost.
- Youth and their elders respect formal education; that respect colors young people's ambitions and frustrations.
- Although formal education is valued, high unemployment among university graduates and the lack of marketable training are causing youth to re-consider BTVET as a promising option.
- Youth currently or previously participating in BTVET value that training highly.

Employment

> *"If you think you will keep looking for jobs, you will never find it. If you create your own, then you can even end up employing other people to work for you."*
>
> *— YouthMap participant[1]*

Youth are disproportionately affected by unemployment in Uganda. The GOU recognizes the challenges associated with its rising population and youth unemployment rate and has put in place some policies and programs to address these challenges. However, the GOU has not yet developed comprehensive policies on youth employment. The revised National Youth Policy (2011-16) draft, being circulated in September 2011, calls for the development of a national youth employment policy and emphasizes employment creation through youth-led enterprise development. It also calls on the state and the private sector to play greater roles in creating internship and job opportunities for youth and protecting them against labor exploitation.

In meeting these challenges, Uganda has significant resources upon which to draw. Uganda has nearly half of the arable land in East Africa, and the agricultural sector makes up 73 percent of its economy. The oil industry is expected to be a "game-changer," generating over US$2 billion per year for the next 30 years starting in 2013. In this regard, the GOU intends to triple spending on energy projects in the 2011/12 budget and to develop supporting infrastructure. An oil executive in Kampala said, "There is a real effort by the government and us to ensure that [the oil sector] benefits local people and companies." Yet the oil industry is facing challenges in finding qualified graduates in the country, highlighting the need to invest more in training youth to occupy oil-related jobs and delivering training that meets industry standards.

> The U.S. Embassy in Uganda identified four economic drivers of growth with employment potential for youth: 1) $1.67 billion in foreign investment projects; 2) growing foreign investments in manufacturing, finance, agriculture, and mining; 3) construction of an oil refinery and distribution network, and hydroelectric power projects; and 4) construction of industrial parks in the largest population centers.

In FGDs, youth across all districts identified unemployment as their most pressing challenge and expressed frustration at the lack of employment opportunities. At the time of the assessment, 57 percent of *YouthMap* participants were not working, and 70 percent of those not working were looking for work. In identifying barriers to employment, youth cited:

- Nepotism and corruption in the formal sector;
- Lack of incentives for training and recruiting youth in the private sector;
- Exploitative internship practices and a shortage of meaningful internships and apprenticeships;
- Education that does not equip youth with practical skills for the workplace;
- Poverty and young people's inability to afford basic necessities such as clothing for work;

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1   *"YouthMap* participants" are those youth who participated in the 97 focus group discussions conducted as part of the assessment.

- Alcohol abuse (cited as a reason why youth engage in high-risk behaviors and cannot keep jobs);
- Lack of access to information about jobs and career guidance.

Sectors that appear promising for youth employment include the agriculture, ecotourism, telecommunications, ICT, financial, and oil sectors; however, youth need to have greater access to high quality, relevant, practical skills training. Because formal sector jobs are limited and highly competitive, the majority of Uganda's youth gravitate to the informal economy, where they fail to find stable employment. Among barriers to entrepreneurship, youth noted: lack of access to land and markets; lack of financial resources; lack of an enabling environment and youth-friendly policies; and high taxation and excessive bureaucratic procedures. Notwithstanding these challenges, youth demonstrated admirable adaptive capacities and interest in entrepreneurship. Of the youth working at the time of the study, one-third was self-employed. Over 60 percent said they would invest in small businesses if given access to resources. Over 90 percent of young men and women expressed interest in learning a new skill or trade.

Youth expressed strong interest in agriculture, and 41 percent of youth surveyed were already engaged in agricultural work. FGDs noted the following barriers to participation in agriculture: the education system's emphasis on theory over practice; lack of modern farming skills and equipment; limited access to land, finance, and markets; erratic weather patterns; inflation's impact on commodity prices; negative attitudes toward farming/"digging;" and inaccessibility or limitations of government programs. However, *YouthMap*'s local market survey revealed opportunities for youth to take a lead role in improving agricultural value chains.

Healthy Lifestyles & Family Formation

"Young people want to first get good jobs, settle, and develop, and then they can later think about marriage."
— YouthMap participant

The GOU, private sector, civil society, and community-based groups carry out a number of policies and programs to meet the SRH needs of Uganda's youth. However, these efforts are to some degree out-matched by a large, sexually-active youth population, a significant portion of whom are also involved in high-risk sexual activities that place their health and lives at risk. According to the 2006 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), over 62 percent of young women and almost half of young men have engaged in sex by age 18. Twenty-six percent of young women and 74 percent of young men engaged in high-risk sexual activity during the 12 months preceding the DHS. High-risk sexual behaviors include non-consensual, commercial, transactional, and intergenerational sex, as well as non- and extra-marital sex.

According to UNAIDS 2010 figures, HIV prevalence is 4.8% for females and 2.3% for males ages 15-24. HIV prevalence increases with age: 20-24 year olds have higher rates of HIV infection than 15-19 year olds.

These high-risk behaviors are compounded by: cultural attitudes that continue to limit access to certain services and information; a lack of youth-friendly health services; and persistent myths that limit young people's use of contraceptives. In particular, primary and secondary data indicate: growing concern and acceptance of transactional sex; the high occurrence (25 percent) of coerced first-time sex for female youth; transportation and supply costs as prohibitive factors in seeking SRH care; and the occurrence of unsafe abortion. (Since abortion is illegal and therefore under-reported in Uganda, its prevalence in FGDs is noteworthy.)

In spite of these challenges, youth across all groups expressed a common desire for more information about preventing STIs and HIV, preventing pregnancy, and family planning in order to meet their life ambitions. Several initiatives, such as the Straight Talk Foundation and other mass media entertainment programs, are reaching youth with relevant information, though youth require additional content to help them make informed decisions about their health and family formation. Meeting the informational and service needs of youth will require an increased emphasis on open counseling from various adult stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, health care workers) and greater dissemination and implementation of GOU policies.

Citizenship & Engagement

"The greatest achievement that has touched me a lot is reaching out to the kids and trying to encourage them, telling them that challenges come our way but they are not permanent."

— YouthMap participant

Ugandan youth aged 18 to 30 constitute 7.4 million or just over half of Uganda's registered voters. Based on sheer numbers, youth would seem to represent a political constituency to be reckoned with and a civic asset to be valued. Yet, as reported by *YouthMap* participants, these numbers do not necessarily translate into either influence or respect.

The majority of *YouthMap* participants expressed cynicism about national politics and government programs, citing: marginalization and manipulation of youth; corruption and vote-buying; nepotism, bribery, and financial impropriety in government programs. They described being used during election cycles with their concerns subsequently dismissed. They stated that young people's desperation made them easy targets for manipulation by politicians or others intent on using youth to destabilize communities. Many youth are both victims and perpetrators of political violence, and there are major obstacles to full youth political participation. Participants described their exclusion from the planning of government-supported, youth-focused programs and the subsequent shortcomings or failures of those programs.

Despite their cynicism, 93 percent of participants reported being registered to vote, and 61 percent of male and 58 percent of female youth reported engagement in civic activities. Youth repeatedly asserted their desire to participate politically and to develop the political influence to drive positive change in Uganda. Under the stewardship of the Uganda Youth Network, a National Youth Manifesto was developed in 2010 and presented to political parties as a set of achievable demands intended to make the voices of youth count in Uganda's political processes. The Manifesto was a positive step for youth engagement and a good articulation of collective youth issues and concerns.

The GOU acknowledges the importance of youth participation in political processes and has developed policies that address some of the issues reported. The National Parliament allots five seats for youth Members of Parliament, at least one of whom is female. There are already numerous civil society organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based and youth groups which support youth engagement and programming across Uganda. However, based on FGD comments, additional work must be done to ensure youth are productively engaged in Uganda's political and civic life.

Youth at Risk

"I dream of peace and security in Karamoja."

— YouthMap participant

The GOU's National Youth Policy identifies 22 priority target youth groups for special attention due to their vulnerability and living circumstances. They include: youth in conflict; youth with disabilities; youth in the informal sector; orphans, rural/female/unemployed youth; youth addicted to alcohol or drugs; and youth affected by HIV/AIDS. Indicators of the magnitude of Uganda's at-risk youth population include:

- 1.7 million are orphans and vulnerable children.
- 75 percent of the nation's approximately five million people with disabilities are youth, according to one NGO stakeholder.
- 73 percent of Uganda's prison population is between 18 and 30 (Uganda Prison Services, 2007) and due to overcrowding, youth are often imprisoned with adult criminals.
- Uganda has the highest alcohol abuse rate in the world, and youth interviewed often cited drug and alcohol abuse as contributing factors in low work productivity and vulnerability to violence and crime. 57 percent of youth aged 14 to 35 are involved in drug abuse (UHRC, 2009).

In northern Uganda and Karamoja, most of the youth may be regarded as at risk. Youth in the north, imperiled by 23 years of conflict, are the poorest in the country with the lowest rates of education, the worst access to schools, the lowest rates of wage employment, and one of the lowest rates of skills training. Youth in the northeastern Karamoja region are affected by armed conflict, prolonged drought, famine, limited access to education, and political and socioeconomic isolation from the rest of Uganda.

Nationally, the MGLSD's Department of Youth and Children Affairs is tasked with ensuring the care, protection, and empowerment of children and youth. Regionally, two ministries in the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of State for Northern Uganda Reconstruction, and a Ministry of State in charge of Karamoja Development strive to improve conditions in those regions. These government agencies and a variety of donors and NGOs work to address youth needs with admittedly mixed success.

In FGDs with youth at risk:

- Youth linked high-risk and illicit behaviors to unemployment, idleness, poverty, and lack of parental guidance.
- Disabled youth noted social stigma, denial of their land rights, and inaccessibility and ineffectiveness of government programs.
- Former abductees of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda stressed the impact of interrupted educations, lingering psychosocial impacts of the war, and inability to re-assimilate into their communities.
- Youth in Karamoja emphasized their desire for education and security but cited barriers that include: involvement in armed conflict related to cattle rustling, crime and violence due to poverty and lack of employment and education opportunities, food insecurity, and cultural attitudes and practices that exclude youth from decision-making processes.

Recurring Themes

Throughout the *YouthMap* assessment, certain themes recurred across all studied issues.

Poverty.   Poverty affects every facet of young people's daily lives. Between 54 percent and 66 percent of the country live on $1 per day; between 73 percent and 84 percent live on $2 per day. In FGDs, youth cited poverty as a barrier to civic involvement, education, entrepreneurial activity, and employment.

Gender-Based Inequities.   Gender-based disparities emerged throughout the assessment with data and FGD comments suggesting female youth are disproportionately affected by discrimination in land rights, employment and compensation, and access to SRH. Indicators of these disparities include: 70 percent of female youth aged 14-30 are engaged in unpaid family work; women account for only 37 percent of public sector employees; women-owned businesses are reportedly forced to pay significantly more bribes than male counterparts and were subject to more harassment. More than half of young women in Uganda (56 percent) have experienced physical violence, and a quarter reported that their first sexual encounter was forced. The GOU has affirmed its unequivocal commitment to achieving gender equality, setting forth a National Gender Policy and tasking the MGLSD as well as other ministries to promote gender equity. Though the road ahead to gender equity is a long one, the GOU commitment is a hopeful sign for the future.

Location-Based Disparities.   The impact of decades-long conflict in northern Uganda and low development in Karamoja has created significant disparities in the opportunities available to the regions' youth. While FGD comments did not emphasize urban/rural disparities, the data indicate certain disparities exist: 60 percent of the rural population lives in poverty compared to 42 percent in urban areas; urban youth aged 25-30 report more years of schooling than rural youth; and urban youth across all age groups work almost twice as much as rural youth (though the youth unemployment rate in urban Kampala is high).

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Overview of YouthMap

The Challenge

With 28 percent of the population ranging from 12 to 24 years of age, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is the most youthful region in the world. As highlighted in the 2007 *World Development Report: Development and the Next Generation* (WDR), youth are this continent's most abundant asset—representing enormous opportunities as well as challenges. Despite increased primary school enrollment and reduced health risks in some countries, school completion rates remain comparatively low and HIV/AIDS and other health risks remain highly prevalent. Additional challenges youth face in making the transition to adulthood include poor educational quality, lack of social safety nets including youth-friendly services, high rates of youth unemployment and underemployment, as well as issues such as child labor, rural to urban migration, widespread poverty, and conflict situations. African youth are not a homogenous group and circumstances vary widely by country, gender, age, educational level, ethnicity, and health status. Gaining a better understanding of youth populations and the specific challenges and opportunities they face will enable development efforts to make targeted investments that can effectively prepare Africa's youth to become healthy, productive, and engaged citizens.

The YouthMap Initiative

YouthMap is a four-year program designed to assess youth circumstances as well as support promising programs and practices in positive youth development in SSA. Through *YouthMap*, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) is conducting holistic assessments on the conditions of young people and the status of youth-serving infrastructure in up to eight countries in SSA. The program is supported by a US$10 million agreement with USAID/Washington and is being implemented by IYF, USAID Missions, and local partners in eight target countries. *YouthMap* is a project under IYF's broader Youth:Work program.[1]

YouthMap aims to capture a comprehensive picture of the lives of young people in each country, including how they spend their time, how they interact with each other and other segments of society, what services they utilize and what services they do not feel are accessible. It seeks to capture, as well, young people's hopes, aspirations, and challenges. Assessments survey both in- and out-of-school youth, out-of-work youth and youth at risk, and investigate opportunities and challenges related to youth development across sectors. Issues of interest include education, livelihoods, economic growth, agriculture, health, democracy and governance, technology, and local institutional capacity to respond to young people's needs.

YouthMap also supports a learning and exchange agenda in the region. In each country, IYF hosts a dissemination event to share the results of the assessments with key stakeholders. IYF will also host regional meetings that engage youth as active participants and feature promising practices and lessons learned. *YouthMap* assessments and learning publications will be disseminated through the Youth:Work platform as well as through IYF's Global Partner Network and other channels.

YouthMap Uganda

Objectives and Approach

Uganda has a rapidly growing youth population—a "game changing" trend—with enormous potential to bolster or undermine national objectives in the areas of governance, economic, and social development. This population has come under increased scrutiny as neighboring East African countries have experienced violence and crime, often involving youth, and as Uganda attracts international attention for its rapid population growth and significant "youth bulge." It is recognized that various youth cohorts are at risk, including those affected by HIV/AIDS, out-of-school and un/underemployed youth, and those affected by conflict in northern Uganda and in the Karamoja region.

In order to better inform and direct U.S. Government (USG) programming for youth in Uganda, USAID/ Uganda[2] launched a cross-sectoral youth assessment through *YouthMap* in April 2011. IYF and FHI 360 implemented the *YouthMap* assessment in partnership with the Centre for Basic Research (CBR), a Ugandan research institute, and a team of international and local researchers, including youth. Field research and data collection were conducted between April 4 and May

13, 2011. IYF has also coordinated *YouthMap* assessment activities with the related children/youth assessment activities of UNICEF and BRAC in Uganda and has aimed to capture synergies between these efforts.

The assessment builds upon the theoretical framework introduced in the World Bank's 2007 WDR, which posits that youth face major life transitions as they move from childhood dependence and adolescence to independent, adult decision-making in the areas of learning, starting productive working lives, adopting healthy lifestyles, forming families, and exercising citizenship. *YouthMap Uganda* adapted this life transition stage framework in response to the scope of work (SOW) received from USAID to assess both the "supply side" of services available to youth and the "demand side" of youth perspectives, needs, challenges, opportunities, and assets. *YouthMap* also investigated issues pertaining to youth at risk, including youth engagement in and victimization by conflict and violence, especially in Karamoja and in northern Uganda. See the *YouthMap Uganda* Framework in **Annex 1**.

A holistic approach to positive youth development underpins the *YouthMap* framework. To journey successfully through the core life transitions from adolescence to adulthood, youth need to develop the life and learning skills that will enable them to adapt to and actively participate in today's increasingly complex, interdependent national and global environments. To earn their livelihoods and flourish in the workplace, or as entrepreneurs, young people need to develop appropriate skills and competencies, including how to work with one another, how to think creatively, how to be active citizens, and how to adapt to changing circumstances. They need to know how to act in morally and ethically responsible ways. *YouthMap*'s cross-sectoral perspective on youth issues aims to capture this holistic nature of youth development. The assessment took an assets-based approach, exploring youth assets, opportunities, and aspirations, and investigated the role of youth as potential and actual "problem solvers," rather than looking exclusively at challenges and at youth as "problems to be solved."

Based on the SOW from USAID/Uganda (see **Annex 2**), the *YouthMap* assessment focused on the following research questions:

- What are the opportunities, issues and challenges facing youth in Uganda as they cope with major life transitions in education, going to work, health, forming families, and exercising citizenship?
- Who are the most vulnerable youth populations in Uganda, and what are their unique needs?
- How effectively have the Government of Uganda (GOU) and Uganda's development partners developed policies, structures, programs and partnerships to address the needs of youth, and to take advantage of their enormous potential?

The *YouthMap* assessment places a particular focus on USAID/Uganda's strategic priority areas as articulated in the Mission's draft Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), specifically:

- Fostering the employability of and economic opportunities for youth, especially in connection with the Mission's new Feed the Future (FtF) initiative;
- Assessing and strengthening youth-focused interventions in the area of reproductive health (RH), to address Uganda's extremely high population growth; and
- Engaging youth constructively within civil society and the governance and political life of Uganda.

In response to these strategic priority areas, the assessment aimed to take a broad snapshot of youth assets, opportunities, and challenges related to USAID/Uganda's three Development Objectives (DOs) and Special Objective (SpO) for the Karamoja region. The assessment investigated the potential of youth cohorts to act as "game-changers" who could significantly affect development objectives and impact. Key "game-changing" issues the assessment explored include fostering employment opportunities for youth, addressing population growth, and responding to youth engagement in and victimization by conflict and violence, especially in Karamoja.

Also in response to the SOW and based on assessment findings, the *YouthMap* assessment team has prepared a separate "Uganda CDCS Cross-Sector Youth Programming Options" document to describe the types of contributions USAID could make to support youth in Uganda and provide options for most appropriately targeting interventions and beneficiary populations in keeping with the strategic priorities of the CDCS.

Methodology and Implementation

The *YouthMap* assessment examined existing socio-economic data, documentation, and literature on youth in Uganda, complemented by new primary data collection from FGDs and key informant interviews. It included a review of USAID/Uganda's current and past programming, a survey of USAID implementing partners, key documents related to the Mission's 2011-2015 CDCS and Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) Strategy, and interviews with USAID staff and implementing partners. Key aspects of the assessment methodology are briefly summarized here; see **Annex 3** for a detailed overview of the *YouthMap* methodology and implementation process.

YouthMap field research ensured a broad geographic representation for the study, focusing on urban, rural, and peri-urban areas of twelve districts, listed below. Primary research and field work (see **Annex 3**) included: (1) Key Informant Interviews; (2) Youth FGDs and Youth Survey; (3) Health Facilities Assessment; (4) Local Market Survey; and (5) Online Survey of USAID Implementing Partners.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the key informant sample by region and sector (see **Annex 4** for complete information on key informants interviewed). **A total of 182 key informants were interviewed.**

Table 1: Key Informant Sample by Sector of Respondent and Region[3]

Region	District	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society	Education Institution	Donor
North and West Nile	Gulu	3	4	6	3	2
	Nebbi	4	5	3	1	0
Northeast / Karamoja	Kotido	3	3	4	1	1
	Nakapiripirit	3	3	3	1	1
Central and Kampala	Luwero	8	3	5	1	0
	Kampala	7	10	22	3	7
East and East Central	Butaleja	1	0	0	0	0
	Mbale	4	3	2	1	0
	Namutumba	4	2	3	1	0
South and Southwest	Masindi	5	5	3	2	0
	Kamwenge	6	3	3	2	0
	Kabale	5	3	3	1	0
	Totals	**53**	**44**	**57**	**17**	**11**

Table 2 shows a breakdown of the youth FGDs held in each research location, which included cohorts of in-school, out-of-school, employed/self-employed, and youth at risk (see **Annex 3**). **A total of 1,062 youth between the ages of 15 and 30 participated in FGDs** around the country. For detailed information on FGDs held, see **Annex 5**. Criteria used for identifying youth FGD participants (referred to as "*YouthMap* participants" in this report) are included as **Annex 6.** Descriptive statistics on youth interviewed in the FGDs is included as **Annex 8**.

Table 2: Summary of Focus Group Discussions Held

Region	District	Urban/Rural	Number of FGs	Total per location
North and West Nile	Gulu	Urban/Peri-urban	6	12
		Rural	6	
	Nebbi	Urban/Peri-urban	4	9
		Rural	5	
Northeast / Karamoja	Kotido	Urban/Peri-urban	3	5
		Rural	2	
	Nakapiripirit	Urban/Peri-urban	4	6
		Rural	2	
Central and Kampala	Luwero	Urban/Peri-urban	6	10
		Rural	4	
	Kampala	Urban/Peri-urban	12	12
		Rural	0	
East and East Central	Butaleja	Urban/Peri-urban	0	2
		Rural	2	
	Mbale	Urban/Peri-urban	5	8
		Rural	3	
	Namutumba	Urban/Peri-urban	5	8
		Rural	3	
West and Southwest	Masindi	Urban/Peri-urban	5	9
		Rural	4	
	Kamwenge	Urban/Peri-urban	4	8
		Rural	4	
	Kabale	Urban/Peri-urban	6	8
		Rural	2	
Total Number of Focus Groups				**97**

Table 3 is a summary of health facilities assessed by FHI 360 by region and district. See **Annex 3** for more detailed information on the sampling strategy and data collection methods.

Table 3: Summary of Health Facility Assessments

Region	District	Health Facility Assessed	No. of Facilities Assessed
North	Gulu	Gulu Youth Centre Lapayinat Health Center (HC) III	2
West Nile	Nebbi	Nebbi District Referral Hospital Packwach HC IV	2
West	Masindi	Masindi Hospital Pakanyi HC III	2
	Kamwenge	Bigodi HC III Mahyoro HC III	2
South Western	Kabale	AIDS Information Centre Mariestopes Health Centre	2
Central and Kamapala	Kampala	Foyer HC III- Namugongo Naguru teenage Information and Health Centre	2
	Luwero	Katikamu HC III Luwero/Kasana HC IV	2
East	Butaleja	Busolwe Hospital Butaleja HC III	2
	Namutumba	Namutumba HC III Nsiinze HC III	2
		Total Number Assessed	**18**

A local market survey was piloted as part of the assessment to provide USAID a greater understanding of the market needs and gaps within selected districts as well as business areas where youth may be able to fill those needs. Due to resource and time constraints, a full market assessment was not conducted; however, surveys conducted show the value of collecting such information, even when done on a limited budget. A sample of 25 sub-county III officials from eight districts were interviewed about missing businesses, needed businesses, and skills training needs in their areas. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the market assessment conducted and **Annex 10** presents an analysis of the local market survey.

Table 4: Summary of YouthMap Market Assessment

Region	District	No. of Officials Surveyed	Total per Location
North and West Nile	Gulu	5	10
	Nebbi	5	
Central and Kampala	Luwero	2	2
East and East Central	Mbale	2	4
	Namutumba	2	
West and Southwest	Kabale	2	9
	Kamwenge	2	
	Masindi	5	
	Total Number Surveyed		**25**

Finally, an online survey was also developed and distributed to all USAID implementing partners to capture their experiences, lessons learned, and recommendations on how to address youth issues in Uganda most effectively. A total of 19 implementing partners completed the survey. **Annex 11** includes an analysis of the survey results as well as additional information on USAID programs serving youth.

Youth Engagement

In addition to IYF's local and international research team members, IYF recruited youth to participate in the assessment in a meaningful way, and will continue to engage youth in the dissemination of assessment findings. Youth were core members of the assessment team and served as data collectors. Youth were paired with experienced team members, allowing them to build their capacity in assessment through practical experience.

In addition, a group of young people from varied backgrounds was engaged as members of a *YouthMap Uganda* Peer Review Committee. Peer reviewers served as a sounding board by bringing their perspective and knowledge of local conditions to bear on the conclusions drawn from the assessment. The primary objective of the committee was for young people themselves to review and evaluate the findings of the assessment. This process has enabled youth themselves to provide input into the situational analysis and recommendations presented to USAID and other stakeholders.

Youth will also play a critical role in disseminating findings. Recruiting dynamic youth to present findings within their communities will allow for broader and deeper dissemination. Increasing access to this knowledge builds trust and buy-in within communities, which will be important for subsequent youth programming around the country.

The remainder of this report is organized around the youth life transition themes listed below:

- Section 2: Education & Learning
- Section 3: Work & Employment
- Section 4: Healthy Lifestyles & Family Formation
- Section 5: Citizenship & Engagement
- Section 6: Youth at Risk

We also encourage readers to refer to **Annex 7** which contains analysis of national and regional survey data on youth in Uganda, including analysis of the 2010 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS).

SECTION 2: EDUCATION & LEARNING

This section presents an analysis of education and learning issues for youth in Uganda, examining both the supply of education and training available and youth demand for education and training. Supply-side issues include the provision of education services—formal, vocational, and non-formal—as well as linkages between the services provided and employment opportunities. Demand-side issues focus on youth aspirations and assessment of services available. Per the *YouthMap* framework, this section addresses:

SUPPLY-SIDE ISSUES	DEMAND-SIDE ISSUES
• Availability of formal and non-formal education opportunities and access vis-à-vis demand	• Youth aspirations and expectations related to education and learning
• Provision and content of life skills, both in and out of school	• Youth perception of value and relevance of education
• Effectiveness of existing structures and policies for business, technical, vocational and non-formal education (NFE)	• Reasons for school dropout or non-enrollment (e.g. financial, family, logistical)
• Linkages between education and employment	

Education Supply

Formal Education Supply

The Uganda formal education system includes seven years of primary education, four years of ordinary secondary education, two years of advanced secondary education, and tertiary education. Transition from one cycle to the next is conditional on successful completion of national exams, which also determine eligibility for scholarships.[4] This emphasis on exams is a key characteristic of formal education in Uganda and has resulted in reduced attention to parts of the curriculum not part of the national examination. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) is responsible for developing policies for all levels of education, including pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational. Primary education has been decentralized, and implementing the policies is the responsibility of districts. In addition, tertiary institutions, public and private, are autonomous.

The GOU has made **access to education** one of its priorities. As a result, it introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, and Universal Secondary Education/Universal Post-Primary education and training (USE/UPPET) in 2007. These two policies have created opportunities for young Ugandans to access primary school (UPE), secondary school (USE), and vocational training (UPPET) without paying fees. While UPE covers almost all government primary schools, USE does not cover all government secondary schools. Some private secondary schools that are accepted into USE receive government subsidies through a public-private partnership system based on the number of students enrolled. These policies overall have had great success in increasing access to education, especially at the primary level, although completion and transition rates remain low. Analysis of the 2010 UNHS showed a large increase in the supply of primary schooling, with over 80 percent of villages having a primary school in most regions; in the North, slightly more than half of villages had a primary school, up from 23 percent in 2006.[5] As a result, primary enrollment has increased significantly. In 2008, net enrollment ratios (NER) were above 90 percent for both girls and boys, though primary school completion stood at 47 percent (50 percent of boys versus 46 percent of girls).[6]

> "The need to monitor UPE and USE is a serious challenge in the country. This partly accounts for the failure to understand challenges in the implementation phase of most well-intentioned programs in their early stages.
>
> — *YouthMap peer review committee member*

While access to primary education is no longer a problem in the vast majority of the country, **transition to secondary school** is much harder. USE has helped increase transition rates from primary to secondary school from 51 percent in 2006 to 69 percent in 2007.[7] Nevertheless, the NER at secondary level was only 21 percent in 2008,[8] and a large number of Ugandans still live too far away from a USE/UPPET school.[9] In 2012, the first cohort of students will have access to advanced secondary education. While private schools only enroll about 10 percent of children in primary schools, the low supply of government secondary schools and the liberalization of education[10] have resulted in a continuous increase in the proportion of students attending private secondary schools, currently around half of total enrollment. In sum, GOU efforts to provide free education have not been entirely successful, with the transition to secondary school remaining a challenge for many primary school graduates.

The **relevance** of the secondary school curriculum is questioned by a range of stakeholders. In addition to traditional academic courses (e.g. science, mathematics, and languages), more practical courses are offered in the curriculum. For example, agriculture is offered in most secondary schools, and entrepreneurship is taught in the advanced secondary education cycle. However, while these courses are meant to provide students with practical skills, they often emphasize theory over practice. As youth reach A-level studies, in particular, agriculture and entrepreneurship courses should ideally provide knowledge and skills relevant to future employment. While these subjects are often popular, very few schools have gardens for students to practice what they learn about irrigation, for example. Similarly, entrepreneurship focuses on theory and regulations rather than the application of concepts.

Small initiatives led by the private sector and NGOs have showed that students can surpass expectations in both enthusiasm and creativity when given practical projects. A recent national competition of entrepreneur clubs supported by *Educate!* rewarded secondary school students for having developed and commercialized non-wood charcoal pellets and natural mosquito repellent and using profits in socially responsible ways. Similarly, a month-long competition between school-based clubs following the Ugandan stock exchange with virtual money generated great interest among both students and teachers, who enjoyed a learning exercise that was both practical and fun. Such initiatives remain at a small scale but should be promoted in developing an educational culture of associating theory and practice.

> " **There is little emphasis on practical skills acquisition in the school system, leading to the search for white collar jobs. The syllabus is uniform and does not cater for the economic and cultural specificities of the various regions of the country.**
>
> — *Private secondary school official, Mbale district*

It is important to note that the secondary school curriculum will be revised by the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) starting in 2012, with the rollout in the first year of secondary (S1) slated for 2014. Some broad aspects of the process have already been defined. The revision is expected to reduce the number of core subjects in the first four years, partly by merging related subjects and including more practical skills. In addition, the life skills and values curriculum being rolled out at primary will be extended to secondary schools. Life skills introduced in the new primary curriculum include a large range of skills such as building confidence, self-esteem, and managing emotions. The entrepreneurship curriculum recently revised in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) will be piloted in 100 schools in 2012 and evaluated.

In addition to curriculum reform, education reforms are needed to improve the **quality of secondary education**. The large increase in students following the implementation of USE/UPPET expectedly put the system under pressure, resulting in student-classroom ratios often much higher than 60,[11] the current maximum target. The GOU is working with partners, such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, to build new secondary schools and classrooms to accommodate the influx of students and reduce overcrowding. The MoES has also introduced two policies to reduce overcrowding in the medium-term: dividing students in one school into two shifts, and partnering with private schools to provide education to those eligible for free secondary education. These two policies, only implemented in a few hundred schools at present, are currently being evaluated through an impact evaluation by the MoES with World Bank funding.[12] Given the growing

number of primary school graduates, high population growth, and the slow pace of construction of new schools and class-rooms, it is likely that both of these policies will be necessary for years to come.

Other ongoing efforts to improve quality include building school libraries and laboratories and distributing more science textbooks and equipment (e.g., reagents for chemistry). A recent exercise led by the MoES in all USE/UPPET schools found that 49 percent of schools lacked libraries and that access to laboratories was sparse, with a ratio of 437 students for each lab.[13] One school official in Namutumba summarized some of the obstacles to better quality in her school and in the education system in general: *"Big class sizes in terms of student numbers, with many streams having between 70 to 100 students. Students are de-motivated with the thinking they cannot achieve much because there are no role models in the families and communities around them. [There is a lack of] discipline… High rates of absenteeism for day scholars. Poor reading culture. Inadequate infrastructure."*[14]

Access to tertiary institutions is still quite limited. There were 145 higher education (universities and non-university) institutions with a total enrollment of 155,000 students in 2007, which increased to 180,000 in 2009.[15] To expand access to tertiary education, the GOU has opened new institutions, such as the University in Busitema in 2007-08, and increased the number of scholarships offered. With the GOU providing approximately 4,000 scholarships per year for universities, the majority of those enrolled are either students paying full tuition in public universities or those attending private institutions.[16] The MoES is currently working with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) to develop a national loan program to provide loans for youth to pursue higher education.

One of the main challenges the formal education sector faces is linking the training provided to students with the **needs of the labor market**. As discussed in section III, there are very few jobs in the formal sector, and most Ugandans earn their living from agriculture and/or the informal sector. As a result, the link between the training provided to secondary and university students and the skills needed for the market is weak. The large majority of stakeholders interviewed, ranging from government officials to private sector representatives, observed that young people leaving secondary school, as well as those leaving tertiary institutions, were not well-prepared for the workplace. As one MoES official noted, *"**We currently train two graduates for every technician, when we should be training eight to ten technicians for every graduate.**"*[17]

> "It prepares us for the future, but to some extent it does not. It has a negative effect as well. It is training us for job-seeking. It trains us to be in offices, and yet the labor market cannot absorb us. We should have training for local skills.
>
> — *Young man in Mbale*
>
> How can you develop interpersonal skills there? Universities don't provide those skills; they come with the environment in the workplace.
>
> — *Private sector stakeholder in Kampala*

The MoES has recently made **internships** for students in tertiary institutions mandatory. This measure is intended to provide hands-on experience to students, who are considered not to have the work experience sought by employers. Indeed, young people without formal training have often spent more years working and are sometimes seen as having more practical skills than those with degrees, a frustration frequently expressed by young graduates without work. As a result of the new directive, education institutions and businesses are creating opportunities and developing systems for internships. Large corporations expressed strong interest in internships both to add to their workforce and learn about individuals' working capacity before hiring them. Often, smaller companies interviewed expressed challenges in mobilizing the human and financial resources necessary to make the most of an internship opportunity, both for the intern and the company. One financial services company in Kampala described a systematic and selective process to offer up to five internships per year to university students. Interns receive transport stipends and meals for the duration of their internship and, more importantly, are given responsibility for some work in the office and get exposed to senior decision making. These interns have largely been successful in getting hired by government institutions, large accounting firms, and some by the company itself.

However, this success story is not yet the norm. As a result, youth often complained that internships were unpaid and felt that companies were mostly exploiting the cheap or free labor.

Business, Technical, Vocational, and Non-Formal Education Supply

Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) has been defined in the **National Development Plan** (NDP) 2010-2015 as an overlapping three-tier system: craftsman-level training offered by technical schools and institutes, technician-level training offered by technical colleges, and graduate engineer-level training offered by universities. BTVET comprises 133 public institutions, about 600 private training service providers, and 17 apprenticeship and enterprise-based training programs.[18] A **recent sub-sector analysis** supported by the MoES and BTC Uganda provided five broad recommendations to improve BTVET in Uganda: (1) raise relevance of training, (2) increase quality of provision, (3) provide greater access and equity, (4) reform the organization and management of BTVET and (5) ensure financial sustainability and internal efficiency in use of resources.[19]

The same study noted that the actual share of workers with BTVET qualifications accounts for only six percent of the workforce and that fewer than 40 percent of companies regarded courses offered by BTVET institutions as relevant. The MoES is in the process of formulating a BTVET strategic plan for the next ten years to guide the use of resources.

The GOU transformed polytechnic institutes into universities in the 1990s to increase access to university, but has since recognized the importance of developing technical skills to serve the needs of the economy not met by university graduates. The MoES is currently implementing a **new BTVET policy** following the BTVET Act passed in Parliament in 2009. This policy includes the creation of new vocational centers and makes use of community polytechnics to provide training and certificates. The Act includes a levy on private companies to finance skills training, but this component of the policy has not yet been implemented as the mechanics of such a levy have not been worked out with private sector stakeholders. Such a levy could bring the capital required to improve the quality of vocational training institutions. While there is widespread appreciation for the new policy from government and private sector interviewees, questions remain on how to implement the policy. Discussions are taking place between stakeholders—MoES, private sector and donors—to that effect, especially in incentivizing young people to enroll in technical institutions and financing the sub-sector.

> **The BTVET policy is there, but there's a negative attitude from parents towards VT. They want their children to go to university. The government also has a bad attitude, as it sends children first to government universities, then to private universities, and then to VT. We were never told about VT and teachers told us you have to go to university if you want to achieve anything.**
>
> — *NGO representative in Kampala*

UPPET also provides an opportunity for primary school leavers to attend vocational training instead of traditional secondary schools without paying fees, though not all government vocational institutions are covered under UPPET. This has increased the number of vocational students in recent years: **BTVET enrollment** increased from 14,077 to 43,208—a 207 percent increase—from 2000 to 2007.[20] Even more impressive is the increase in girls' enrollment from a mere 1,463 in 2000 to 16,704 in 2008, going from 10 to 39 percent of total enrollment. While girls represent close to 40 percent of BTVET students overall, 2011 UPPET enrollment shows that girls represent only 19 percent of students benefiting—suggesting girls are more likely to have to pay to attend vocational institutions, or choose to attend institutions with fees. While vocational school enrollment has increased steadily, more needs to be done by different stakeholders to promote BTVET and to provide the skills in demand by the economy.

Vocational training institutions face similar challenges in providing quality education as schools. Many vocational trades, in particular, require large resources to purchase machinery and materials for regular training and practice. Since resources and equipment are often inadequate, courses meant to be practical tend to be too theoretical. As one young man in Mbale complained: *"The [teaching] strategies laid are more theoretical than practical. The technical colleges are no different because they*

have also degenerated into moneymaking. They do things more on paper than real practical things." GOU institutions often only have resources for initial investments in machines, but not for maintenance when they break down or replacement when they become obsolete. The large number of private or community training centers often do not even have those initial investment resources.

Despite these challenges, BTVET is a promising option for disadvantaged youth to acquire practical skills and make a living immediately after training. **Several recent BTVET studies demonstrated a positive impact of BTVET on youth employment,** though further study will be needed to assess the impact of BTVET in Uganda more fully.[21] A random-ized evaluation of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) project showed that participants who received vocational training and enterprise development support experience positive economic and social impacts, as indicated by improvements in earnings, profits, savings, and living standards and reduction in aggression among young men. Two other studies—LEAP and SKIPI Uganda—demonstrated that a very high percentage of BTVET graduates (77-90 percent) were able to find employment by using new skills and experienced an increase in income. The BTVET programs also improved their social status within their families and communities after finding work. In the SKIPI Uganda project, 70 percent of graduates became self-employed utilizing their new skills.

Due to the high unit costs involved in most skills training, a large number of vocational schools offer some of the same low-cost, gender-tracked skills: hairdressing/tailoring for women and carpentry for men. Institutions rarely link their courses to rigorous market studies that would indicate which skills the local private sectors demand,[22] and rarely develop or maintain relationships with the private sector. As a result, many tend to continue offering the same courses because of their own financial and other resource constraints, thus training students for already saturated markets. Based on key informant interviews, there is high demand for skilled technicians, and weak capacity to train them, which highlights a need to invest resources in building the capacity of BTVET centers to train skilled technicians. One notable exception seems to be the tourism/hospitality sector, where several institutions interviewed had developed links with hotels. Another example is the Uganda Petroleum Institute in Kigumba, which has begun training in engineering and technical skills needed in the oil industry. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), with support from DfID, is building the capacity of one vocational center to serve as a center of excellence in Gulu district—both for its own students and to improve quality of training in neighboring private centers. Such an initiative, mirroring the concept of clustering schools[23] in other contexts, could prove invaluable in raising the quality and relevance of training throughout the country, and should be carefully studied.

Non-formal education (NFE) exists to serve learners who have not completed the formal education system. The majority of learners in the non-formal system are dropouts and/or disadvantaged youth and children.[24] NFE opportunities available to youth include a wide range of vocational training and practical, hands-on skills, including agricultural, technical and busi-ness skills development, which take place outside Uganda's formal education and training system. Such services are usually characterized by short duration, higher flexibility, and a focus on practical content and delivery methods.[25] In addition, a number of civil society organizations (CSOs) offer functional literacy courses for adults, usually in local languages, where youth who have left school can learn skills and basic literacy and numeracy.

As with formal education, or perhaps even more so, internships, attachments, or apprenticeships are crucial to the NFE process. Most vocational schools include some form of internship toward the end of the course, but these are rarely seen as the most important part of the course by institutions. Students and graduates, on the other hand, greatly appreciate the opportunity to work in real-life conditions. One international NGO providing vocational training scholarships and apprenticeship placements for disadvantaged youth in the North found that those in apprenticeships had higher rates of employment or self-employment months after the training.[26] **This highlights both the value of practical education and the value placed by the private sector on skills over theory.** As the program manager explained: *"Those in apprentice-ship really perform better, because they are exposed to a real market from the start, they know how to deal with customers, they see when customers are satisfied, and it's not classroom teaching, and they learn how to price commodities and their labor."* While it is not possible to train large numbers of people solely through apprenticeships, training programs should emphasize time spent with private sector entrepreneurs, especially in the informal sector that employs the majority of young Ugandans.

Education Demand

Education Profile of YouthMap Participants

- Of those currently enrolled in education:
  - ° 10 percent are in primary school
  - ° 11 percent are in secondary school
  - ° 29 percent are in a vocational school
  - ° 49 percent are in university or other tertiary education
- Of those not currently enrolled:
  - ° 7 percent had never been to school
  - ° 41 percent had not studied further than primary school
  - ° 45 percent had attended some secondary school
  - ° 14 percent had enrolled in or completed a university program
- 33 percent had attended or completed a vocational training program

Formal Education Demand

As shown in the text box above, a relatively large number of *YouthMap* participants were still in primary school, despite being older than the prescribed age. Of those not enrolled, about half had not gone further than primary.

Despite challenges in formal education access and quality, there is a widespread perception among young men and women and their parents that passing national exams and attending university is the best road to achieve prosperity and personal development. Overall, formal schooling was viewed as a positive and relevant experience for economic reasons as well as social and moral benefits. In urban areas, especially in Kampala, a secondary or tertiary certificate is considered to be one of three important factors in securing employment, along with family connections and work experience. As a young woman in Kampala noted: *"If one has gone to school and completed, it's easier to get a job compared to those ones who haven't undergone formal school-ing. Nowadays people use English in work places, and it is learned through schooling."* Given the importance of government as a provider of formal employment and the education requirements for eligibility, formal schooling is a legitimate path to employment for many seeking work in the civil service. A young woman in Namutumba described it this way: *"Formal education promotes employment. Those who cannot go to university can become local council leaders."*

> "
> **If there is help in terms of fees, why not study through the formal channels? If help is limited, there is no need to study through the right channels, since they are expensive and take a lot of time compared to vocational studies.**
>
> — *Young man in Kampala*

Youth also considered formal schooling to be a valuable institution for the inculcation of life skills, including general health knowledge and responsible citizenship. The idea that school keeps youth "out of trouble" was echoed in many FGDs; a young man in Gulu explained: *"Formal schooling keeps you away from potential crimes—the time or duration you spend in school makes you not to have time for engaging in criminal activities. It also enlightens you about the consequences of engaging in bad acts."*

Most young people who have left the formal education system did not do so willingly. Indeed, the most common rea-son given for not continuing their schooling was a lack of funding. According to the recent UNHS data, schooling or

transport-related cost is the reason given by 49 percent of young people not currently in school.[27] Other reasons include having completed the desired level (11 percent), not willing to attend further, and sickness in the family (7 percent each). For girls, early marriage and pregnancy remains an important cause of dropout, reasons that were given in almost every FGD. Certain cultural practices (e.g. female genital mutilation) also pose challenges to the school completion and retention of girls.

These comments from *YouthMap* participants highlight some of the key issues that keep them out of school:

- *"Girls get pregnant from schools and they are not sent back to school after delivery—the community here does not support sending child mothers back to school, reason being they are already spoilt and can never contribute positively to the community."* —*Young woman in Gulu*
- *"We are facing a lot of problems of school fees, at times we get back to school late due to lack of school fees. At times we are sent back home from school because of lack of exam fees and you reach home, find parents do not have the money they want at school, then you miss exams and end up dropping out of school."* —*Young woman in Nebbi*

> **Even if you are a graduate there are no jobs. We see many people who have completed Makerere or Gulu University loitering on the streets here without jobs. Some boda bodas are even doing better than them, so it does not motivate us to study formal schooling…. To me it is very useless—it's only useful to those who have got some jobs after studying.**
>
> — *Young man in Gulu*

While formal education was seen as the best course to follow in general, high unemployment among graduates has led young people to question the resources and years invested in formal schooling. Many youth expressed frustration at having spent many years in the formal schooling system, or supported siblings to do so, without direct economic benefit. This was expressed well by an unemployed graduate in Nebbi: *"When you look at the time you have spent in school, which is almost more that 15 years from primary one to a degree course, someone who has not gone to school can utilize those 15 years very well and become better off than you in everything, instead of studying history and chemistry. I rather take my child to a vocational training institute; the school fees spent in studying up to university can be very good capital for children who have gone to a vocational institute."*

Students also highlighted a widespread lack of career guidance and access to information about job opportunities. This, combined with lack of marketable skills, makes it impossible for most graduates to acquire gainful jobs. One youth participant said, *"In general, there's a gap between the skills learned at university and the market. I have a bachelor degree in economics but couldn't find work. The skills were not practical, it was ambiguous. There is no link between the private sector and the universities."* Youth expressed interest in career guidance that could help them break into the labor market.

Business, Technical, Vocational, and Non-Formal Education Demand

At the national level, 11 percent of youth aged 15-17 declare having received some skills training, increasing to 19 percent of those aged 18-24 and to 28 percent of those aged 25-30 (2010 UNHS).[28] In this nationally representative survey, skills include welding, carpentry, construction, masonry, electricity, plumbing, automotive/transport repair, computer repair, phone repair, sewing/tailoring/textiles, crafts/basket weaving, catering/food service, laundry/dry cleaning, beautician/hair/nails, health care/traditional medicine, massage/ reflexology, agriculture/land management/fishery, and bookkeeping/accounting.

In FGDs, appreciation for vocational training appeared to vary greatly depending on the current activities of the youth interviewed. Those still enrolled in the formal system, as discussed above, usually aspired to continue their education up to the university level. In contrast, young people who had completed their studies or dropped out earlier than planned saw great value in technical and vocational skills training. As most youth interviewed—and most youth in the country—are no longer enrolled in the formal system, the majority of *YouthMap* participants expressed interest in vocational training and wanted to gain greater access to BTVET opportunities despite traditionally more negative attitudes from parents and

communities toward BTVET. About one third of *YouthMap* participants either attended or completed a vocational training program. Of these youth, 61 percent reported that they are currently working; among youth who had never enrolled in vocational training, 48 percent were currently working –suggesting that BTVET had a positive effect on employment among *YouthMap* participants surveyed.

In fact, **92 percent of young men and 91 percent of young women interviewed expressed interest in learning a new skill or trade.** Two of the most frequent reasons cited in FGDs for positively regarding vocational training were: (1) the practical aspect of the courses taught, and (2) the short-term nature of most courses, which leads to faster returns on smaller time and financial investments. Of the skills they wished to learn: 18 percent said they were interested in driving, 17 percent in computers, 13 percent in tailoring, 9 percent in mechanics, 4 percent in construction, 9 percent in nursing, and 29 percent in other areas such as catering and carpentry.

Among youth without formal degrees or certificates, the vocational courses most often sought included carpentry and mechanics for young men, and tailoring, hospitality, and hairdressing for women. Other courses of interest were computer skills, building / construction skills, and cement work. While schools often divide students by gender, most schools visited showed that these barriers can be crossed, for example, with young women studying mechanics or young men learning tailoring. Youth who had already completed secondary schooling most often indicated interest in professional training in computers, nursing, or engineering.

> **Vocational schools help us so much – you may be dull in class or performing poorly in some subjects, but you may be successful in vocational because of the skills.**
>
> — *Young woman in Masindi*
>
> **Formal schooling only equips you with knowledge, but you need to mix it with vocational skills training so that you can earn a living faster and in a better way.**
>
> — *Young man in Gulu*

Currently enrolled vocational training students, or those having completed skills training, felt their training was valuable. As one young woman learning catering in Kampala said: *"Even if I don't get a job, I will go out and make cakes that I can sell and get money for my own values."* However, some youth complained about the cost and quality of training, for similar reasons as their peers in formal education. Overcrowding was not mentioned as often as in formal school settings, but lack of sufficient, appropriate, or up-to-date equipment was frequently mentioned. Another problem often expressed by young people with vocational skills was a lack of preparation for the informal economy and a difficult transition into self-employment:

- *"The only challenge those who join vocational schools face is that, they complete their studies and come out without necessary tools required to start their own jobs. My sister was a bit lucky and she was given basic tools for catering, she started her own hotel and she is doing well."* —Young woman in Nebbi
- *"The only reason for them taking long to start work is that, they complete the trainings and fail to get money to buy tools, they graduate from training centers without tools, those tools are very expensive."* —Young woman in Gulu

Despite the great interest expressed by youth in learning practical skills, vocational training almost always amounts to a second choice, far behind formal schooling. While the perception of BTVET by education sector stakeholders may be changing, those interviewed asserted that the broader community, especially parents, still viewed vocational training in an overwhelmingly negative light. A young man in Gulu summed it up this way: *"Within the village here, if you study up to primary seven and you were supposed to join secondary level, and you decide to join a vocational training institute, people always treat you as somebody who does not have the brain to continue with your studies."* Another echoed this view: *"Those who join vocational training centers are sometimes considered by the community members as people who can't continue with their studies—those whose brains are weak."*

As a result, vocational and technical education and training is frequently seen as a short-term deviation from the "normal" path. Indeed, a skill learned can provide income that will enable fees to be paid to rejoin the formal system. One young man in Nakapiripirit explained that *"Being able to be in a vocation school is an achievement. It is a step to achieving my ambition of*

being an engineer." One NGO providing skills training opportunities to a large number of youth in the North confirmed that several beneficiaries use money earned through their work to enroll in formal schooling.

Currently, most young Ugandans attending vocational training do so after failing to advance in the formal education system. However, with better career guidance provided at primary and lower secondary levels, BTVET could become a first choice for more students. Indeed, many young people find the traditional education system too long, and many more have seen their siblings or friends fail to find work after university. Vocational and practical skills have proved to help young people make better transitions to productive working lives.

Key Conclusions

- Uganda has achieved great success in increasing access to primary education throughout the country, reaching universal access in most regions. Due to pressure on the system, quality at the primary level has suffered, leading to low rates of completion and transition to secondary school.
- UPPET has started to provide a chance for all young people to access secondary education and training. With continued progress toward the goal of universal primary completion combined with demographic pressure on the system, secondary schooling risks facing similar challenges as the primary system in the near future. Upcoming curriculum reform at the secondary level is an important opportunity to provide practical training and skills relevant to the needs of the mostly informal and agricultural Ugandan economy.
- Access to tertiary institutions is still limited to a small fraction of the population, and university graduates remain largely unemployed, under-employed or self-employed as they leave their institutions. Better links between the private sector and universities are needed.
- BTVET, recently recognized as a crucial component of the education sector, can provide alternatives to the formal education sector. Popular notions that BTVET is second-best to formal education remain prevalent in the country, slowing the necessary transition toward equipping young people with practical skills.
- Young people in general would like to complete secondary school and attend tertiary institutions. Given the length of formal schooling, and the growing number of under-employed graduates, a growing number of youth recognize the benefits of vocational skills training.

SECTION 3: WORK & EMPLOYMENT

This section provides analysis of youth employment in Uganda, examining the "supply" of employment opportunities being created in the labor market and the "demand" for employment on the part of youth.[29] Supply-side analysis includes an overview of labor market trends, key government policies, formal and informal employment opportunities, recruitment practices, and employers' perceptions of youth. Demand-side analysis provides a summary of assessment findings from youth FGDs regarding their interests, aspirations, and challenges related to employment. Per the *YouthMap* SOW, this section addresses:

SUPPLY-SIDE ISSUES	DEMAND-SIDE ISSUES
• Existence of formal, informal sector employment for youth	• Youth opportunities and challenges in finding jobs
• Sectoral opportunities, labor market trends, potential for greater youth employment	• Level of optimism / frustration related to employment
• Existence of vocational, employability, youth livelihood and micro-finance programs, as well as service delivery capacity	• Preparation of youth for work through formal or non-formal education and training
• Ability of private sector to absorb graduates	• What jobs are youth interested in?
	• What jobs are youth qualified / unqualified for?

Employment "Supply"

An Overview of Youth Employment and GOU Labor Policies

Uganda has the world's youngest population and one of the highest youth unemployment rates in SSA: around 18 percent of youth ages 15-24, and 16 percent of youth ages 18-30.[30,31] Youth are disproportionately affected by high un- and under-employment, making up over 80 percent of the total unemployed (72 percent in urban and 83 percent in rural areas).[32] Unemployment is high even among youth with tertiary education, with 36 percent of university graduates unemployed.[33] The youth unemployment rate is now estimated at 32.2 percent in Kampala.[34] Among gender differences, the unemployment rate for females (ages 18-24) was recorded at 27 percent compared to 9 percent for males in the same age group in 2009.[35]

The GOU acknowledges that half of economically-active youth are not engaging in income-generating activities (paid or self-employment).[36] Analysis of the 2010 UNHS data showed that about 20 percent of youth are either doing domestic work at home or are idle across the country.[37] With a population growth rate of 3.2 percent and a "youth bulge" that has not yet reached its peak, finding gainful employment is expected to continue to be a major challenge for Ugandan youth in the years ahead.[38] Readers are encouraged to refer to **Annex 7** for analysis of 2010 UNHS data on youth employment.

The GOU's NDP[39] identifies eight primary growth sectors: agriculture, tourism, mining, forestry, manufacturing, oil and gas, information and communications technology (ICT), and construction. The 2011 **National Employment Plan** (NEP) prioritizes: 1) matching supply to demand for skills; 2) helping workers and enterprises adjust to change; and 3) delivering skills in demand.[40] The GOU is currently revising the National Youth Policy, as described below in Section 5. Based on an interview with the MGLSD, it is expected that employment creation and use of ICT to increase productivity will be priorities; other youth-related focus areas such as youth empowerment, education, and skills training are anticipated to remain the same. Once finalized, these policies are anticipated to provide a more comprehensive approach to the youth employment challenge in Uganda.

The GOU has identified the agricultural sector as the mainstay for both skilled and unskilled labor given Uganda's natural resource endowment of nearly half of the arable land in East Africa.[41] The MAAIF's Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan intends to create an improved environment for youth employment but does not articulate a strategy to create jobs directly for youth in agriculture, noting that youth involvement in agriculture is "quite limited," partly

due to issues of access to and control over productive resources (land and capital).[42] In order to increase access to finance, the GOU is promoting savings and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs), with over 1,000 SACCOs as members across 82 districts.[43] The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) is a district-driven program put in place to enhance rural livelihoods by increasing agricultural productivity. NAADS' new guidelines target youth, women, and persons with disabilities as special interest groups.[44]

Formal Sector Employment Opportunities

Despite Uganda's sustained economic growth over the past decade, formal employment opportunities remain limited. The 2010 UNHS showed that "employment for wage," used as the best measure of whether formally employed, is low for youth aged 15 to 17 at less than ten percent (though most of them are still in school).[45] It is higher for older cohorts: 21 percent for those aged 18-24 and 28 percent for those aged 25-30, meaning older youth are more likely to be formally employed. However, this means that over 70 percent of youth (18 to 30) are still not formally employed. The rate of employment for wage is higher in urban areas, and varies across regions with the highest seen in the central region. (See **Annex 7**.)

Youth reported facing particular challenges in securing formal employment, including lack of experience and skills, perceived nepotism, and corruption, in competing for the few available jobs in the formal sector. One NGO stakeholder explained, *"Everything has been commercialized in form of bribing. You must bribe to get a well-paying job."* Youth also voiced frustration about the growing number of foreign employees (e.g., in hotels and industries) that are displacing Ugandans from jobs. Young women face even greater constraints in joining the labor force compared to young men due to factors including low education and skills, cultural norms, discrimination, and limited access to resources, leading to vicious cycles of poverty from one generation to the next.[46] Based on FGDs, the common perception is that female youth who have found gainful employment are likely paid less than their male counterparts.

> **There is a real effort by the government and us to ensure that it benefits local people and companies. For the industry to reach the levels we plan in two years, there will be 20,000 jobs created, directly and indirectly. Of those, about 3,000 to 4,000 will be technicians. This includes mechanical—plumbing and welding, electrical, production and instrument technicians. Right now we don't have them.**
>
> — *Oil company executive in Kampala*

According to the **2010 Business Census** by UBOS, Uganda has more than 457,000 private businesses (200 percent increment in the last decade), including 278,700 in trade, 63,980 in hotels and restaurants, and 9,140 in agriculture. The Census also reported that the number of jobs in private businesses increased by 136 percent to just over one million in the last ten years; however, many businesses do not survive beyond ten years.[47] Overall, private sector employment has been concentrated in agriculture and fishing (69.4 percent), manufacturing (5.6 percent), trade (8.9 percent), and hotels and restaurants (2 percent), according to the NEP. Sectors that provide employment to the remaining 9.8 percent of the working population include the mining, telecommunications, and financial sectors.

Based on the literature review and key informant interviews, **sectors that appear promising for youth employment include the agriculture, ecotourism, telecommunications, ICT, financial, and oil sectors.**[48] The U.S. Embassy in Uganda has identified several economic drivers of growth: 1) $1.67 billion in foreign investment projects; 2) growing foreign investments in manufacturing, finance, agriculture, and mining;[49] 3) construction of an oil refinery and distribution network, and hydroelectric power projects; and 4) construction of industrial parks in Uganda's largest population centers.[50]

With GOU spending on oil anticipated to triple in 2011/12,[51] the "game-changing" **oil sector** shows potential to create jobs for youth given the projections that it will generate over US$2 billion per year starting in 2013 for the next 30 years.[52] The NEP anticipates new job opportunities for science and engineering professionals and technicians in petroleum exploration and production.[53] An oil executive interviewed explained that while it can be easy to find low-skilled employees, it is very difficult to fill engineer and technician positions because of the lack of qualified graduates in the country; as a result, oil companies may seek foreign employees or Ugandans trained abroad and provide additional on-the-job training. Several

private sector stakeholders said that Ugandan technical institutions are not prepared to train youth for oil-related jobs and deliver the level of quality that meets industry standards. Those interviewed perceived this to be a major challenge and expressed willingness to invest in skills training for youth. Even though direct formal jobs in the oil sector are not anticipated to be many, the industry appears promising for indirect employment opportunities through the value chain and the creation of small businesses to provide goods and services to the industry, according to key informants interviewed.

The majority of the population continues to work in **agriculture**, which is estimated to employ over 80 percent of the total population directly or indirectly.[54] Nearly 60 percent of agriculture workers in Uganda are youth (compared to 40 percent in Kenya and Ghana).[55] As noted in the NEP, there is a need to transform the sector from subsistence to market-oriented agriculture for employment creation, with an emphasis on value addition. Given growing demand for nature-based tourism, the **ecotourism and hospitality sectors** present promising opportunities for youth in rural areas to provide services to eco-tourists or operate as entrepreneurs related to niche market opportunities.[56]

Private sector stakeholders interviewed felt that the **telecommunications and financial sectors** will likely grow at a slower pace than other growth sectors but will still generate some opportunities mainly for youth with tertiary education. Given the level of foreign aid, both formal employment and volunteer opportunities in the **NGO sector** will remain a source of employment for youth. Formal jobs are provided through the **public sector** (civil servants, teachers, army, or police) or government initiatives, but these jobs are highly competitive and meant mostly for university graduates. One government official in Namutumba said, *"Most of the youth employed in the formal sector are in government service. Most of teachers especially in primary schools are youth from teacher training colleges."* Yet, the public sector is no longer the most significant source of recorded wage employment in Uganda, as stated in the NEP. Employment opportunities in the public sector have been more limited for women, who account for 37 percent of public sector employees.[57]

> **Financial services will grow—both banking and microfinance. There is a gap in accounting services. There are a few very big firms but there needs to be a larger number of small accountants and bookkeepers.**
>
> — *Stakeholder,*
> *Financial consulting firm in Kampala*

> **University graduates work as technical specialists and junior managers in our company.**
>
> — *Private sector employer,*
> *Telecommunications, Kampala*

> **Young people are fundamental in our industry, they just need some more training to get to the level we need.**
>
> — *Private sector employer, Ecotourism, Kabale*

Private Sector Recruitment and Internships

Employers interviewed said that they advertise new openings through media (newspapers and radio) or post them in public places. One telecommunications employer said, *"We recruit both internally and externally. When there is a new job opportunity, we first advertise it internally. If we can't find an internal candidate, we then use media, newspaper, and website to advertise."* However, the main challenge for youth reported is that most jobs require applicants to have considerable work experience and often to be over 30 years old—major barriers to younger entrants.

Based on interviews with educational institutions, it appears that most do not work with employers for internships and placement of youth even though many have integrated internships into training programs (both formal and non-formal). Even those who have intentions to do so said they are constrained by lack of systems and financial means.

Employers recognize the importance of gaining practical experience through internships or apprenticeships. Two general types of internships were described: specialized internships for university graduates (often paid) and general internships for in-school youth (usually unpaid). Some employers and other stakeholders, as well as youth, felt that employers generally offer internships to get "free labor." One private sector stakeholder in Kampala explained: *"Some youth have been exploited*

through these internships by companies that do not provide basic transport or food. Some are given little attention and that's not how internships should work." Despite these issues, internships remain a primary avenue through which youth acquire practical skills, work experience, and build networks.

Employers' Perception of Youth and Skills Mismatches

Table 5 provides a summary of employers' views of Ugandan youth, based on key informant interviews. Overall, youth are characterized by their potential to become productive and successful adults, with many positive qualities. However, stakeholders interviewed overwhelmingly felt that graduates (both university and other graduates) are not prepared to work. They are as also perceived to be impatient, unreliable, and driven by the desire to get white collar jobs, make money quickly, and live beyond their means.

Table 5: Employers' Perception of Youth

Positive	Negative
• More productive and flexible than adults • Less expensive to hire compared to adults • Ambitious, motivated—work with a lot of hope • Deliver quality work with enough guidance • Strong business acumen • Energetic, creative and able to adjust quickly to new challenges • Dynamic, fearless and willing to take risks • Loyal and focused (less family responsibilities) • Good listeners, eager and quick to learn • Friendly, good attitude and strong interpersonal skills • Easy to mobilize, team spirit • Willing to do anything to gain experience • Vocal and passionate about youth issues • Less prone to corruption • Have potential to give back to community	• Need more practical knowledge, skills and work experience • Need more soft skills (problem solving, work ethic, critical/creative thinking) • Need more financial management skills because of tendency to waste money • Lack of patience and easily frustrated • Demanding (higher salaries) • Desire to make quick money (sometimes resulting in petty theft) and live extravagantly • Not always committed or responsible • Highly mobile, leading to high turnover • Undisciplined, stubborn and provocative • Low self-respect and confidence • Prone to alcohol and drug abuse

In terms of skills mismatches, employers interviewed confirmed that there is a huge gap between what students are taught in the formal education system and what the economy needs. High youth unemployment is closely linked to the lack of skilled human resources, which arises from weaknesses in education and training.[58] In Mbale, one hospitality sector employer explained that they need individuals who have a set of skills such as plumbing, refrigeration, and electrical/mechanical engineering, but schools are not producing such graduates with practical skills. Employers interviewed said they tend to hire graduates based on their academic track records but do not expect them to have the skills necessary. One telecommunications sector employer explained, *"Graduates have no technical skills prior to joining our company and they need further training. We have staff development programs and we train them on the job."*

Informal Sector and Enterprise Development Opportunities

The majority of Uganda's youth end up in the informal economy, where they often fail to find stable employment. The informal sector accounts for the largest share of the Ugandan labor outside agriculture (67 percent of total employment outside agriculture).[59] In northern Uganda, the majority of work performed by youth is in the form of *leje leje* (small jobs) in the informal sector.[60] Many, particularly female youth, engage in brewing local alcohol as a main economic activity; alcohol produced in the informal sector makes up about 80 percent of alcohol consumed in Uganda.[61] Across the country, 70 percent of female youth, aged 14 to 30, engage in unpaid family work.[62] Riding *boda bodas* is one of the most commonly cited youth occupations, but many struggle to pay rental costs (Ush.10,000 per day) because of rising fuel costs. For youth seeking to build their skills and job prospects, the informal sector provides limited opportunities for skills training; some youth try to gain skills in agriculture or through apprenticeships with small businesses locally.[63]

Key informants interviewed observed that Uganda presents promising opportunities for enterprise development, including in agriculture. Yet the availability of entrepreneurship programs and support services offered currently is negligible compared to the number of youth seeking self-employment opportunities. Faced with a set of challenges, many youth in the

informal sector become necessity-based micro-entrepreneurs and find themselves unable to grow their ventures into viable enterprises.[64] A 2006 USAID case study highlighted factors that affect youth access to microfinance services in Uganda, which include: 1) laws prohibiting entrepreneurs younger than 18 to apply for loans; 2) unwillingness of existing groups to include youth on the basis that they are not ready; 3) youth are not yet seen as a distinct market.[65]

SMEs are recognized as an engine of growth as they provide a prime source of new jobs and income generation across all sectors—from resource-based industries to manufacturing and services.[66] Yet Uganda ranks low on the ease of doing business (122nd out of 183 countries), according to the *Doing Business 2011 Report*; it takes 25 days for an entrepreneur to start a business in Uganda.[67] High costs of entry discourage entrepreneurship and reduce productivity and growth. The *Doing Business* report notes that a female entrepreneur in Uganda made 32 payments that cut across 16 tax regimes, accounting for 36 percent of her profit in taxes, and spent about 20 days (161 hours) in one year on compliance.[68] The report also suggests that female-owned businesses are forced to pay more bribes and are at greater risk of harassment than male-owned enterprises when dealing with government offices.

YouthMap Market Survey

In order to better understand potential ways forward to address youth employment needs around the country, the *YouthMap* assessment included a limited market survey to investigate the existence or nonexistence of local market economies in Uganda. Given the limited scope of the survey piloted (see **Annex 10**), the results cannot be interpreted as definitive, yet they provide some broad insights into the state of local economies and potential opportunities for young entrepreneurs, and point to the value of conducting low cost/high efficiency full market assessments in the future.

> "
>
> **Agro-processing is growing. There is high demand, and we can't meet 50 percent of it, so food and fruit processing will grow.**
>
> — *Private sector stakeholder in Kampala*
>
> **There is also an opportunity in rural areas with the production sector beyond just basic processing. For example, bananas can be processed into many products. This would also keep young people in the rural areas if there are options.**
>
> — *A donor in Kampala, sharing his opinion on rural employment generation*

Though agriculture was reported to be the most important activity for the majority of people across Uganda, leaders in most of the districts surveyed reported a lack of important agriculture inputs because 1) people cannot afford them; 2) shops do not exist; or 3) people are ineligible or unable to get sufficient inputs from GOU programs such as NAADS. Without access to inputs, agriculture cannot be optimized, and people will not be able to maximize production. Local leaders also identified what they thought were "missing" skills and market gaps, a number of which youth could fill, such as carpentry, metal work, food and produce trading. Reasons cited as to why these businesses were "missing" included chronic shortage of electricity and lack of sufficient funding, knowledge, equipment, and technology. Another issue highlighted was limited access to training facilities in most districts, meaning youth would need to travel far in order to obtain expertise—increasing the cost of training and thus decreasing the likelihood they will seek such opportunities.

(continued)

Employment "Demand" on the Part of Youth

Youth Voices: Current Occupations and Barriers Identified

Nearly 60 percent of youth interviewed were not working at the time of this assessment, and 70 percent of those not working were looking for work. Below is an overview of the employment profile of youth focus group participants.

Employment Profile of Youth Focus Group Participants

- Of youth FGD participants, 57 percent were not engaged in any economic activity at the time of this study and 70 percent of those not engaging in any economic activity were looking for work
- Percentage of youth who were looking for work by age:
  - 48 percent for youth between 15-17 years
  - 67 percent for youth between 18-24 years
  - 86 percent for youth between 25-30 years
- Among the 43 percent who were working:*
  - 33 percent said they were self-employed
  - 18 percent reported working in the formal sector
  - 27 percent said they were working in the informal sector
  - 41 percent said they were engaging in agriculture
- Percentage of youth reported to have been working for more than six months:
  - 60 percent for youth in the formal sector and 73 percent for youth in the informal sector
  - 80 percent for self-employed youth and 85 percent for youth in agriculture

Note: Youth who were working could choose more than one option: agriculture, formal, informal or self-employment.

By gender	Engaged in any economic activity?	
	Yes	No
Total Sample	43%	57%
Male	60%	40%
Female	53%	47%
By age	**Yes**	**No**
15-17	40%	60%
18-24	51%	49%
25-30	77%	23%

Of those who are engaging in an economic activity…				
Gender	Formal	Informal	Self-employed	Agriculture
Male	21%	33%	36%	44%
Female	15%	19%	30%	37%
Total Sample	18%	27%	33%	41%

Constrained by a lack of marketable skills and lack of formal sector jobs, most youth said they engage in informal sector work or agriculture-related work. Some youth acknowledged engaging in illegal activities to earn a livelihood.[69] *YouthMap* participants were asked how they usually make money; their responses are summarized in the table below.

Table 6: Commonly Cited Occupations of Youth Interviewed

Formal	Informal	Agriculture or Seasonal	Illegal
• Ecotourism and hospitality (tour guides, interpreters, hotel staff) • Entry level positions with agriculture-focused companies • Telecommunications (sales and marketing, engineers, technicians or support staff such as HR or legal) • Banking (tellers and entry-level managers) • Mining • NGO-sector jobs incl. field coordinators, office assistants and community mobilizers	• Petty traders selling food, groceries, secondhand clothing, telephone cards • *Boda boda* drivers • Casual laborers (incl. off-loaders or working on underground cables) • Construction workers • Domestic workers • Security personnel • Self-employed or working for small-scale businesses in areas of welding, motorcycle repair, bricklaying or metal fabrication, small cinemas • Political mobilizers or polling assistants • Mediators/brokers • Brewing alcohol (over 18 with license) • Hairdressing or tailoring • Political campaigning or mobilizing	• Horticulture (vegetables and fruits such as passion fruit and pineapple) • Crop farmers (maize, coffee) • Sugar cane cutters or growers • Poultry (chickens and turkeys) • Piggery • Livestock farming and trading	• Prostitution • Gambling • Brewing/selling alcohol (if under 18 or without a license) • Selling drugs • Commercial livestock raiding • Organized criminal activities

In terms of **barriers** to getting a job, youth interviewed felt there is widespread nepotism and corruption[70] in the formal sector. A majority of youth interviewed were highly pessimistic and less than hopeful about their chances to be recruited for formal sector jobs. One young man in Masindi shared his experience: *"I was looking for a job of driving in Mabira forest, and they gave me a job but they wanted me to pay Ush.300,000. I did not have it so I lost the job."* Youth across all districts described cases where potential employers demand one-time payments (ranging from Ush.100-400,000) as bribes or a percentage of salaries on a continual basis in exchange for contracts. One participant from Masindi described it this way: *"For a young person to get a job, s/he should give 50 percent of the salary to the employer. You have nowhere to report these cases because it is not done formally."*

Lack of access to information about jobs was highlighted as a key reason for unemployment. Of youth interviewed, 43 percent said they learn about job openings from radio, 21 percent from family and friends, and 18 percent from newspapers. Radio in particular remains a predominant source of information, especially for rural youth. Other reasons for unemployment commonly cited by youth include the following:

- Lax labor laws allowing employers to dismiss employees without reason;[71]
- Lack of policy incentives for the private sector to recruit and train youth;
- Limited educational and employment opportunities due to poverty;
- Inability of youth to afford basic necessities, such as clothing for work;
- Alcohol abuse (cited as a reason why youth cannot keep jobs and engage in high-risk behaviors).

Youth Aspirations and Frustrations
Youth interviewed said their primary goal was to secure gainful employment to support themselves and their families. They described their interest in a variety of occupations, aspiring to become accountants, lawyers, social workers, journalists, musicians, agriculture officers, commercial farmers, community leaders/ activists, NGO professionals, politicians, and business owners (of agriculture-related, trading, and other businesses). Young women often referred to their interest in having skills so that they can earn income and start healthy, successful families where they can provide care and guidance to their children, which many say they did not have growing up. Young women described varied interests in becoming doctors, nurses, judges, teachers, secretaries, graphic designers, fashion designers, or running small businesses in areas such as catering, boutiques, or tailoring. Young men discussed their interest in becoming army or police officers,

> **I want to make sure I get a job and pay school fees for my siblings until they complete their studies at the university level.**
>
> — *Young woman in Gulu*

> **If you think you will keep looking for jobs, you will never find it. If you create your own, then you can even end up employing other people to work for you.**
>
> — *Young man in Gulu*
>
> **I would like to be self-employed because I am tired of being used.**
>
> — *Young woman in Mbale*

engineers, or running small business focusing on metal works, carpentry, and construction.

In terms of frustrations, youth discussed different forms of exploitation they had seen or experienced. First, they described cases of sexual harassment against both males and females at work. Second, low or unfair compensation was highlighted, with some youth reporting earnings of as little as Ush. 500-1,000 a day or Ush.15,000 a month—or only payment in-kind (such as food) for informal work. Third, youth discussed frustration over unpaid jobs they are forced to take in the hopes of getting formal jobs as they gain skills and experience. One university graduate in Masindi explained: *"I have been volunteering with the local government office for a year but I do not get any compensation. It is expensive to undertake this because of the need to buy clothes and pay for transportation."*

Youth Interest in Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development

Among those youth interviewed presently working, 33 percent were self-employed (36 percent male / 30 percent female). Among different age groups, self-employment rates were 59 percent (ages 25 to 30), 28 percent (ages 18 to 24), and 12 percent (ages 15 to 17). The highest proportions of self-employed youth were in Gulu (59 percent) and Nebbi (53 percent). Those engaging in agriculture reported receiving some assistance with inputs from government or NGO programs in their districts.

Youth interviewed expressed great interest in entrepreneurship and enterprise development. Many said they are already engaging in trading, small manufacturing, or agriculture-related work. However, some youth shared their fear of failure if they were to start a business as a result of lack of resources, confidence, and support structures. Those who have started businesses felt that they do not have the necessary business skills or finances to succeed. Some youth felt that microfinance institutions or saving groups tend to leave youth out due to social hierarchy, cultural norms, and young people's poor economic standing or inability to contribute.

Barriers to business startups commonly cited by youth included:

- Lack of access to land and markets;
- Limited access to finance due to lack of collateral;
- Lack of enabling environment (skills training, role models, and social safety networks);
- High taxation and lack of youth-friendly policies to promote youth-led enterprise development;
- Excessive bureaucratic procedures and expenses associated with formal registration;
- Electricity power outages that reduce productivity across Uganda where the existing electricity network reaches only ten percent of the population.[72]

One NGO stakeholder in Luwero said: *"Youth do not have the money to bribe officers in public offices. When you decide to start a business with small capital, the next day you are visited by a revenue officer demanding a trading license and income tax returns. This has hindered youth to start businesses."*

Youth Interest in Agricultural Enterprise Development

The number of people who are self-employed in agriculture is increasing at 11.2 percent per year according to the ILO.[73] Despite the perception that youth are not interested in agriculture, **many youth interviewed expressed great interest in agriculture** and are already engaging in agricultural work, as noted above. Areas youth are most interested in are crop farming and management (coffee and maize), horticulture, agro-processing (maize milling and produce processing), and animal farming and management (piggery, poultry, and livestock).

Based on FGDs, youth are interested in agriculture partly because it is a traditional source of income and can put food on the table. Youth described managing very small farms (using ancestral land or renting land) without sufficient inputs, capital, technology, modern farming techniques, or basic business skills. They spoke of other challenges including depleted soil leading to low yields, adverse weather, and fluctuating market prices. Youth said they are forced to sell their produce to middlemen, often below market prices, as they have no means of transporting their produce elsewhere for higher prices. As inflation is expected to accelerate to 11.3 percent in 2011 due to higher commodity prices,[74] young agricultural workers will likely face more barriers to working or finding resources necessary to run businesses. A lack of access to land also remains a major barrier. Young women interviewed felt that it is more difficult for women to have access to land on account of cultural norms and gender stereotypes within families. In northern Uganda, access to and utilization of land is a serious issue of concern for youth, and most cannot afford to rent land for farming.

> "
> **I want to receive my bachelor and master degree first and then become a businessman running piggery and poultry projects.**
>
> — *Young man in Luwero*

> "
> **Even though we are farmers, we do not have enough to eat after we sell our produce. We live on one meal a day.**
>
> — *Young farmer in Luwero*

Among young farmers interviewed, only a very few are directly benefitting from government initiatives such as NAADS. They reported not receiving sufficient information to participate and noted that many youth are left out because of the selection criteria. One young man in Masindi said: *"The issue for youth is lack of capital. We end up cultivating for home consumption. Even when you bring NAADS, it has not helped the youth."* Even those who are part of NAADS felt they had not benefitted much except to receive some small financial support and inputs. For example, those who are provided animals may not be able to afford animal feed or veterinary drugs, underscoring the fact that programs that provide inputs alone are not sustainable. One private sector stakeholder in Nebbi said: *"There is a need for reorganization of implementation of government programs. For example, in NAADS, most people may want to do poultry but you find that in their budget, there is only one bag of feeds and in the end you find that the birds end up dying."*

Respondents said they are **more likely to go into animal rearing over crop farming** for three reasons: they do not need much land to raise animals; it generates income more quickly; and they are afraid of external shocks if it takes longer. Some stakeholders expressed the view that many youth have no patience to invest their income strategically because of their desire to make and spend money quickly. Like many other youth interviewed, many young farmers reported not having enough food to eat and living on one meal a day, usually taken in the evening, which underscores the serious food security issues faced by young people and the need to assist young farmers in moving beyond subsistence farming.

Key Conclusions

- Sectors that appear promising for youth employment include the oil, agriculture, ecotourism, telecommunications, ICT, and financial sectors; however, youth need to have greater access to high quality, relevant, and practical skills training. Finding gainful employment is expected to continue to be a major challenge for youth in the years ahead in light of Uganda's high fertility rate.
- Constrained by the lack of marketable skills and formal sector jobs, most youth said they engage in informal sector

work or agriculture-related work. Some youth acknowledged engaging in illegal activities to earn a livelihood. Youth see unemployment as their most pressing challenge as many are idle, unemployed, or underemployed across the country. Youth reported facing major challenges in securing formal employment, including corruption, nepotism, and exploitation in the labor market. Young women face even greater constraints due to cultural norms and gender stereotypes.

- Enterprise development presents a viable option for youth, particularly in agriculture. However, the availability of entrepreneurship programs, support services, and access to credit offered currently is negligible compared to the demand for such assistance. Local market survey results reveal opportunities for young entrepreneurs to provide better access to agriculture inputs for local farmers.

- Employers in general have a mixed view of youth and described youth characteristics in both positive and negative terms, but overall younger workers are recognized as an important driver for sustainable growth.

SECTION 4: HEALTHY LIFESTYLES & FAMILY FORMATION

This section provides an overview of the health sector in Uganda including a description of the state of youth health and political environment, and an assessment of the supply and demand for health services in the focal regions. The assessment of supply and demand for health services was informed by health facility assessments, key informant interviews with stakeholders, and FGDs with youth. The section includes a review of the status of youth-friendly information, services, and programs; and it provides perspective on demand for these services through analysis of youth health knowledge and behaviors, desired attributes of information, services, and programs, and the factors that contribute to family formation. Per the SOW, the following issues are addressed:

SUPPLY-SIDE ISSUES	DEMAND-SIDE ISSUES
• Provision of youth-friendly health/SRH services	• Level of youth health knowledge and awareness
• Provision of health and SRH education	• Positive/negative youth health and SRH behaviors
• Youth access to health information and services	• Youth demand for health and SRH services
• Areas of unmet need and major gaps	• Influences on marriage and childbearing
• Effectiveness of existing policies, strategies, programs, and practices	

Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health: A Summary of Recent Literature and Policies

Current Status of Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health

Relatively speaking, young people are generally healthy. Yet, they often face pressing health concerns especially related to sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

Sexual Behaviors and High-Risk Sex: By the age of 18, over 62 percent of young women and almost half of young men (47.9 percent) have had their sexual debut. Not only are young people having sex, but they also are engaging in high-risk sexual behaviors, defined as non-marital sex, extra-marital sex, non-consensual sex, commercial sex, transactional sex, intergenerational sex, and sex for survival.[75] Data from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) revealed that 26 percent of young women and almost three-quarters of young men (74 percent) had high-risk sex in the 12 months preceding the 2006 survey.[76] Having multiple concurrent partners (MCPs) can also dramatically increase one's risk of contracting HIV. Sexually active women, ages 15-19, are more likely to report having multiple partners than women of any other age. Four percent of this population reported having two or more sexual partners in the past 12 months and almost a quarter of sexually active young men (22.7 percent), ages 15-24, reported multiple sexual partnerships.[77]

Transactional sex is of growing concern in Uganda. According to the DHS, around ten percent of young women and men gave or received money, gifts, or favors in exchange for sex in the past 12 months.[78] Other studies have reported much higher levels of transactions in sexual relationships among Ugandan youth.[79,80] A study of rural Ugandan adolescents found that 90 percent of girls' three most recent relationships included some level of economic support.[81] Another study among secondary school students in rural Masaka found that sex was highly transactional, both within peer and non-peer sexual relationships. While gifts and favors were associated with almost all relationships, regardless of sexual status, the provision of money was used as an indication of sexual interest. In fact, sexual relationships without a transaction were viewed negatively by both male and female youth. Young women felt that if they gave sex "for free," they would be more likely to be viewed as "loose," and youth of both genders thought that willingness to engage in sex without a transaction could indicate that one was HIV positive.[82]

The experience of violence and sexual coercion among youth also has been associated with risky sexual behavior, as well as other negative health outcomes, such as increased risk of STIs and HIV.[83,84] More than half of young women (56 percent) have experienced physical violence and a quarter reported that their first sexual experience was forced.[85] In a survey in rural Uganda, 14 percent of sexually active adolescent girls reported their first sexual encounter was coerced, and coercion was

higher when sexual initiation happened at an earlier age. Those who experienced sexual coercion at first sex were also more likely to report experiencing subsequent sexual coercion, putting them at further risk of negative health outcomes.[86]

Contraceptive Use: In light of these high-risk behaviors, contraceptive use among youth is particularly important in order to prevent unwanted and early pregnancies. Despite high levels of knowledge of contraceptives, youth in Uganda have low levels of contraceptive use. Only 11 percent of sexually active young women currently use a modern method, although 53 percent report ever using one. Current use is lower among married women (17 percent) than sexually active unmarried women (34 percent). Yet 35 percent of currently married youth have an unmet need for family planning (FP).[87] Of those using a method, condoms are the most popular form of contraceptive.[88] At last sex, 39 percent of young women and 56 percent of young men used a condom.[89] However, consistent condom use is a concern. Data from the 2004 National Adolescent Survey indicated that only 36 percent of adolescents reported consistent condom use in the three months preceding the survey.[90] Condom use at last high-risk sex is also concerning: only 38 percent of young women and 48 percent of young men used a condom on these occasions.[91]

HIV/AIDS: Given young people's engagement in risky sexual behaviors, it is not surprising that they bear a large share of the country's HIV burden with females carrying the heaviest load.[92] According to UNAIDS 2010 figures, HIV prevalence is 4.8 percent for females and 2.3 percent for males ages 15-24.[93] HIV prevalence increases with age: 20- to 24-year-olds have higher rates of HIV infection than 15- to 19-year-olds.[94] Youth have very high levels of HIV knowledge, although awareness of prevention methods is lower. Out of the three most common prevention messages targeting youth (i.e., abstinence, be faithful, and condom use), knowledge that condoms can reduce HIV transmission risk was the least well known. Only 72 percent of young women and 82 percent of young men knew that using condoms could prevent HIV infection. A total of 62 percent of young women and 68 percent of young men knew all three modes of prevention. This knowledge has not translated into perception of risk and subsequent behavior change, as is evidenced by low and inconsistent condom use as well as low HIV testing rates among youth. Only 13 percent of young women and nine percent of young men have ever been tested for HIV.[95]

Family Formation: Also relevant to young people's SRH is the context in which they begin to form their own families. While early marriage is discouraged in Uganda, a large number of women still marry at a young age. Among 20- to 24-year-olds, 46 percent of women were married by age 18 compared to only seven percent of young men. Furthermore, 24.9 percent of young women, ages 15-19, have begun childbearing.[96] Births to these women make up 20 percent of all births in the country, the majority of which (13 percent) are to unmarried girls.[97]

Young mothers suffer more negative health outcomes due to early childbearing, including increased risk of complications like prolonged labor, stillbirth, postpartum hemorrhage, maternal stress, and maternal mortality.[98] The potential risks increase even more when inadequate care is sought during the antenatal, delivery, and post-natal periods. While the DHS reports that 94 percent of women age 15-24 who had a child in the previous five years received antenatal care from a skilled provider,[99] other data suggest that young women are not receiving adequate antenatal care. Magadi found that adolescents were significantly more likely to have zero antenatal care visits during their first trimester and were more likely to not meet the suggested four visits than older mothers.[100] In terms of delivery care, only 50 percent of young women gave birth in a health facility or reported being assisted by a skilled provider.[101] Additionally, studies show that adolescent girls are less likely to seek immunization services for their children after birth.[102,103]

In addition to poor health care-seeking behaviors associated with unplanned pregnancies,[104] unwanted pregnancies among young women contribute to the high burden of abortion-related morbidity and mortality experienced by youth in Uganda. Data suggests that young women account for up to half of all abortion related mortalities.[105] Due to its illegal status, statistics around abortions are difficult to find. Social stigma surrounding the issue is thought to contribute to underreporting; therefore, statistics on the number of youth who report having a close friend who has attempted to end a pregnancy are considered to be more representative of actual levels of abortion than self-report statistics. A nationally representative survey of adolescents ages 12-19 revealed that over 26 percent of females and 22 percent of males had a close friend who tried to end a pregnancy.[106] Another survey of in- and out-of-school adolescents in Kabarole found that 56 percent of respondents reported having a friend who had an abortion.[107]

Overview of GOU Policies and Priorities Related to Youth Health

To address many of the challenges described above, the GOU has created a supportive policy and legal environment for the promotion of youth health, including reproductive health. While the National Youth Policy and the Uganda National Adolescent Health Policy are prime examples, a number of other national-level policies speak to adolescent and youth health needs as well. These include the Uganda National Policy Guidelines and Service Standards for Reproductive Health, the National Policy for HIV Counseling and Testing, the National Population Policy, the Sexual and Reproductive Health Minimum Standards of Service, among others. Laws around the legal age of sexual consent, rape, and defilement also seek to contribute to positive youth outcomes.[108]

The National Youth Policy (discussed further in the next section), finalized in 2001 and currently under revision, sets the stage for positive youth involvement and development on a number of levels. It lays out the rights and responsibilities of youth in their own development, as well as the responsibilities of adult partners. Health priority areas include improving youth-friendly health services, promoting life skills, promoting innovative resources and partnerships in youth health programming, protecting youth from violence, and advocacy for the adoption of an adolescent health policy, which was successfully adopted in 2004.[109]

Building on the Youth Policy, the National Adolescent Health Policy for Uganda recognizes the specific health needs of adolescents, particularly in relation to the following reproductive health issues: pregnancy, abortion, STIs/HIV, and psychosocial concerns. Recognizing the health challenges that youth face and the often neglected nature of their concerns, the policy seeks to mainstream adolescent youth health concerns into the national development agenda. The policy sets targets across five health areas, discusses strategies and provides an institutional framework for implementing the policy, and provides guidance on the role of various stakeholders and direction on monitoring and evaluation of the policy implementation.[110]

Other policies, such as the Uganda National Policy for HIV Counseling and Testing and the Uganda National Policy Guidelines and Service Standards for Reproductive Health, incorporate young people's health into larger health policy frameworks.[111] For example, the Counseling and Testing Policy permits youth ages 12 and up to assent or dissent to an HIV test without parental consent. This policy also guides counselors to assess each situation to ensure that: 1) adolescents are able to understand the testing procedure and results; 2) adolescents are protected from abuse; and 3) adequate counseling is provided in an ongoing manner.[112] Along with integrating adolescent concerns into various sections, the Uganda National Policy Guidelines and Service Standards for Reproductive Health includes a section specifically on the management of adolescent RH. This section outlines a comprehensive list of services and information that should be made available to youth to meet their comprehensive SRH needs from post-abortion care to nutrition and hygiene. Suggested service delivery points, information, education and communication (IEC) message topic areas and guidelines, and counseling and referral guidance are provided.[113]

Sexual and Reproductive Health Supply

The availability and accessibility of quality SRH information, services, and programs for youth is critical to meeting youth health needs. The following section provides key results from primary and secondary data collection and analysis on the current availability of information, services, and programs, as well as gaps in provision.

Supply of Information: Youth in Uganda receive information on SRH from a number of sources. Schools, health care providers, parents, other family members, friends, and the media all serve as mechanisms to transfer knowledge and information. Accessibility to and trust in these sources depends on youth's age, residence, and school status.

The school system in Uganda is a major source of SRH information, particularly since the 1997 UPE mandate successfully reduced barriers to accessing education. With increasing numbers of youth attending school, programs with school-based educational initiatives, such as the Presidential AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY)[114] and the Straight Talk Foundation (STF)[115] campaign, have had larger platforms for information dissemination.[116] The growing reach of school-based SRH education was confirmed by key informants and by nine of the 20 youth FGDs. Both KIs and FGDs specifically noted that STF distributes much of its information via the school system. A 2008 evaluation of the STF program confirmed the reach of their materials: 99.4 percent of youth surveyed in secondary schools across six districts reported

exposure to STF products. Exposure was measured as the percent of youth who reported ever listening to the Straight Talk radio program or reading one of the Straight Talk newspapers, *Straight Talk* or *Young Talk*. Exposure was significantly lower among youth attending primary school (65.3 percent).[117]

> A group of young married women from Kamwenge said that there was *"no information available to youth on reproductive health and family planning at their health centre."* This dearth in FP information was also confirmed by in-school youth. Those in school said that information provided via this channel mainly addressed issues around responsible parenting, including economic reasons to plan one's family.

Interpersonal communication, particularly with trusted adults or family members, also serves as an important source of information for youth. Traditionally, youth learned about sexual relationships via family members. Paternal aunts, referred to as a "Senga," served as the primary channel for sharing sexual and marital information with adolescent girls. While this traditional system has been weakened,[118] a 2004 nationally representative survey of adolescents found that a quarter of girls still receive some information via this source.[119] Although one survey found that up to 81 percent of adolescents seek health information from parents, teachers, and other adults,[120] fear or embarrassment still prevent many youth from discussing SRH with their parents[121] and prevent parents from addressing these issues with youth.[122] FGDs with youth confirm that parents are often not the primary source of information; however, they also indicate that youth are interested in receiving information from parents and other adult family members, primarily because these individuals are viewed as experienced and knowledgeable, both of which are highly-valued characteristics among youth. Parents and other adults may be especially important sources of information in rural settings and for out-of-school youth.[123]

Finally, the media—including television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet—also are key sources of SRH information for Ugandan youth. Reading a newspaper, watching television, and listening to the radio are all more common among youth in Uganda than among those over 25 years of age.[124] Radio is by far the most popular media source,[125] but internet and mobile use are increasing. Between 2005 and 2009, mobile subscriptions have increased from 5 to 29 per 100 people and internet use has increased from 1.7 to 9.8 per 100 people.[126] Both STF and YEAH, another national-level communication program designed to reach youth with HIV prevention messages, have utilized mass-media sources for youth messaging.[127,128] FGDs confirm that youth receive much of their information from media, particularly from STF. However, several youth also mentioned accessing potentially less accurate and possibly harmful sources of information. One in-school youth from Luwero sent his fellow FGD members into laughter when he said that he gathers his information from newspapers like the "Red Paper" and the "Onion." It was clarified that these are pornographic papers and despite the laughter, several other youth agreed that these serve as *"the richest source of their information, especially information on sexuality and reproduction."*

The type of information available to youth is also of great importance. Not surprisingly, both the literature and discussions with youth revealed a heavy emphasis on HIV prevention messages. According to youth, the primary messages they receive revolve around the ABC platform (i.e., abstinence, be faithful, use condoms); however, youth also reported receiving messages on HIV testing, avoiding sharps, and male circumcision. Messages around abstinence and condom use for HIV prevention are often tied to FP and seem to make up the majority of the FP information available. Other reported FP messages targeted youth centers on avoiding unwanted pregnancy, staying in school, and child spacing, but less on FP methods available and how to use them. Young mothers and young married participants seemed to be particularly lacking in FP information.

Despite these many sources, there are still numerous barriers to youth receiving comprehensive and high-quality SRH information. In addition to the lack of FP specific information, these barriers include:

- Challenges around the provision of SRH information via adults in the community, including parents, teachers, and health care workers. There is some evidence that due to adults' own lack of knowledge and discomfort with sexual health information, they may provide inaccurate information designed to scare youth from engaging in sex.[129,130,131,132] Youth also feel uncomfortable and/or scared to ask for information, further compounding this challenge. Finally, key informants noted that a lack of female teachers in the school system hinders the schools' ability to effectively foster communication with girls, who are already disadvantaged in terms of accessing information due to lower school attendance and less access to media sources, such as radios.[133]

- While schools have been fairly effective in reaching youth, particularly with HIV information, those out of school have less access to quality information. Also, while school programs for disabled youth have increased their access to information, deaf youth still feel challenged by communication barriers and other disabled youth generally feel that their unique needs are not being addressed.

- Finally, a lack of information regarding specific services available in their communities—expressed by both key informants and youth—also clearly hinders service utilization.

Supply of Services: While SRH services are provided to youth through various levels of health facilities in Uganda, Level III and IV Health Centers (HC) are critical suppliers of these services. According to the government system, HC III's, which should be found in every sub-district, are to have a general out-patient clinic, a maternity ward, and a functioning laboratory. HC IV's, which serve a county, should offer the same services as an HC III, as well as offer in-patient services, and the ability to conduct emergency surgery. Beyond the provision of specific services, these facilities face the challenge of meeting several additional needs of youth in order to be considered "youth-friendly." Attributes which contribute to the **"youth friendliness"** of a health facility include the accessibility of the location and facility hours, the friendliness of the facility environment, including the level of privacy and confidentiality afforded to youth, staff preparedness in interacting with youth, the availability of peer education/counseling or other educational programs, the presence of supportive policies and administrative procedures, and affordable fees.[134]

In reviewing the availability of youth-friendly services (YFS) in Uganda through health facility assessments, key informant interviews, youth FGDs, and the literature review, it is clear that while many of the services available meet some criteria for being "youth-friendly," there is still much to be done in order to meet the urgent SRH needs of youth. In fact, a service provision assessment conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2007, found that only five percent of facilities provided YFS.[135] Rather than reviewing each of the criteria separately, the following case study is presented as an illustrative example of a typical health facility available to youth. It does not represent an assessment from a single health facility, but rather a composite of the most common characteristics found across facilities included in this assessment.

Case study of an average health facility available to youth in Uganda

This government-run facility is conveniently located less than a kilometer from public transportation and from other sites where youth spend time (i.e. schools, playgrounds, etc.). The facility is open from 8 am–5 pm with no set hours specifically for youth. Voluntary Counseling and Testing is only available until 2 pm. All clients, youth included, generally wait about 45 minutes to see a provider. Visits last about 20 minutes with the provider, though this can range from 5 to 45 minutes. Services are free, although inadequate supplies often mean that clients need to purchase medications or supplies like syringes at a local store in order to be fully served. The physical facility environment includes a single waiting room with no separate area main-tained for youth. Clinic staff have been trained in RH and one staff member received training in Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health; however, this training occurred over two years ago and no refresher trainings have been held since. The services available to youth include HIV testing, STI syndromatic testing, treatment, and family planning. There is no peer education or counseling available, although some limited supply of youth-specific print materials are available for youth to browse while they wait. Youth are not actively involved in developing materials or messages for the facility, but they can provide feedback on services via a suggestion box—although it's rare that suggestions result in a change to services. The facility does not have specific policies on providing care to youth, though they do practice confidentiality. While no official policy exists, providers are hesitant to provide methods such as the intra-uterine device (IUD) or Depo-Provera (DMPA) to youth who do not already have children. Spousal or parental consent are not required for most services, but they may be suggested depending on the service that the client is seeking; this is particularly true for HIV testing and STI treatment. Youth are generally served regardless of their marital status. In order to promote available services, the clinic relies mainly on word of mouth, but may occasionally use a radio spot or local event to publicize the facility. These promotions usually focus on the types of services available, but sometimes emphasize that the services are free. The community is thought to have a positive view of the facility, but is rarely involved in the facility beyond seeking services. While specific outreach is rarely done to reach vulnerable populations or more youth, the facility is interested in improving their youth-friendliness through adding more entertainment that might draw youth to the clinic.

Although health services are generally available, barriers to implementing youth-friendly services include inadequate funding—which leads to the need for patients to buy supplies, uneven application of national level policies for serving youth, and limited training that providers have in YFS.

While fees for health services are a barrier to access for all community members, youth are particularly vulnerable given their limited ability to earn an income.[136,137,138] Of the 20 FGDs, 14 mentioned cost as a prohibitive factor to seeking services and accessing FP in particular. This cost was associated with the actual supply of contraceptives and with transportation to HCs. In instances where services were not free, facility assessments revealed that health clinics do offer reduced fees for clients in need, but no specific guidelines existed for the determination of these reductions. In cases where inadequate supplies contributed to the need for patients to buy necessary service provisions, no clear mechanism existed to aid individuals who were unable to afford these products. Cost of services can be especially prohibitive and damaging to young pregnant women, who as a result, may not seek adequate antenatal, delivery, or post-partum and child care.[139,140]

The lack of apparent consistency in application of youth-friendly national policies also may negatively impact the health outcomes of youth. While many of these practices, such as the reluctance to provide specific methods to youth, may not be openly apparent to youth, others, such as the suggested parental or spousal consent pose more apparent challenges. The existence of these barriers to services were particularly salient among FGDs with married youth and youth with children, indicating that spousal or partner approval may in fact be a hindrance to service provision for these populations. One young mother indicated that the presence of one's partner was even required to access condoms, which sparked laughter from the other young mothers, who ultimately agreed the partner presence is requested for some services and went on to say that "their partners are never there for them." While key informants generally felt that youth friendly policies were one of the strengths of Uganda's health system, they did agree that dissemination and implementation of these policies has been a challenge. The literature suggests that the decentralization of services in Uganda contributes to this challenge in execution.[141]

Finally, the sparse amount of training that providers reported receiving in serving youth directly contributes to providers' limited ability to be sensitive to additional concerns and challenges that youth face in communicating their SRH needs. Much of the literature on youth-friendly health services in Uganda notes that providers are often rude and unwilling to provide SRH services to youth.[142,143,144,145] A few key informants agreed that a major challenge in SRH provision is that health care providers have trouble relating to youth and may in fact even be rude to youth seeking SRH services.

Supply of Programs: As a supplement to GOU provided information and services, a number of NGOs, faith-based organizations, and community actors run programs geared towards improving the health of youth in Uganda. For information on key actors and their initiatives, see **Annex 12**. Table 7 also presents a range of evaluated[146] programs designed to improve youth RH using various mechanisms, along with key lessons learned.

Table 7: Evaluated Youth SRH Programs

Program Description	Key Lessons Learned
Straight Talk Campaign[147]	
The Straight Talk (ST) campaign consisted of multilingual radio shows, newspapers, school based and community based activities such as health fairs designed to talk to adolescents about delaying sex and/or practicing safe sex. Specific ST materials have been developed and tailored for various target audiences, including primary school age youth, secondary school age youth, and parents. All ST materials seek to provide facts, but also to improve relevant skills such as decision-making.	• Theory-based, targeted, and tailored messaging can effectively address knowledge gaps, attitudes towards condoms, and increase parent-child communication. • Knowledge gaps around ASRH remain among youth, particularly in rural areas and among out-of-school youth, indicating greater difficulties in reaching these populations, even with mass media. • Negative attitudes around condoms persist indicating a need for continued efforts need to be made to address inconsistent messages available. • Addressing harmful gender norms among males may require a different approach than efforts focused on females.

Program Description	Key Lessons Learned
African Youth Alliance Program on Sexual Behavior[148]	
This program was designed to reach out-of-school youth across 12 districts. The project combined a behavior change communication (BCC) campaign, provision of YFS, opportunities for livelihood skills training, local and national advocacy efforts, capacity building of implementing partners, and the establishment of coordination mechanisms. The program tapped into existing youth networks and involved youth in the design and implementation of the program.	• Coverage of the program indicates that multi-component initiatives can improve a project's ability to reach audiences. • It remains challenging to reach out-of-school youth (girls in particular) due to constraints which contribute to inconsistent attendance in programs. • Limited behavioral change among males demonstrates a need for more thoughtful male focused interventions.
Delivery of Improved Health Services (DISH) project, and International Training for Health (INTRAH)[149]	
This intervention, implemented in four level IV clinics in Jinja, included training health workers in counseling and communicating with adolescents, reorganization of services to be more youth-friendly, provision of basic FP and STD supplies, and the introduction of games and other recreational activities in facilities.	• Involvement of parents and youth was seen as crucial to success and overcoming community resistance. • Recreational activities led to an influx of youth at the health centers, but this did not always translate into health seeking as adolescents were turned off by the lack of separate waiting areas for youth.
"Senga" program[150]	
This pilot study, using two intervention villages and one control, implemented a program utilizing a modified version of the traditional means of passing information from paternal aunts, "Sengas," to girls. In this study, 11 adult women and 3 adolescents were chosen to serve as Sengas. Each was trained to cover a variety of SRH topics using different teaching methods and was offered the opportunity to sell socially marketed condoms. Sengas were introduced to the community and individuals were told they could visit whichever Senga they wished.	• Reliance on traditional practices increased community acceptance and understanding of the program. • Despite decreasing reliance on traditional Sengas, adult women are appreciated as reliable sources of sexual health information; greater number of visits to adult Sengas indicated that youth preferred seeking advice from adults. • Community-based educators need formal training, sustained support, and monitoring to ensure success.
Soroti School Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention project[151]	
This project trained teachers, peer educators, tutors, and student teachers in life skills education and set up a peer mentoring system in 367 primary schools in Soroti District, Uganda. Upper primary students were paired with younger students to promote additional exchange of information. An anonymous health letter box was created to allow for greater comfort in asking questions and to facilitate open discussions about many sensitive sexual health issues Parent-child communication was also encouraged.	• Primary schools are an appropriate and effective setting for the provision of life skills education. • Training teachers is essential to improve their capacity to provide SRH info and should be integrated into teacher-training colleges. • Involving the community in the creation of a supportive environment to end incest and sexual abuse can be effective; grandmothers and aunts should be incorporated into these efforts. • Fear of disease, pregnancy, and positive view of waiting to have sex until marriage were reasons why youth decided to remain abstinent.

Youth and key informants were also asked to describe the programs available in their communities. They spoke of a variety of types of programs from livelihood programs designed to improve the economic situation of specific populations like sex workers to broader community-wide sanitation efforts. Youth typically focused on describing programs with an emphasis on either counseling or entertainment, indicating the importance of both of these elements to youth. Almost half of the FGDs specifically mentioned the STF program, further demonstrating its wide reach. When asked about their favorite programs, the majority of youth mentioned programs that could be categorized as edutainment. Radio programs topped the list with programs such as Rock Point and Youth Parliament each being mentioned a number of times. One youth explained why the use of drama as a means of transferring RH information was so successful: *"Because it has an entertainment component and also involves the youth themselves as the characters in the shows."* Key informants also felt that programs that involved community participation were more often successful.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Demand

In addition to the adequate and accessible supply of SRH information, services, and programs, a number of demand-related factors contribute to the health outcomes of youth in Uganda. These include young people's own knowledge and behaviors, their desire for certain attributes in the information and services provided to them, and the cultural context which influences their desires around family formation.

Knowledge & Behaviors: SRH knowledge and behaviors set the stage for young people's demand for SRH services. Complementing the information presented above, the most salient themes captured through primary data collection and building upon literature review findings are highlighted here.

Confirming DHS results, *YouthMap* participants had a generally high level of knowledge of FP methods; however, they also held a number of myths and negative opinions about contraceptives that contribute to their non-use. Fear of side effects and the perceived negative effect that FP may have on sexual pleasure were the most common reasons cited for not using contraceptives. While youth mentioned many side effects, most of the mentions referred to myths such as FP causes infertility, child deformities, and cancer. The idea that condoms are not 100 percent effective or that condoms could burst inside a women were also frequently mentioned by youth and were often used as a reason to have unprotected sex. This concept was repeated across various segments of youth. Demonstrating a common perspective on condom efficacy, one older youth from Kabale said: *"Young people think condoms are not 100 percent safe and therefore most of the youth prefer having live sex since the difference in risk is about the same."*

> **Girls cannot resist temptations from sugar daddies, for instance, gifts in exchange for sex, but young men can resist temptations from sugar mummies in exchange for sex. Therefore, boys can more easily survive getting sexually transmitted diseases than girls.**
>
> *— One young married woman linking greater vulnerability of girls to negative health outcomes*

While transactional sex was not specifically addressed in the FGD guide, it came up spontaneously in almost every group regardless of age, school status, or vulnerability (i.e., disabled, HIV positive, etc.) status. Transactional sex was described in a range of ways, from prostitution to a more casual exchange of money or goods. Although participation in transactional sex, and prostitution in particular, was mostly attributed to poverty and a lack of employment options, females also were often described by both males and females as materialistic and therefore more prone to engage in sexual relationships in exchange for money, gifts, or favors. While discussions of transactional sex primarily referred to females, there were some instances where males insisted that they, too, were at risk of being tempted into transactional relationships by "sugar mummies."

The issue of abortion was another topic that spontaneously came up in FGDs with all types of youth. Notably, when probed on the most important RH issues faced by youth today, abortion was among the top of the list. In discussing what contributes to abortion, youth described a number of factors which encourage early sex and result in unwanted pregnancies. Included among these factors were: school drop-out; a lack of jobs, which leads to transactional sex; and early marriage. One OVC youth in Masindi stated: *"Abortion is one of the reproductive health issues young people in my community face. Young girls who get pregnant while still in school tend to abort as they still want to go on with their education. In the process they over bleed and lose their uteruses, thus not being able to give birth in the future."* Also apparent in this description is the fear that youth associate with abortion and the potential health consequences they face as a result.

Demand for Information, Services & Programs: While evidence suggests that youth are knowledgeable about SRH (Statistics and International), they also have a high demand for additional information.[152] Youth across the FGDs commonly mentioned wanting more information about preventing STIs and HIV, pre-venting pregnancy, and use of family planning. Additional SRH information would help youth to make more informed decisions about their health. For example, one youth expressed a desire to know the benefits and consequences of abortion so that she could make her own informed choice. Other youth had questions and concerns about FP, including information on safe days, myths about condoms

getting stuck inside women, the link between pill use and infertility, and how to use specific methods and their side effects. A few groups of youth expressed a desire for more information about the "dangers" or consequences of having sex, pregnancy, and childbirth indicating that youth are concerned about their choices, but don't yet have enough information to feel confident about their SRH decision-making.

In terms of desired attributes of health services and programs, youth reported a number of demands, ex-pressed well by one youth: *"Well-trained health workers plus friendly staff with good teaching or counseling services are the most important things that attract many youth to a given health center."* Having adequate staff and supplies, good quality care, and friendly staff were all seen as important aspects of a youth-friendly clinic. When faced by unfriendly or inadequate numbers of staff, they may not reveal what they want and may return home without adequate treatment. For example, one youth said *"Young people need to find counselors every time they go to test for HIV because these people give them courage to go for a test, but in other places where there are no counselors, youth sometimes do not go for testing."* In addition to YFS, privacy and confidentiality frequently have been documented as highly desirable among youth.[153,154,155,156,157,158,159] Finally, some form of "edutainment," whether it be a video shown on TV, youth clubs, or posters, were also valued for their ability to bring enjoyment to the health service seeking.

Family Formation: Although statistics on early marriage and childbearing are readily available in the literature, there is less discussion of youth's desires for marriage and childbearing. While it is important to track these indicators as both early marriage and childbearing contribute to the country's high fertility rate and negative health outcomes, it is just as important to understand youth's motivations and desires around these issues to effectively communicate reasons to delay marriage and childbearing and to increase youth's use of family planning. The FGDs included specific discussion of these topics.

In discussing their desires for marriage, most youth viewed marriage positively and mentioned many benefits of marriage. The most common benefits included the desire to expand one's clan, to be like one's peers, and to gain respect from the community. One interesting reason for marriage, mentioned in four FGDs, was to control one's sexual behavior by becoming faithful to another individual, and therefore reducing the risk of contracting HIV or other STIs. As one youth from Kamwenge said *"Most youth want to get married to avoid STD's such as HIV which are got from having multiple partners, but with marriage you have one partner."*

While youth desired marriage, they generally felt that the ideal age to get married is between 18 and 25 so there is adequate time to either finish their studies or prepare for the financial responsibility of starting a family. Although some youth stated that marriage should happen before the age of 18, other youth often disagreed and in one of these instances, youth insisted that an individual would get arrested if he married a girl that young. Despite these opinions, it was recognized that certain situations, such as poverty, mistreatment from one's family, or an unintended pregnancy, may leave youth, particularly girls, with no other option than marriage.

Across FGDs, gender norms proscribing different expectations of marriage for men and women were apparent in youth's views on the subject. Youth reported societal, familial, and economic pressure on females to get married and a growing financial responsibility prior to marriage felt by males today. The strongest driver for marriage among young women was felt social pressure; which was tied to feeling ridiculed by the community if one reaches a certain age and is still unmarried. Males, on the other hand, were described as feeling increasing pressure to earn money before marriage, a responsibility not attributed to females. Also demonstrating the presence of unequal gender norms within marriage, nine groups described a fear of marriage among females associated with potential mistreatment either through violence or unfaithfulness. Several individuals said this was because they had witnessed others' "bad marriages," indicating exposure to poor marital relationships and sometimes violence.

> **Marriage was respected in that they had to first consult before engaging themselves in any relationship as there was paying of dowry whereas today, marriage is not respected for young people since they now decide for themselves and choose to get married without anyone's consent.**
>
> *— An out-of-school youth from Kamwenge referring to his parents' generation and describing the negative impact of this change*

Youth also held very positive views of childbearing. Reasons for having children reflect the value and respect afforded to children in Ugandan society. Youth felt that gaining respect, having someone to inherit your property, and having additional hands around the house to provide labor or security were the primary reasons for having children. The primary concern about childbearing was having the financial resources to support a family. **Although the majority of youth expressed a desire for 3-4 children, it seems that if financially able, a larger family was still considered ideal.**

Despite youth's strong support for marriage and childbearing, youth described tension between traditional family values that contribute to marriage and childbearing and the economic and health situation they face in today's world. For instance, the reduced role of dowries in marriage was tied to both a decreasing value placed on marriage as well as to increased freedom to finish school and choose a partner. The large majority of youth also felt that young people have a harder time with SRH and family formation today, compared to their parents. Not only did youth articulate the idea that their parents' generation had more abundant resources to support a family, but parents were also viewed as healthier and less affected by STDs and child malnutrition. Further demonstrating this tension, many of the same reasons that youth provided for having families, such as viewing children as a source of respect or even labor, were also articulated as old concepts that are no longer applicable for today's youth.

Key Conclusions

- It is clear from this assessment that there are many factors in Uganda that have the potential to positively contribute to youth's sexual and reproductive health outcomes. The government has set the standard for equal access to health services and programs, and many public sector, civil society sector, and community-based actors have stepped up to the challenge of ensuring that equal access becomes a reality.

- Despite existing initiatives, a greater focus on actionable information around FP is needed. While mass media campaigns and other SRH programs have supported youth's high knowledge of many SRH issues, these programs lack the detailed information required by youth to make informed health decisions and demand appropriate services. The historical emphasis of SRH information on HIV prevention to the detriment of other SRH topics, combined with the hesitancy of many adults to provide detailed and accurate SRH information, and the inconsistent application of national-level policies has also contributed to this gap.

- The society in which youth live today presents both opportunities and challenges for further improvement of their SRH. Norms around sex, marriage, and childbearing are shifting and youth clearly experience tension between the traditional values of their elders and the modern values of the day. Desires to reach educational and financial goals before forming their own families may eventually yield further delays in marriage and childbearing. However, these changes need to be accompanied by a shift in cultural norms that promote greater gender equality.

- Negative gender norms, which place females at higher risk for sexual coercion, early marriage, and pregnancy, and pressure males to live up to harmful standards of masculinity, will continue to delay the realization of better health outcomes for youth, until they are addressed and equalized. Positive role models of open partner communication, joint decision making, and respectful relationships are greatly needed to reverse growing concerns around sexual coercion and transactional sex.

- Finally, married youth and those with children are a particularly vulnerable population that has received less attention than other out-of-school youth. While general wisdom holds that married youth in particular have greater access to FP and other RH services due to the social acceptability of sexual activity among this population, results from this assessment revealed that married youth and youth with children may suffer from an even greater lack of information and services than other populations. Gender and cultural norms, which decrease female decision-making and promote early marriage and childbearing, are serving to disadvantage these populations who may be most in need and most willing to utilize family planning.

SECTION 5: CITIZENSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

This section provides an overview of government policies, programs, and civil society initiatives to promote youth participation in Uganda. It also presents the views of youth on how they engage in the country's civic and political processes and offers insights into how youth are using technology. For purposes of this assessment, citizenship and engagement consists of two main categories: political activities (e.g., voting, campaigning, running for office, lobbying) and all other forms of civic participation including volunteering with charitable programs; religious, artistic, cultural, and sports activities; and formal/informal improvement of community resources. Per the *YouthMap* framework, this section addresses:

SUPPLY-SIDE ISSUES	DEMAND-SIDE ISSUES
• Existence of GOU and non-State institutions, structures, policies to promote youth participation • Existence of GOU and CSO interventions promoting peace, stability, and development in northern Uganda and Karamoja • Existence of civic organizations accessible to youth	• Governance-related concerns of youth • Level of engagement and integration of youth in society • Sources of marginalization and disaffection, drivers of criminal activity and violence, potential for youths' destructive behavior • Motivation for and levels of youth civic participation, civic knowledge, community service • Concerns of youth related to conflict, stability issues

Citizenship and Engagement: Overview of Key Policies and Supply-Side Initiatives

Overview of Government Policies and Programs

The NDP recognizes the importance of democracy and adherence to the rule of law for Uganda's transformation to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years.[160] One major shift in Uganda's recent political landscape has been the incorporation of a multi-party system of democracy.[161] In 1993, Uganda adopted a decentralization reform policy with the aim of bringing services closer to the people and a vision of good governance, democratic participation, and control of decision making by local communities.[162] Uganda's decentralization reform efforts, however, appear to have fallen short of their promise. According to the IMF, the decentralization process has become subject to "central directions" taking it more towards deconcentration in certain areas, thereby undermining local autonomy as well as the horizontal accountability links on which decentralization frameworks rely. This in turn has hampered effective public service delivery.[163] The NDP does not refer specifically to the civic participation of youth, but does reference the GOU's objective to develop and nurture a national value system through a proposed set of ten core national ethical values: unity in diversity; honesty in civic duties and all endeavors; respect for community and environment; hard work for self reliance; community responsibility; integrity; patriotism; social harmony; justice and fairness; and creativity and innovativeness.[164]

A **National Youth Policy** was created by the GOU in 2001 as "a statement outlining our vision, the values and principles that guide us, the issues that challenge us and the initiatives, programmes and delivery mechanisms being planned and implemented to improve the social economic well-being of our youth."[165] The policy, whose mission is "youth empowerment," focuses on a set of underlying principles: respect of cultural, religious and ethical values; equity and accessibility; gender inclusiveness; good governance and national unity; youth participation; youth empowerment. The National Youth Policy is currently being revised by the MGLSD. According to key informants, many focus areas of the policy—youth empowerment, education and skills training, productivity, health and gender—will remain the same, but greater emphasis will be given to employment creation, reproductive health in light of Uganda's high fertility rate, use of ICT to increase productivity, and environmental conservation.

In the revised National Youth Policy (2011-16) *draft* circulated in September 2011, the following changes are noted:

1. Policy definition of youth has changed—"youth" refers to young people ages 15-29 rather than those ages 12-30 as provided under the 2001 policy.

2. Three new priority areas have been added: employment creation; youth empowerment and participation in decision-making; and youth & ICT. The following priority areas remain unchanged from 2001: education and training; health; sports and recreation; environment; and gender. The revised draft emphasizes promoting youth participation and cooperation with other groups in society, instilling in youth a sense of ownership in development efforts, and building their capacity to realize their aspirations.

3. Obligations of the private sector and state to create opportunities for youth and protect them from exploitation have been added; in the 2001 policy, only youth and parents/adults were mentioned.

The **National Youth Council** (NYC) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1993, with the overall objective of mobilizing Ugandan youth to engage in activities that benefit them and the nation at large.[166] Under Special Interest Group elections, the National Parliament allots five seats for youth Members of Parliament (MPs), at least one of whom is female.[167] The NYC is a well-recognized entity and resource for young people across the country, but some *YouthMap* participants referred to a negative perception and distrust of the NYC by youth because of its association with government and a perception that it is a politicized/partisan entity, and a perceived preference for NYC members with a specific political affiliation. One NGO stake-holder noted that the National Youth Parliament system tends to *"empower individuals…. The power of young people is not felt because they are not united."* At the district level, youth issues are managed within the portfolio of the Community Development Officer (CDO).

Peace-building programming is found mainly in northern Uganda and some parts of Karamoja. In 2007, the GOU launched the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern Uganda, expected to run until at least mid-2012. The PRDP was developed as a response to the need for a comprehensive framework for post-conflict recovery and contains four strategic objectives: consolidating state authority; rebuilding and empowering communities; revitalizing the economy; and peace building and reconciliation. The GOU and development partners have focused efforts on more "visible" recovery and development activities in the north, while USAID's programming includes more community peace-building activities and mainstreaming of peace and reconciliation practices into planned interventions.[168] In 2009, the United Nations (UN) launched a three-year Peace-building and Recovery Programme to align UN peace-building interventions with the PRDP. Still, there appears to be an inadequate supply of programs addressing politically motivated violence and crime, although some anti-violence messages are evident in the work of churches, NGOs and CBOs, particularly in northern Uganda and Karamoja.

The Electoral Commission (EC) is responsible for formulating and implementing **voter education programs** and may accredit any non-partisan individual, group, institution or association to carry out voter education.[169] In the recent election, the EU found that "Civil society showed itself to be vibrant and committed to supporting the democratic process. The work carried out by civil society groups such as the Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy was key to voter education, and both the Democracy Monitoring Group and Citizens Elections Watch (CEW) provided a regular platform to improve citizens' awareness of the process."[170] One youth-related example is a voter education project in northern Uganda which integrated voter education in the school curriculum and adult literacy programs.[171]

The GOU acknowledges the importance of youth participation in political processes in keeping with the African Youth Charter, which stated, "Every young person shall have the right to participate in all spheres of society and the State will guarantee the participation of youth in parliament and facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision making on local, national, and regional levels of governance."[172] The GOU supported the **African Youth Forum** (AYF) held in Uganda in 2010 in partnership with UNICEF and the African Union Commission. AYF participants published a Call for Action addressed to the African Heads of States, which recommended encouraging youth participation in the creation of effective mechanisms and implementation.

Overview of Key Civil Society Initiatives in the Sector
There are numerous CSOs, CBOs, church and youth groups which support youth engagement programming across Uganda (see **Annex 12** for key stakeholders in this area). Two of USAID's partners in this sector are the International Republican Institute[173] (IRI) and National Democratic Institute[174] (NDI). Among IRI's work with youth, it conducts mentoring for promising young women in universities across the country to increase their skills in areas such as networking,

public speaking, IT, issue advocacy, and debate. Several participants have been successful in attaining leadership positions within their university guilds. IRI also supports a program that places interns in political party secretariats and field offices. This internship program provides a venue for young people to become directly involved in politics. NDI has assisted political parties and CSOs to work together to develop policies that represent the interests of citizens. NDI has partnered with district-level CSOs to guide them through a process of evidence-based policy advocacy based on data collection and analysis on pressing community issues (e.g., women's rights, services for disabled).

UNICEF is supporting several efforts that are particularly relevant to civic participation. The U-report project is social monitoring to increase accountability related to service delivery. It is a free SMS platform that conducts polls on questions such as "Is the water point near where you live working?" This enables UNICEF to map how many people have water issues in a given locale—which can then be sent to the MP, to newspapers, etc. U-report is intended to be an effective tool for empowering the community, especially youth. In the north, UNICEF is conducting FGDs with youth to guide the content for participatory radio drama, using some of the participants as actors, dealing with peace-building from a youth perspective. UNICEF also plans to map youth services and youth-led/youth-serving organizations and youth centers in at least four districts per region and in all of the Acholi sub-region.

Among youth-led NGOs of note are:

- **Uganda Youth Network**[175] **(UYONET):** A nonpartisan, national youth organization that works with implementing partners in human rights and good governance; youth economic empowerment; environment and sustainability; and building the institutional network. It advocates for non-violent, peaceful youth participation in political processes and for policies/priorities at the national level, e.g. through a Youth Advocacy Campaign supported by USAID through IRI. One valuable initiative—aimed at addressing the low participation of youth in governance—was UYONET's development of a National Youth Manifesto (NYM)[176] to make the voices of youth count in Uganda's political processes. A principal demand of the NYM is for an independent Youth Ministry. Political parties—including the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC)—adopted and included some aspects of the NYM in their own manifestos prior to the recent election. To advocate for accountability, UYONET subsequently conducted an audit[177] of the political parties' commitments.
- **Restless Development:** Restless Development has been focusing on youth-led development within Uganda since 1997, empowering young Ugandans to live healthy and productive lives, fully supported by their families, communities, government and civil society, including the transition to peace in the post-conflict Karamoja region.
- **Africa Youth Development Link (AYDL):** A youth-led organization in Kampala which works to connect young people to their leaders and constructively engage them in political processes. AYDL monitors elections, facilitates debates and advocates for youth-friendly policies and priorities with national and local leaders, especially for youth elections.
- **Uganda Youth Forum:** A faith-based organization that implements youth leadership development campaigns and engages young people in service activities such as environmental preservation and HIV/AIDS prevention. The Youth Forum organizes annual youth conferences, leadership training, peer-to-peer counseling and support, and performs community and school outreach.[178]

Discussion of the perceived effectiveness of youth-led organizations was limited in the FGDs and interviews outside Kampala, perhaps as a result of a lack of information on various ongoing youth activities in Uganda. In most districts, local government staff and NGOs were able to point to key actors in civil society that focus on youth activities, but rarely cited national-level activities or structures outside the NYC and the Uganda National Students Association. In Kampala, many of the youth leaders who form part of the small network of youth-led organizations have broken away from the NYC structure to manage their own activities. **All those interviewed said that their biggest challenge was mobilizing funding for their activities and ensuring that their activities were not politicized.** Many existing programs also suffer from external perceptions of addressing elite youth populations rather than addressing the needs of the vast population of ordinary Ugandan youth.

Youth Citizenship and Engagement in Uganda: Demand-Side Findings

Profile of Youth Participating in Focus Groups[179]

93 percent of youth over the age of 18 registered to vote:
- 94 percent of young men said that they were registered to vote
- 92 percent of young women said that they were registered to vote

Many youth participate in civic activities:
- 61 percent of young men participate in civic activities
- 58 percent of young women participate in civic activities
- 54 percent of those ages 15-17 participate in civic activities
- 59 percent of those ages 18-24 participate in civic activities
- 64 percent of those ages 25-30 participate in civic activities

Of those who do not participate in civic activities:
- 17 percent said it is because they do not have "enough time"
- 14 percent said they are not interested in participating
- 55 percent said there are "no opportunities" to participate
- 3 percent said they do not know
- 12 percent said it is because of other reasons

> **The greatest achievement that has touched me a lot is reaching out to the kids and trying to encourage them, telling them that challenges come our way but they are not permanent.**
>
> *— Young woman in Kampala*

> **I volunteer in Foundation for Development of Needy Communities because we deal with communities. Right now, we help [them] on how they can save and then lend to each other and do business. Through our work, I have seen change in the community.**
>
> *— Young woman in Mbale*

Youth Civic Engagement

Overall, youth in Uganda are becoming more involved in the country's civic and political processes. This was confirmed in FGDs, where the majority of youth—61 percent of males and 58 percent of females—indicated that they were active and participated in their communities. While much of their civic participation is supported and guided by NGOs, local associations and churches, *YouthMap* participants also acknowledged an intrinsic desire to assist a neighbor in need.

The most popular form of youth involvement in the community was through activities supporting community members who had lost a relative, such as burial ceremonies. Youth also mentioned communal work (*burungi bwansi*), involving borehole preparation, small construction, road-building/maintenance, and repair work. Other community participation included helping the elderly and disabled, and involvement in church activities. *YouthMap* participants cited examples of engagement in health-related sensitization or mobilization campaigns as one of the most common ways in which youth engage in civil society. Youth also referred to their involvement in other activities, including savings groups, drama and music groups, school clubs (patriotism clubs), peer counseling, tree planting, and sports clubs / teams.

Some youth who were employed or self-employed with government projects, like road building or reconstruction, referred to these activities as engaging in their communities. For those youth, community participation was not limited to volunteering one's time or labor (usually unpaid), but was expressed through paid activities. One young woman in Kampala noted: *"For some of us,*

we were involved in farming groups or labor cooperatives, in that we used to dig people's gardens in turns, collectively."

Reasons cited for lack of community participation included being too busy with school or income-generating activities. Other obstacles included a lack of self-confidence and a lack of youth group cohesion to mobilize for community engagement. In the north, some youth felt that they could not concentrate on volunteering or engaging in peace-building within the community when they did not have enough money to support themselves or their families. One young man in Gulu noted: *"Poverty is making people think for themselves only rather than thinking about working for the community."* This conflict between community engagement and income generation was a constant cross-cutting theme across districts and FGDs. Despite the number of youth that chose to spend their time trying to make money rather than volunteering, very few said that they were not at all involved in their community.

Youth Political Involvement

When asked about their political involvement, the majority of youth said that they participate in the political process. FGDs highlighted roles for youth in the political process as voters, polling assistants, candidates, morale-boosters for candidates during campaigning, security guards for candidates, door-to-door contacting and leafleting, secretary for youth affairs and other youth affairs positions at schools, and youth chairpersons at the village and parish level. Youth who were not involved cited a lack of education and money as fundamental barriers to their participation in the political process.

In characterizing their involvement, a common sentiment among *YouthMap* participants was an **overwhelming sense of being marginalized and manipulated within the political sphere,** especially during election cycles. Many said they were being used as *"political ladders"* or *"wheelbarrows moved to every corner during campaigns and elections."* While many expressed the view that politics was "a dirty game," the majority of youth interviewed said they were engaged in the political process, albeit in a limited capacity. One youth in Mbale summed up the situation by saying, *"We are active though we are not given a platform."* Some youth also complained about the high nomination fees required to run for local leadership positions, which are major barriers for poor youth with political ambitions.

The main motivations for youth participation in the political process include material gain, with a number of youth feeling forced, as a result of their circumstances, to sell their vote to candidates. As one key informant in Kampala noted, *"Politicians can buy a young person's vote with a piece of soap."* Another incentive is employment through odd jobs associated with campaigns and elections. Youth also become involved in the political process out of fear of retribution or exclusion from future government programs. Some youth said they participated in political violence in return for promises of a more secure future by politicians: *"When one feels the candidate will be helpful in securing a job, this creates pressure to support such a candidate."* At the same time, many youth are forced to participate in politics and are victims of political violence. Political party youth brigades and paramilitary groups also remain a major obstacle to full youth political participation.[180]

> "Youth participation in most development activities is at a token level. Participation of the youth should be embedded, right from planning of any activity to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation level. Voices of youth are missing in most development activities, including in youth-specific programs. A lot of money is sunk into youth programs which are not representative of youth voices.
>
> — *YouthMap peer review committee member*

> "When you have no money, you cannot be voted [for]. To campaign nowadays requires money. I joined politics to improve my welfare. We the youth have the potential to lead but no money at all. We are being labeled as future leaders, but when will the future come? The political leaders are not implementing the programs. Our leaders are talking the talk but not walking the walk.
>
> — *A young man in Masindi noting that there was still a long way to go before youth achieved real participation*

Among youth interviewed, there was a strong sense of being used and marginalized by leaders who were ready to engage youth during campaigns, but not when elections were over. Youth expressed the conviction that community officials were out to enrich and serve their own personal interests. Many youth held strong and generally negative views of their leaders and how GOU programs were facilitated at both the central and local government levels. Youth generally felt that politicians held negative views towards them, and there was an overwhelming sense of being excluded from decision-making by leaders who do not listen to them.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the desire to effect greater change—both for themselves and for their country—is also a key motivation for youth participation. Despite the challenges mentioned above, youth said they participate in the political process because they want good leaders and would like to be able to voice their grievances. There was clear acknowledgement of the power of politics for greater change. The following sentiments illustrate positive youth ambitions in the political arena:

- *"Within the next five years, I want to become an MP. I am laying a foundation here and learning skills as an administrator…." "I want to be a rich man who assists vulnerable youth. I want to have a happy family, not like the one I have now, and lead a mass of people as an MP." —Two young men, Luwero*

- *"I intend to stand as an LC 5 [local council] candidate in 2016. I hope I will become a political leader." —Young man, Kotido*

- *"I want to study and become a presidential advisor." —Young woman, Gulu*

- *"I want to be a judge because I want to be using fairness and transparency in deciding cases, unlike the current judges…. My dream is to become president of the Republic of Uganda." —Two young women, Kampala*

> **We are not given a chance to go into leadership and it's our biggest problem. They undermine [youth] saying that our thinking capacity is low. The youth would progress given a chance. The posts given to youth are few. For me I wanted to stand for LC1, they refused. They say that you are young to stand even if you have ideas.**
>
> *— Young man in Kabale*

> **I consider myself politically active because I have reached the voting age of 18, and my votes can now change the government of Uganda.**
>
> *— Young woman in Kampala*

The assessment also revealed some ageist attitudes and generation gaps confronting youth. Many attributed their refusal to run for office to lack of support or opposition from elders in their communities: *"The youth were robbed of their confidence by elders who see no value in them. They therefore don't participate for fear of not being wise enough."* Another youth concurred: *"We participate in politics but do not get the votes we need because they [voters] think it is the old people who have the experience."* Such attitudes suggest the strong linkage between established political power and the role of seniority is increasingly seen as an impediment to young people's aspirations. Finally, tribalism or regionalism was also identified as a deterrent to young people's participation, in addition to being a hindrance in access to resources like jobs and volunteer opportunities. Some youth felt that the government is dominated by one tribe or people from one region and that those who are not from a certain area have no political influence.

Youth Voting

According to the Norwegian Council for Africa, some 7.4 million youth (aged 18-30) in Uganda were eligible to vote in the 2011 elections—1.4 million of them for the first time.[181] This youth cohort constitutes about half of all Ugandans in the National Voter Registry (nearly 14 million). The actual turnout for the 2011 presidential election was 59.28 percent, significantly lower than previous elections. According to the EU: "Notwithstanding a number of incidents of violence and intimidation, especially on Election Day, the electoral campaign and polling day were generally conducted in a peaceful manner … The increase in campaign spending and 'monetisation' of the election were major concerns. The distribution of money and gifts by candidates, especially from the ruling party, a practice inconsistent

with democratic principles, was widely observed by EU observers deployed across Uganda."[182]

Many *YouthMap* participants said they saw voting as the main form of participating in politics. One commented: *"I consider myself active because I encouraged my old mother who didn't want to go and vote, and for the good of the country, she voted, which she had not been doing in the past elections."* Some youth felt that their votes were not worth much and acknowledged the limitations of casting one's vote. One key informant in Kampala explained that being able to vote did not necessarily translate to direct influence: *"There is a big difference in being at the table where decisions happen, and being able to influence the decision making."* One youth in Namutumba noted: *"Politics and development are inseparable; we know it is our right to vote and be voted."*

With regard to concerns related to conflict or stability, one district-specific concern among *YouthMap* participants in Gulu was a strong feeling of being watched or a perception that the government would punish people if they did not vote or participate in a particular way. One young man said, *"At times people are pressured—we were told that if you do not vote, there is a machine which the government is using which observes everybody who have not participated and people who have not participated will be arrested and punished."*

Corruption and Youth Frustration

Youth expressed concerns about corruption especially as it relates to the lack of transfer of funds or benefits to the end-beneficiaries of government and NGO projects, and the fact that money gets "eaten" at the district or sub-district level. In all districts surveyed, a large number of youth talked about the existence of nepotism and bribery within central and local government systems, where one is required to pay for a job or to be related to someone in exchange for access to services.

Some youth referred to the challenges faced in participating in government-run programs, particularly in meeting the requirements of such programs and obtaining approval for their own programs. There was also mention of being excluded from the planning of programs meant for youth, which has led to program failures in some instances. The NAADS program in particular was singled out by many respondents as being under political influence, with exclusive benefits for campaign agents, friends, and relatives of NAADS and government officers. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) expressed concern over their exclusion from the political process, feeling that local councilors do not consider disabled people in their programs.

A number of youth drew a parallel between current events taking place in Kampala and around the country with the "Arab Spring," associating the youth of Uganda with those in the Middle East and North Africa region. A common sentiment expressed was a feeling of marginalization, a large divide between youth and politicians, and a sense of being disenfranchised by their leaders. These frustrations, coupled with a lack of suitable alternatives, led a large number of Uganda's youth to participate in recent protests.

But others interviewed said that youth stand to lose the most from the strikes and current destabilization. A young woman in Kampala said, *"Most youth like participating in strikes, which can make them forego education especially when they are arrested and imprisoned."* While acknowledging that the increasing involvement of Uganda's youth in recent protests arose from a

> "Leaders don't listen to our views; they have so much corruption among them-selves and only mind about people of their political parties. If you are from a different political party, you are likely to get problems with the leaders.
>
> — *Young woman in Kampala*

> "The condition we are in forces us to participate in demonstrations. We have youth who are engaged in criminal activities like drug abuse in this com-munity. We have crimes in the place.
>
> — *Young man in Masindi*

> I don't like politics because Uganda has lost a lot of property and many lives due to politics. These days there are walk to work demonstrations where people have been killed.
>
> — *Young man in Namutumba*

desire to effect change, *YouthMap* participants pointed out that the conditions and sense of desperation facing youth made them an easy target for manipulation by politicians. In this regard, one respondent explained how youth are influenced by campaign politicians to organize and engage in demonstrations with the intention of destabilizing communities. Another respondent concluded that youth are always a target—whether it is through such manipulation or through the forced recruitment of youth in "rebel activities" where they end up being killed or arrested.

Youth and Technology

Technology Snapshot of Youth Surveyed
- Nearly three-quarters of youth reported little/no computer usage: 57 percent never, 12 percent rarely, and 4 percent once a month
- Of those who have access to a computer: 11 percent every day, 7 percent 2-3 times a week, and 8 percent once a week
- 86 percent of youth reported little/no Internet usage: 71 percent never, 10 percent rarely, and 5 percent once a month
- Of those who do use Internet: 5 percent every day, 5 percent 2-3 times a week, and 5 percent once a week
- Over 90 percent of youth interviewed reported having access to a mobile phone:
  - 90 percent of youth aged 15-17
  - 97 percent of youth aged 18-24
  - 98 percent of youth aged 25-30

ICT offers many opportunities for young people in Kampala and some opportunities outside of the major cities. **Radio** remains a predominant source of information for youth, especially in rural areas, to stay informed of news because of limited infrastructure and poverty. Over 70 percent of youth interviewed said their main source of news is radio, while nine percent cited television and eight percent cited newspapers (see **Annex 7**). Radio is also an important source of sensitizing and informing the public on news, as well as on issues including death announcements and employment opportunities. **Mobile phone** usage is a growing trend for youth communication in Uganda, and there has clearly been major growth in both access and usage.[183] Some youth used mobile phones for information on employment opportunities, as well as to receive security alerts, and to send/receive money. **The perception among the majority of youth in both urban and rural areas was that every youth has a mobile phone, or at least access to one, across the country.** Some youth noted some use of iPods, mostly in larger cities.

USAID/Uganda recently took part in the Technology for Social Accountability Exposition, organized to promote the benefits of citizen participation in good governance. USAID and its partners (NDI and IRI) supported the exposition to democratize access to information, empower civil society to use technology for better delivery of services, and enable the public to hold government officials accountable. Themes included: Emerging Good Governance Applications; Civic Education and Organizing through Technology; Citizen Participation through Mobile Technology; and Technology's Impact on Journalism.

Many young people in Kampala also have access to **computers** and the **Internet**. In Kampala and some parts of Masindi, Nebbi and Namutumba, youth said they use Facebook and the Internet for the purposes of e-mail, research, and chatting with friends. Others in Kampala mentioned the use of the Internet for Twitter and Bandua. NGOs (e.g., IRI and AYDL) and youth networks like UYONET[184] also cited the use of Facebook to connect to young people and sometimes to connect young people to politicians. As shown in the snapshot above, many youth in rural areas and most cities outside Kampala were found to have rarely or never used a computer or the Internet. Those with access usually utilized these resources at schools, and said that an insufficient power supply often impeded access to such technology. In terms of overall use of computer, Internet and other ICTs, the majority of Ugandan youth are clearly still falling far behind compared to other developing countries.[185]

In FGDs, youth were not asked specific questions about new

technology in particular, but about their use of technology in general. Participants referred to the use of a variety of technologies—including oxen, ploughs, notice boards, radios, newspapers, *boda boda* taxis and grinding mills, as well as the above-mentioned new technologies. Some youth pointed to negative consequences of new technology (e.g., pornography viewing, increased Western influences), while the majority of those interviewed noted the benefits.

Key Conclusions

- FGDs indicated that youth participate in the political process at the periphery, carrying out predetermined and limited tasks. Overall, youth displayed great awareness of their subaltern roles. They demonstrated little sense of being able to work the political system in their favor, yet continue to see political activity as a route to jobs and income.

- Youth expressed their disappointment with the current political situation. Many respondents felt that they were excluded because of their status as youth. The majority of *YouthMap* participants expressed a desire to voice their opinions, engage in decisions that determine their futures, and seek a political process that includes youth as equals.

- Youth expressed frustration with government and government-run programs. They noted that their participation was fundamental to the success of development programs, yet they remain excluded and expressed a desire to go beyond token participation.

- Despite feelings of disempowerment and discouragement, the issue of citizenship is of growing importance to Ugandan youth. Demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility, the majority of *YouthMap* participants were involved in some form of civic engagement in their communities, usually supported and guided by NGOs, local organizations, and churches. Many shared their aspirations to assume political leadership roles in order to help their communities and affect greater change.

- Stakeholders and youth interviewed acknowledged that youth are both the perpetrators and victims of political violence. One reason frequently cited for youth involvement in violence (particularly among young men) was the lack of suitable livelihood alternatives. However, youth also show potential to contribute to conflict resolution efforts, including in Karamoja.

- New technologies offer opportunities for youth, especially urban youth. *YouthMap* participants reported being aware of the many uses of new technology, and the vast majority have access to mobile phones. However, poverty and basic infrastructure issues prevent average Ugandan youth, particularly in rural areas, from using the Internet and social media to participate in politics or other activities. To increase outreach to youth, mobile phone / SMS technology and radio were felt to be the most appropriate communication tools.

SECTION 6: YOUTH AT RISK

This section provides an overview of characteristics and risk factors pertaining to youth cohorts considered to be especially at risk in Uganda, current government policies and existing initiatives focused on these youth cohorts, as well as a discussion of the views of young people at risk on their own needs and priorities. The specific circumstances and perspectives of youth in Karamoja and northern Uganda are presented in the second part of the section. Per the *YouthMap* framework, the following issues are addressed:

SUPPLY-SIDE ISSUES	DEMAND-SIDE ISSUES
• Effective approaches and programs for addressing the needs of youth at risk • Lessons learned about psychosocial support • Existing GOU structures, policies and programs to support youth and their effectiveness/lessons • Existing donor/NGO/CBO youth activities and their effectiveness/lessons	• Priorities, ambitions, and frustrations of youth • Characteristics of different cohorts at risk and contributing factors that put them at risk • Assets/needs of youth in post/current conflict areas and those dealing with trauma • Assets/needs of youth in Karamoja

Introduction: Profiles of Youth at Risk in Uganda

The *YouthMap* assessment looked in particular at the following youth cohorts, considered to be most at risk in Uganda:

- Orphans and vulnerable children[186] (OVCs) and youth living with HIV/AIDS;
- Disabled youth;
- Alcohol / drug users / abusers;
- Juvenile offenders including incarcerated youth;
- Young women, especially teenage mothers, those affected by GBV, and sex workers;
- Youth affected by conflict/violence, especially in Karamoja and northern Uganda.

Out-of-school youth (including dropouts) and unemployed youth were also considered to be especially at risk; these cohorts are addressed in **Sections 2 and 3** above. Drawing from *YouthMap* field research, FGDs with youth at risk, and a literature review, the table below provides an overview of sources of vulnerability, characteristics of cohorts of youth at risk, and key consequences of vulnerability.

Table 8: Sources of Vulnerability and Consequences for Youth at Risk

Sources of Vulnerability	Characteristics of Youth at Risk	Consequences
Macro-level: • Poverty, food insecurity • High fertility rate • HIV pandemic • Infrastructure, governance and conflict issues Pressing youth issues: • Un/underemployment • Limited livelihood alternatives • Limited access to land or capital • Inadequate services for youth Community/family-level: • Deteriorating family structures • Easy access to alcohol and drugs • Limited social safety nets • Gender stereotypes/barriers	One or more of these contributing factors leads to: • Sense of insecurity (economic, political, and social) felt among youth • OVCs marginalized, unable to find health, education and livelihood support • Disabled youth stigmatized and suffering from lack of specialized support • Youth forced to find survival on streets, impeding their education • Young offenders in prisons unable to get skills, exposed to criminals, unsafe • Young women (single mothers, disabled females) particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation	• Lack of safe homes, parental care, career guidance, social safety nets • Casual/seasonal/informal labor, theft, prostitution as livelihood alternatives for survival • Youth exploited and/or face dangerous labor conditions • Risky behaviors affect well-being and exacerbate HIV/AIDS • Substance abuse • Gender-based violence • Juvenile offenders unable to make a living after released, tempted to re-engage in illicit activities for survival
Karamoja		
• Isolated region with infrastructure and local governance issues • Armed conflict, insecurity, inadequate state protection • Tribal, cross-district/border issues • Traditional, pastoral society • Scarce resources, drought, chronic food insecurity, hence common cattle rustling and theft • Limited service delivery • Mixed success of disarmament efforts • High bride price, with girls treated as assets for future wealth	• Youth unable to receive education, skills, or services they need, and forced to find other alternatives • Young males under pressure to demonstrate strength as a warrior, and find ways to pay high bride price, increasing the likelihood of joining cattle raids or armed conflicts • Youth feel pressured to fend for their own security given high insecurity • Female youth confined to livelihood roles, and at risk of violence associated with cattle raids and armed conflict • Youth have limited entitlements and roles in this traditional society	• Majority are idle and cannot get jobs in or outside Karamoja (also resulting in out-migration) • Engage in cattle raiding, livestock theft • Unable to participate politically or civically, resulting in frustration • Keep guns for protection and become both victims and perpetrators of violence/conflict • Young women subject to rape, violence, HIV/AIDS, and teenage pregnancies, leading to further vulnerabilities[187]
Northern Uganda		
• Lingering impacts of the war on the local economy and people • Few programs specifically addressing youth needs and providing relevant skills training and self/employment support services	• Youth in the north are the poorest with the worst access to schools and jobs • Youth deeply affected by poverty and LRA war, particularly female youth, disabled youth, and ex-abductees	• Youth still facing psychological impacts of the war • Many unable to access education, skills training or jobs, hence caught in the cycle of poverty

Supply of Programs and Services for Youth at Risk

It is estimated that more than seven million Ugandans, or 26 percent of the total population, live in chronic poverty. Vulnerable youth groups are categorized as part of this chronically poor population.[188] The GOU has acknowledged the magnitude of issues facing youth at risk and identified 22 priority target groups in the National Youth Policy.[189] Key priority

issues identified include but are not limited to: 1) assisting OVCs and youth affected by HIV; 2) creating opportunities for persons with disabilities or PWDs; 3) addressing substance abuse; and 4) rehabilitating juvenile offenders.

The problem of caring for **OVCs and youth affected by HIV** continues to pose a particular challenge. Widows/widowers or grandparents head the majority of households taking care of OVCs, and the burden of looking after orphans has further impoverished these populations.[190] Where there is an absence of adult support, children and youth are likely to be subject to child labor, recognized by the GOU as a serious problem in Uganda. An ILO study referred to the death of parents due to HIV/AIDS, irresponsible parenting and family practices, and poverty, as some of the factors contributing to child labor practices in Uganda.[191] Additionally, the majority of youth lack necessary health services despite the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and STDs (see **Section 4** above).

About 16 percent of the population (five million people) has serious disabilities,[192] 70 percent of whom are estimated to be youth. However, only 30 percent of **disabled youth** are estimated to be formally or informally employed because of social stigma and the lack of adequate support and opportunities for this cohort, according to one NGO interviewed. The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) reported: "PWDs did not benefit from government programs such as NAADS and the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) because they were regarded as people who cannot satisfy conditions of access. These programs were meant to benefit the active poor, and not the poor or the poorest of the poor where PWDs fell."[193] The UHRC also reported in 2009 that **drug abuse** had become a growing trend in Uganda, with about 57 percent of youth (ages 14 to 35) reportedly involved in drug abuse. Uganda also has the **highest alcohol abuse** rate (four times higher than the world average) according to the WHO.[194] *YouthMap* participants linked idleness, unemployment, peer pressure, poverty, and poor parenting to alcohol and drug abuse.

Juvenile offenders have been identified as a further challenge. The **National Youth Policy** notes that youth form the majority of those incarcerated and attributes the underlying factors to poverty, unemployment, and internal conflicts. The 2007 Uganda Prison Services Census notes that 72.6 percent of Uganda's prisoners are between the ages of 18 and 30 (96 percent males and 4 percent females).[195] The most significant challenge identified during the Census was the continued practice of housing inmates in excess of prison-approved capacities. This results in mixing petty offenders with convicted capital offenders, which increases the prospects of turning petty offenders into hardened criminals and reduces the success of prisoner rehabilitation.[196]

The GOU has acknowledged and attempted to address these issues by developing national policies and legislation, and implementing programs such as NAADS and NUSAF (see above). For example, to address OVCs, the MGLSD has developed a National Orphans and other Vulnerable Children Policy, a National Strategic Program Plan of Interventions, and the Program for Enhancing Adolescent Reproductive Life.[197] However, the demand remains far greater than supply, resulting in a shortage of services. With these policies and guidelines in place, there is a need and opportunity for the GOU to better target these cohorts at risk in order to better meet their needs.

There are a number of NGOs carrying out programs and services for youth at risk, including USAID implementing partners (see **Annex 12**).[198] The LEAD program, for example, works with vulnerable youth, such as orphans, ex-abductees, young mothers, and supports their income generating activities. STAR-EC uses a peer-support group model to discourage risky behavior among youth. However, it is important to note that stakeholders and youth interviewed believed that there are some other cohorts that often do not receive assistance due to cultural, religious, or legal restrictions. One NGO stakeholder said: *"The population groups that are really not worked with are sex workers, drug users, and homosexuals."* Youth interviewed thought that these groups were forced to operate underground in order to avoid legal and other ramifications.

Demand on the Part of Youth at Risk

Key informants interviewed felt that youth generally face a number of challenges that put them at risk. In FGDs, youth repeatedly linked their risky behavior and engagement in illicit activities to unemployment, poverty, idleness, and a lack of parental guidance. Other commonly cited risk factors included limited education opportunities, deteriorating family structures, exploitation of youth, and lack of access to resources. Youth at risk, including one male in Mbale, expressed an overwhelming sense of hopelessness, marginalization, and insecurity: *"We are orphans, and we have lost hope in life completely."*

Yet while sharing their concerns, youth across various districts also shared their hopes for the future. The opportunities that they identified as positive alternatives included income generation opportunities, community activities such as sports clubs, and education and training opportunities.

In terms of youth perceptions of GOU programs, those interviewed felt alienated from existing government programs, saying they lacked sufficient resources to qualify. Even with new guidelines in place aimed at making NAADS more inclusive, youth said they face social stigma and discrimination from their community and society, which they felt reduces their chances of benefitting from these programs. One disabled youth in Masindi explained, *"Most projects favor physically fit people. We join groups but we cannot afford to construct a shelter for pigs and chickens because they are very expensive."* Similarly, one public official stated, *"Most programs are not actually benefiting the youth in need because of the criteria set. Most youth do not have land or start-up capital to hire land or establish shade for provided animals and birds."*

> "
> **Employment opportunities are limited and this has boosted the rate of crimes in the country, since people resort to stealing as a way of getting money to earn a living and when caught, end up in prisons.**
>
> — *Young man in Kampala*

The section below discusses two overarching issues, young people's access to land and deteriorating social structures, which were repeatedly cited by youth as growing concerns. It also summarizes key issues raised by various youth cohorts interviewed.

Access to Land: Many disadvantaged youth reported that they are denied their land rights and they struggle to access land for farming, building homes, and settling down. Since land is the major input in agriculture production and food security, **landlessness has become a source of food insecurity for youth.** One youth in Nebbi said, *"We are being used to participate in land wrangles and violent politics. Youth go for some of these things simply because they do not have alternatives. On land issues, the land your parents left for you is being grabbed forcefully by your relatives, so the only way to save it is to become violent—in the end you are imprisoned for trying to gain access to your land."*

Changing Family Structures: FGDs revealed that youth across all districts are negatively affected by a growing sense of family instability and changing social values. Youth felt that those who have run away from home or are from broken families are particularly vulnerable to risks and likely to engage in illicit activities as a result of a lack of financial resources. A youth from Gulu shared, *"Many parents ended up in divorces and it has impacted negatively on youth during their growth, making them turn to streets to make a living by doing sex work."*

Youth Affected by HIV/AIDS: *YouthMap* participants who are OVCs or living with HIV/AIDS reported suffering from social stigma, high costs of care and treatment, and lack of sufficient support and services. One youth in Mbale said, *"HIV is killing us; we cannot take care of our lives. We are infected but no services to help us live longer."* **They discussed how they created their own support groups in absence of support from their communities.** *"Even if you try to help people, they are not appreciative. They instead keep stigmatizing us all the time, so we keep helping our fellow youth living with HIV,"* said one female youth in Nebbi.

Youth with Disabilities: Disabled youth shared their disappointment in the lack of sufficient school facilities and materials. They reported suffering from stigma, discrimination, physical abuse, and neglect from their own families and societies.[199] One youth in Nebbi shared: *"Some of our community leaders are not doing enough for PWDs. Some of them even despise us."* One female youth in Masindi shared, *"The blind are raped by the boda boda men. Or we end up being overcharged by them because we do not have guides to assist us."*

> "
> **A majority of us have never had a chance of studying simply because of hearing, visual impairments, or mobility problems. Yet those are just physical disabilities – we have very sound brains! So it is the problem of environment. People do not plan well for improving our access to education.**
>
> — *Disabled youth in Kamwenge*

Female Youth: One major issue young women face is **access to land.** In Uganda, most communities do not recognize the rights of women to land. Women mostly possess user rights to defined land lots designated by the clan, husbands, or brothers. Most parents do not apportion land ownership to their daughters and usually girls do not inherit land—a major limitation for women's livelihood opportunities and independence. Young women at risk (including orphaned girls, commercial sex workers, disabled youth, and domestic workers) reported facing a range of issues, including denial of education and dropping out of school, neglect after losing parents to HIV/AIDS, early marriage, sexual abuse, exploitation, unwanted pregnancy, and/or contraction of HIV. Constrained by a lack of livelihood skills and alternatives, many young women resort to prostitution and subsequently become more vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.[200]

Disabled female youth in general are more vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) because of social exclusion, gender discrimination, limited mobility, communication barriers, and social perceptions that they are weak, stupid, or asexual. FGDs suggest that they are least likely of all groups to receive education (and subsequently jobs) because of a combination of stigma and lack of support structures, and thus often find themselves caught in the cycle of poverty. Some find themselves trapped in abusive relationships because they are financially and socially dependent on their partners and families for survival.

Alcohol / Drug Users / Abusers: As alcohol is easily accessible and socially accepted in Uganda, youth are particularly susceptible to alcohol abuse. The lack of employment opportunities was often cited by youth, particularly males, as a reason why they turned to alcohol/drugs and were co-opted into fighting and violence. Youth associated alcohol and drug abuse with many socioeconomic consequences, including low levels of productivity for working youth, GBV on campuses and across districts, rape, and defilement. Youth felt that such abuses compromise their ability to find and hold jobs. The pervasiveness of substance use creates both an additional risk for youth violence and criminality.

One NGO noted the dangers in the criminal justice system for youth and referred to prison as "basically a training camp for crime and illicit activities."

Juvenile Offenders: Respondents from one remand home[201] said young prisoners were caught in a vicious cycle: *"We end up stealing in search of capital, yet, when we are caught, we are taken back to prison."* Youth said they are denied jobs after being released from prison be-cause they lack skills and are burdened by social stigma. In one FGD, all ten men were in school when arrested, highlighting how disruptive these offenses can be for education of youth. Stakeholders in Kabale said that juveniles were often imprisoned with adults and hardened criminals, increasing the chances of recidivism. Some youth are both victims and perpetrators of violence and crime. One youth in Luwero said, *"On the negative side is that some youth are criminals who like gambling, stealing and robberies. It is mostly boys who are resorting to crimes. Girls are mostly into prostitution and some of them consume drugs."* Some youth said they felt targeted by those who want to create problems—especially by rebel groups, opposition politicians, or even government officials—and felt that they were the segment of the population that suffered most from this violence and disturbance.

Supply of Programs and Services for Youth in Karamoja

Karamoja is a far different region from the rest of Uganda, with extremely low levels of development. It has experienced armed conflict, prolonged drought, famine, and political and socioeconomic isolation from the rest of the country. According to an Oxfam study, the major causes of the conflict include culture, poverty, isolation, and absence of effective government.[202] It noted that conflict and insecurity in Karamoja are a manifestation of poverty, livelihood insecurity, and underdevelopment. Analysis of the 2010 UNHS data (see **Annex 7**) on the northeastern region reveals this picture:[203]

- *Population:* 21 percent of the population is aged 15 to 30 (60 percent is under 15 and 19 percent is above 30), which is slightly lower than the national average of 25 percent for the population aged 15 to 30.
- *Poverty:* Poverty rates are significantly higher than the rest of the country. Over 90 percent of the population lives in households that consume less than $1 per day.[204]
- *Education:* The education rate of those in the northeast is very low. The majority (76 percent) of those aged 18 to 24 are not in school. Those aged 18 to 30 have less than three to five years of education. Less than 10 percent of the population report having acquired any type of skills.

Food insecurity is linked to conflict in Karamoja, as the security situation makes it extremely difficult for pastoral communities to access food and natural resources. People have become less willing to travel distances to search for food due to perceived risks—further exacerbating food insecurity. Cattle rustling, theft, and violence to obtain livestock and natural resources from other people or communities are widespread, which in turn worsen food insecurity (particularly for the ones who lose livestock). These situations reinforce a vicious cycle and often result in tribal, cross-district, and cross-border conflicts. A baseline assessment report conducted by Mercy Corps noted that frequent and violent raiding of cattle is common throughout the region, regardless of an ongoing disarmament program in Uganda.[205] With easy access to guns, these conflicts often turn very violent, often resulting in human deaths and injuries, as well as the rape of women. Youth are often involved or manipulated to be part of these activities, particularly young warriors. One donor explained, *"In Karamoja, all youth have risks, from armed insecurity as perpetrators—as warriors—or as victims, especially young women. They all have risks of food insecurity because of the adverse weather conditions."*

The GOU initiated disarmament efforts in 2001, with a focus on young warriors; these efforts have had mixed success. It has made some groups (i.e., those that cooperated and gave up their guns) more vulnerable than others because the state cannot provide them with sufficient protection. Many Karamojong left the region due to loss of livestock, insecurity, a series of poor harvests, poverty, collapse of safety nets, and loss of breadwinners,[206] as well as other challenges faced by the nation as a whole. The GOU has established two ministries in the OPM: a Ministry of State in charge of Karamoja Development to run EU projects; and a Ministry of State for Northern Uganda Reconstruction to implement the Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme (NURP).[207] Programs for Karamoja also include the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) and Functional Adult Literacy.

While improvements are gradually being made, a number of important skills were reported to be missing according to the *YouthMap* market survey, as one employer in Nakapiripirit noted, *"Many skills are not locally available in Karamoja. There are no electricians, plumbers, masons or hoteliers. The hotel industry is affected because local people consider working in this industry as a form of prostitution. Hence, all our staff come from neighboring districts."* The recent NUSAF Youth Opportunities Program evaluation suggests that providing skills training combined with materials has had a significant positive impact on incomes and reduces violent aggression in Karamoja.[208]

There are a number of donors and NGOs operating in Karamoja. The USAID-funded Alternatives to Conflict in Karamoja and Turkana (ACKT) program, implemented by Mercy Corps, seeks to reduce conflicts in the border region through dialogue and support targeted cash-for-work programs. The World Food Program (WFP) purchases food from Karamojong farmers, which encourages them to form smallholder farmer groups to stimulate food production. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is implementing a peace-building project in Nakapiripirit to promote peace and sustainable development in areas bordering Uganda and Kenya. UNFPA is implementing an adolescent SRH program with Uganda Red Cross and a GBV program with local governments and development partners. Though while existing programs are making a contribution, demand for programs and services, discussed below, remains greater than supply; much more remains to be done to improve the situation of people in this underserved region.

Youth Demand in Karamoja

While it is impossible to generalize about all youth in Karamoja since they are not a homogenous group, they can be characterized by their hope for peace and security, their high levels of energy and resilience, and their strong desire to receive education. One educator in Nakapiripirit said, ***"When Karamojong youth are given an opportunity to learn, they catch up ably. They are cooperative, social, intelligent and hard working."*** The majority of youth interviewed either desire to go to school or start a small business, especially in livestock farming and trading, or other kinds of trading.

Risk factors commonly cited by youth include:

- Insecurity: armed conflicts, easy access to guns, and cattle rustling;
- Food insecurity, scarce resources, and lack of access to land;
- Lack of access to educational and employment opportunities and livelihood alternatives;
- Weak local governments and a sense of marginalization from existing initiatives.

> **Many youth interviewed shared their desire for peace. One youth in Nakapiripirit said,** *"I dream of peace and security in Karamoja."* **A young man in Kotido said,** *"I pray for peace to come to Karamoja so that development can prevail."*

Insecurity: Armed Conflicts, Easy Access to Guns, and Cattle Rustling: Youth are deeply concerned about their security, given various forms of conflict taking place in the region—tribal, cross-district, and cross-border conflicts. In both Kotido and Nakapiripirit, despite the GOU's ongoing disarmament efforts, some youth acknowledged that they are still hiding their guns because: 1) there is not sufficient state protection, and 2) guns are a key source of livelihood. Some youth disappear into the bushes from where they launch attacks on livestock and human targets—one of the reasons why there remains livestock theft. Youth also felt that in some cases, it is the youth who have continued to perpetuate the proliferation of illegal firearms—they were said to engage in the buying and selling of illegal guns, which they hide from their families, and continue to use to commit crimes such as cattle rustling. This is a complicated issue and will prove to be difficult to control without addressing the main roots of the conflict, and as long as the youth continue to rely on raiding and livestock theft as a source of income.

A baseline assessment report by the ACKT project suggested that youth can play effective roles in conflict mitigation: "The fact that youth are rated as effective in conflict mitigation shows the potential for engaging youth in conflict mitigation. Youth are usually the perpetrators of cattle raids, but they understand the motivations of their peers so they are uniquely positioned."[209] In this study, youth were ranked third most effective in resolving cattle raiding disputes after the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) and local government.

Food Insecurity, Scarce Resources, and Lack of Access to Land: Like youth in other areas, youth in Karamoja are affected by food insecurity. It is the major livelihood challenge and source of risk because many are pressured to travel long distances to search for food, making them extremely vulnerable to insecurity. As described above, some resort to stealing livestock and food items as a result of hunger. Youth lamented not having access to land in this patriarchal society where land is communally owned, controlled, and distributed by clan leaders (elders). This leads to many youth being idle and increases their chances of joining the warrior culture and cattle raids. In traditional pastoral communities, youth are encouraged to demonstrate "ferocity" through cattle raids, and their ability to pay bride price, often in the form of cows.

> **The majority of youth are frustrated by the lack of jobs and alternative livelihood options. One NGO representative in Nakapiriprit explained,** *"There is no training for youth. Three quarters of the youth are unemployed – that's why they go for raids."*

Lack of Access to Educational Opportunities: Access to education remains a major challenge for youth in Karamoja. Unlike youth in other places, Karamojong youth interviewed consider formal schooling relevant to prepare them for jobs. Respondents who are primary and secondary school graduates reported difficulty in finding jobs. In addition to the fact that there are few schools, stakeholders reported that another reason for low education rates is because of cultural attitudes toward education. One youth in Nakapiripirit said, *"It is because of the illiteracy of parents who do now know the importance of education for their children."* Those who are fortunate enough to receive education outside of Karamoja typically do not return home, resulting in a continued outmigration of those with education.
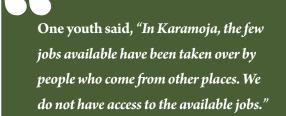
Lack of Employment Opportunities and Livelihood Alternatives: Many male youth interviewed are working as casual or seasonal laborers in areas of construction sites, brick making or bricklaying, collecting water for sale in towns, crop farming, riding *boda boda* taxis or petty trades. Young women said they engage in tailoring, hairdressing, collecting firewood, or domestic work for income. Some secondary graduates are working as teachers in primary schools or the ABEK program, or with NGOs/CBOs as community mobilizers and field/office assistants. The public sector (UPDF, police, and local development offices) creates a limited number of jobs for youth, as noted by an NGO representative: *"Recent recruitment of youth into local development units in Karamoja has helped provide employment for youth who are now earning some regular*

income." The NGO sector also creates some jobs but these are mostly occupied by non-Karamojong youth. Employers tend to bring in outsiders due to lack of skills in the region, which makes it more difficult for locals to get jobs.

Some youth in Nakapiriprit are involved in crop farming, with increased support from government programs. However, they face challenges from prolonged droughts and lack of sufficient land, farm inputs, and labor. A number of youth interviewed are involved in risky or illegal activities, such as collecting and selling *mira* leaves, charcoal burning, brewing and selling local alcohol, prostitution, par-

> " One youth said, *"In Karamoja, the few jobs available have been taken over by people who come from other places. We do not have access to the available jobs."*

ticipating in armed conflicts, and livestock theft or cattle raiding. Most have been affected by armed conflicts associated with cattle rustling because it is often the youth who look after the livestock, and therefore they are targeted during raids and cattle theft. Respondents also reported being exposed to various forms of harassment ranging from sexual abuse, rape, and violence associated with livestock raiding. Young women often suffer when they encounter raiders while performing their assigned livelihood roles such as collecting water and firewood.

Weak Local Governments and Limited Civic Engagement Opportunities: Many youth reported participating in community activities that focus on health issues, community sports activities, or religious activities. However, some youth felt that they were not allowed to play substantive roles because of the nature of Karamoja as a patriarchal society. **Youth reported feeling excluded from both local and traditional political systems, such as *akiriket* (traditional assembly of elders in Karamoja) where decisions for youth are made.** Some reported participating in recent elections, working as polling assistants or helping with voter education initiatives. They felt that they are not able to engage in normal livelihood activities because of the lack of state security. Respondents urged government programs to better target youth who are most in need. They think that local leaders only listen to them when they want to access resources earmarked for youth. Youth also feel "subjected" to grand public and private schemes, which they say they have no role in designing and cannot influence.

Supply of Programs and Services for Youth in Northern Uganda

Although the war has ended after more than 20 years of conflict and interventions have progressed from humanitarian relief to recovery and long-term development, most people in northern Uganda are still living in absolute poverty.[210] People still struggle with trauma and psychosocial impacts of the war, particularly young and female ex-abductees who suffered from the prevalence of sexual and violent assaults. However, many psychosocial programs have ended, and even for existing ones, there appears to be a mismatch between the needs of youth and the available interventions. Programs tend to focus primarily on humanitarian needs and psychological support and place less emphasis on education and training.[211] While the region shows resilience after the war, it lags far behind compared to other regions. According to analysis of the 2010 UNHS data (see **Annex 7**), youth in the north are the poorest in the country with the lowest rates of education; the highest student-to-teacher ratios; the worst access to schools; the lowest percentages in wage employment; and the lowest rates of skills training.

There are a number of NGOs operating in northern Uganda, though few programs specifically target youth (see **Annex 12**). Programs implemented by the GOU and NGOs to uplift the welfare of people, including youth, have had mixed success. A study by the Survey of War Affected Youth (SWAY) found that while programs train youth as carpenters, tailors, and mechanics, there was little evidence supporting the effectiveness and worth of such spending.[212] The GOU's NUSAF program is highlighted as a successful model where youth were given money to purchase skills training from local training facilities of their choice, along with enterprise development support. Preliminary results from a randomized trial suggest that youth used the money effectively and the businesses they established have earned relatively high levels of profit.

Youth Demand in Northern Uganda

Respondents who were former child abductees reported suffering both interrupted education and a lamentable inability to re-assimilate into their home communities. Youth born in captivity face much bigger challenges, particularly when their mothers died in captivity. Their real reintegration is a challenge as they do not know where they belong. One young man from Gulu shared: *"I am a boy born in captivity where there was no school. I do not even know where my people are. My mother died in the bush and she did not show me my father who was a soldier in the LRA."* Many unaffected community members stigmatize these returned abductees for having suffered the misfortune of being abducted. Not surprisingly, many former abductees find a certain degree of acceptance in the anonymity of urban centers, at the cost of having to sever contact with family and old friends.

As in other areas, disabled youth face stigma and discrimination. The conflict and the movement of people have eroded the community networks that might have bolstered them in the past. Young women who were hurt physically face a far greater challenge and suffer from lingering psychological ramifications, as this young woman in Gulu explained, *"I was maimed during the war. My mouth and nose was chopped off. My main problem is looking after my children and buying food. People always abuse me and my children."*

> One youth said, *"The war created a serious situation of ignorance among youth. All schools were dilapidated, students were abducted."*

Education and Livelihood Opportunities: Despite universal education laws, access to schooling is still difficult. One youth said, *"This LRA war has disrupted income generating activities which we could have relied on to get money for school fees."* Many youth report that finishing school is a major priority for many, as they hope to start a business, either in agriculture or in a skilled trade. Many report using their education and work to help other people in their communities. While demonstrating a high level of energy and excitement to succeed, youth are concerned about the effect the war had on their ability to finish their schooling and find work. This belief was confirmed by analysis of the 2010 UNHS data that shows the presence of schools in the north are far behind the rest of the country. The effects of the war and the lack of jobs thus constitute the main issues for youth. Access to capital is difficult for rural people all over Uganda, but is especially problematic in the north, where there are few banking institutions and collateral has been damaged or lost. The *YouthMap* assessment found that **the primary economic activity for youth has been and will continue to be agriculture and herding.**

Youth Perception of Government Programs: Many youth reported feeling marginalized in ongoing efforts to include youth in political processes. The GOU has begun youth political associations in order to engage youth in northern Uganda. Stakeholders interviewed suggested that the Gulu youth leader office has failed to reach the youth or engage them in any political processes outside the ruling political party. Respondents questioned the effectiveness of existing programs, and some exhibited research fatigue and reluctance to participate. They said the reason is because **they have not benefitted directly or existing programs have been benefiting the better off at the expense of the poorest.** One youth stated, *"There is always a lot of nepotism in selecting youth … there is a school established in Gulu meant for ex-abductees, but right now if you go there, you will find more than half of the students have never been abducted. They are children from families of district staff."* Many youth appear very sensitive to such perceived misuse of funds and call for more transparent programming. They also call for community integration initiatives for ex-abductees.

Key Conclusions

- Poverty, social stigma, lack of support structures, and a host of external factors contribute to the vulnerability of Uganda's most disadvantaged youth cohorts. Young people across the country are deeply affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, high substance abuse, deteriorating family structures and changing social values, and lack of access to land and other resources.

- Youth in Karamoja and northern Uganda face uniquely challenging situations as a result of the armed conflicts,

insecurity, weak governance structures, and other factors.

- The demand for services far exceeds supply, exacerbating vulnerability; there are also mismatches between youth needs and available interventions.

- Youth linked their risky behavior and engagement in illicit activities to unemployment, idleness, poverty, and lack of support structures. They reported an overwhelming sense of alienation, hopelessness, and insecurity.

- Young women are especially vulnerable, experiencing psychological and physical hardships as a result of conflict, abuse, and traditional systems that disempower women.

- Findings confirm that each cohort of vulnerable youth encompasses some unique characteristics and youth feel that appropriate programs and services generally do not reach them; therefore, targeted research or assessment work is needed to understand specific needs of target groups as programs are designed. Unless the root causes of vulnerability are understood and addressed, youth will continue doing what it takes for survival, and Uganda will likely face greater social and political consequences.

- Yet despite the most challenging situations, many youth spoke of their high energy, resilience, and a strong desire to receive education, find work, and contribute to peace and development in their communities. Development efforts should acknowledge their significant potential and seek to create substantive roles for youth to engage in peace-building and civic activities, allowing them to build confidence, leadership skills, and empowerment.

- Findings also highlight the need for the GOU to take measures to better support and create enabling environments for youth at risk, in close collaboration with communities and development partners.

ENDNOTES

1. Youth:Work is a five-year youth employability program implemented by IYF and funded by USAID/Washington through its Office of Urban Programs (EGAT/UP). *YouthMap* is an Associate Award under this "Leader with Associates" cooperative agreement.

2. Subsequent references to USAID in this report refer to USAID/Uganda.

3. Please note that FHI 360 conducted field work in Butaleja as an alternative to Mbale on account of logistics and language considerations.

4. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "Projections of Demographic Trends in Uganda 2007-2017," (Dec.2007), p. 9

5. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010. See **Annex 7**.

6. MoES, "Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance Report (ESSAPR)", 2008.

7. World Bank, "Post Primary Education Program Increases Student Enrollment in Uganda,"
<web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/UGANDAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:22690983~menuPK:374871~pagePK:2865066~piPK:2865079~theSitePK:374864,00.html>.

8. MoES, "Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance Report (ESSAPR)", 2008.

9. Government schools are not all USE. In particular, many schools formerly run by churches have been taken over by the government, but are not USE Schools, meaning they charge fees.

10. Prior to the liberalization of the education system, all institutions were managed by the GOU. Since private schools have been allowed to operate, a large number of private secondary schools and universities have opened opportunities for Ugandans to study.

11. MoES, "USE/UPPET National Headcount 2011 report".

12. The evaluations will continue throughout 2012 and results should be available in 2013.

13. MoES, "USE/UPPET National Headcount 2011 report".

14. Wesonga, Deborah. Key Informant Interview, Namutumba. April 26, 2011.

15. GOU, "Ugandan National Development Plan (2010/2011-2014/2015)", p. 215.

16. GOU, "Ugandan National Development Plan (2010/2011-2014/2015)", p. 215.

17. Ministry of Education, Key Informant Interview, Namutumba, April 20, 2011.

18. GOU, "Ugandan National Development Plan (2010/2011-2014/2015)", p. 213.

19. GOU, MoES, "Recommendations to Improve BTVET in Uganda: Synthesis Report of the BTVET Sub-sector Analysis—*DRAFT*", January 2011. The study was supported by the World Bank and Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) Uganda.

20. MoES, "Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance Report (ESSAPR)", 2008.

21. BTVET studies reviewed include:
1) Randomized evaluation of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) Project;
2) IRC's Tracer Study of Livelihoods Education and Protection to End Child Labor (LEAP) Project;
3) Synthesis Report of the BTVET Sub-Sector Analysis by MoES and BTC Uganda;
4) Impact evaluation of Skills for Peace and Income (SKIPI) Uganda:
<www.unido.org/fileadmin/user_media/About_UNIDO/Evaluation/UGA-SKIPI_e-book.PDF>.

22. According to the NDP, accurate data are lacking on the actual employability of graduates including job opportunities and evolving skills demands in the labor market (see p. 242). "This is attributed to absence of institutionalized skills development as well as labor market and employment surveys. *The last comprehensive labor market survey occurred 40 years ago and a national manpower survey was last conducted in 1988.*" [emphasis added] <www.undp.or.ug/download.php?f=520_NDP_2010.pdf>.

23. In some education systems, clusters of schools are created at the decentralized level to increase the support to school directors and teachers in more remote schools. With one school serving as cluster center, usually a secondary school or institution with better infrastructure

and support, other schools in the cluster are supported through teacher training, networking and/or access to resources, such as books, electricity, computers, etc.

24. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "Projections of Demographic Trends in Uganda 2007-2017", (Dec.2007), p. 9.

25. Wedig, Karen, "Linking Labour Organisation and Vocational Training in Uganda: Lessons for Rural Poverty Reduction," (May 2010), p.14.

26. International Rescue Committee, AVSI, "Livelihoods Education and Protection to End Child Labor (LEAP) Project: Tracer Study Report on Non-formal Vocational and Apprenticeship Training Graduates," October 2010.

27. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010. See **Annex 7**.

28. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010. See **Annex 7**.

29. The *YouthMap* conceptual framework adapts the construct of supply and demand (as understood in the field of economics) to analyze "supply" as the services, programs, and opportunities available to youth and "demand" as youth perspectives, needs, challenges, assets, and agency.

30. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "Report on the Findings of the Urban Labour Force" (2009), pp. vii, 21.

31. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/10. See **Annex 7**: The report on the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010.

32. World Bank. "The African Development Indicators Report." 2009. <siteresources.worldbank.org/ INTSTATINAFR/Resources/ADI-200809-essay-EN.pdf>.

33. Conan Businge. "Is a degree still worth it?" Sunday Vision 21 July 2011. <www.sundayvision.co.ug/ detail.php?mainNewsCategoryId=7&newsCategoryId=134&newsId=750794>. The Ugandan Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development defines a person as underemployed if he or she worked less than 40 hours a week and is available to work more hours, noting that such a person is not "fully utilizing his/her skills, education and experience in the current employment".

34. Conan Businge. "Is a degree still worth it?" Sunday Vision 21 July 2011. Also see UYONET, "The National Youth Manifesto: Youth Voices Count (2011-2016)".

35. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "Report on the Findings of the Urban Labour Force" (2009), pp vii, 21.

36. The Republic of Uganda, "National Development Plan - NDP (2010/11-2014/15)," The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Kampala.

37. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/10. See **Annex 7**: The report on the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010.

38. Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan: 2010/11-2014/15, p.23. See also World Bank, *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation*, pp. 4-5 for a discussion of the "youth bulge" across regions.

39. The Republic of Uganda, "National Development Plan (2010/11-2014/15)," p.1. <www.undp.or.ug/download.php?f=520_NDP_2010.pdf>.

40. The Republic of Uganda, "The National Employment Policy (NEP) for Uganda," April 2011.

41. See the Feed the Future's FY2010 Implementation Plan, p.5.

42. Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan: 2010/11-2014/15, p. 23. <www.caadp.net/pdf/Investment%20Plan-uganda.pdf>.

43. These are self-help cooperatives where members save together and offer loans to each other at reasonable rates of interests, which help cover costs of administration. There are also village savings and loans associations (VSLA) which help provide small capitals to undertake livelihood activities, with high participation of women. Similarly, the Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) has created saving schemes involving youth and provided loans at a low interest rate—generating Ush.1.1 billion in savings from 82 groups. Those who cannot save can sell their labor and use the money as their contributions. For more information, visit Uganda Cooperative

Savings and Credit Ltd. website <www.ucscu.co.ug/>.

44. For more information, visit National Agricultural Advisory Services <www.naads.or.ug/about-naads/mission-vision/>.

45. Data from the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/10. See **Annex 7**: The report on the Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, November 2010.

46. International Labor Organization, "Uganda Decent Work Programme 2007-2010," (May 2007), p. 9.

47. Businge, Conan and Sophie Nakikata. "98% businesses owned by Ugandans." New Vision 18 July 2011. <newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/760535 >.

48. The term ecotourism is defined as "Travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations found in these areas." Uganda Export Promotion Board, *Uganda: Ecotourism Assessment*, June 2006, page 4. <www.biotrade.org/ResourcesNewsAssess/Uganda_ecotourism_assesment.pdf>.

49. Investments come from India, United Kingdom, Middle East, China, and South Africa.

50. Embassy of the United States, Kampala, Uganda. <kampala.usembassy.gov/business.html>.

51. Economist Intelligence Unit. "Country Report: Uganda." June 2011.

52. Oil and Gas Discovery in Uganda: Challenges and Opportunities," USAID Presentation by Mugyenyi Onesmus, May 26, 2011.

53. National Employment Plan (NEP).

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59. NEP and International Labour Organization/Cooperative Facility for Africa. "Uganda: Country Profile." <www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/ent/coop/africa/countries/eastafrica/uganda.htm>.

60. Survey for War Affected Youth, "The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda," September 2006, p.37.

61. *Waragi* or *enguli*. While brewing is illegal if one is below 18 or operates without a license, these laws are poorly enforced. Uganda was ranked first from 189 WHO member states in terms of alcohol consumption (four times higher than the world average). Y.E.A.H. Uganda, "Alcohol Consumption in Uganda: Literature Review." March 2007. <www.yeahuganda.org/pdfs/research/AlcoholConsumption.pdf>.

62. The Republic of Uganda, "National Development Plan - NDP (2010/11-2014/15)", p. 204.

63. For information on skills training in the informal sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, see Richard K. Johanson and Arvil V. Adams, *Skills Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004).

64. Necessity-based entrepreneurs refer to those who are unable to find wage employment and therefore running micro or small businesses.

65. USAID MicroReport #38, "Microfinance, Youth, and Conflict: Central Uganda Case Study." 2006. p. 3.

66. Uganda Investment Authority. 2010 Baseline Survey of Small and Medium Enterprises in Uganda. Draft Final Report. February, 2011. p. 21

67. World Bank, "Doing Business 2011: Making a Difference for Entrepreneurs." <www.doingbusiness.org/~/media/FPDKM/Doing%20Business/Documents/Annual-Reports/English/DB11-FullReport.pdf>.

68. World Bank, "Doing Business 2011: Making a Difference for Entrepreneurs."

69. According to SWAY in 2006, in Northern Uganda, few youth had access to land, and the majority of work performed was in the form of small, sporadic, unprofitable work with little pay, about 55 cents per day. Survey for War Affected Youth, "The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda." September. 2006. p. 37. Authors: Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman and Roger Horton.

70. Uganda was ranked 127th out of 178 countries by Transparency International. Uganda got the corruption score of 2.5 out of 10, with 10 being very clean and 0 being highly corrupt. Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index for 2010." <www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results>.

71. Uganda is rated 87.8 out of 100 in labor freedom by the Heritage Foundation, meaning dismissing an employee is not difficult. Enforcement of labor standard and regulations has not been effective due to a chronic lack of administrative resources. The Heritage Foundation, "2011 Index of Economic Freedom: Uganda." <www.heritage.org/Index/Country/Uganda>. For more information on measurement tools, see Schumpeter (Feb 24, 2011). Uncorking Enterprise. *The Economist.* <www.economist.com/node/18227144>.

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179. The numbers of youth who said they were registered to vote were self-reported figures and therefore they may be overstated.

180. Youth policy demand 6 (p.12) in National Youth Manifesto 2011-2016. Youth in brigades are largely seen as an obstacle to political participation as they often contribute to violence and fear among youth and others, particularly during elections. Such brigades and para-military groups are 'bused in' to drum up support for a candidate or party and sometimes attack members of the opposition. Some youth also noted that such activities (using violence) were a means to participate and for which they may be paid. Per the NYM, government and political party leaders must disband political party youth brigades and paramilitary groups in all subsequent electioneering processes. Government should also reorganize existing youth structures as grounds for grooming future political leaders with values of tolerance and non-violence.

181. Norwegian Council for Africa, "Uganda: 7.5 million youth to vote in 2011," (April 2009), <www.afrika.no/Detailed/18145.html>.

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183. According to 2009 data from the Research ICT Africa, 28,395 Ugandans are mobile post-paid subscribers and 9,181,029 are mobile pre-paid subscribers. Total fixed wireless subscribers number 47,827 and mobile internet users 310,056. <research-iwp.hostfilemaker.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=RIA_Country_database&-loadframes>.

184. UYONET recently received NED funding to implement 'Strengthening Uganda's Civil Society Participation in Governance,' a one-year project to strengthen citizen civic competency by focusing on the election cycle and using new innovative and effective interventions including the use of new social media (e.g. Twitter and Facebook). The project will support stronger lobby and advocacy efforts for political accountability by eight partner youth CSOs in Kampala, Wakiso, Gulu, and Mbale. It will also build the capacity of the newly elected youth leaders (local and national) and operationalize the National Youth Manifesto.

185. Uganda Communication Profile. See above.

186. An OVC is a child who is orphaned or made vulnerable because of HIV/AIDS. Orphan: Has lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. Vulnerable: Is more vulnerable because of any or all of the following factors: is HIV-positive; lives without adequate adult support; lives outside of family care; or is marginalized, stigmatized or discriminated against.

187. The Oxfam Karamoja Conflict Study noted that the attacks on innocent and unarmed women, children, and the aged are becoming the norm rather than the exception. Oxfam, "Uganda: The Karamoja Conflict: Origins, Impact and Solutions," 2004. <www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/learning/pastoralism/downloads/karamoja_conflict.pdf>.

188. Uganda Poverty Report, 2005. <www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/2_CPR-Uganda2005_Summary.pdf>.

189. They include: school dropouts and out-of-school youth; female youth; urban youth migrants; youth affected by armed conflict; youth inmates; youth with disabilities, illiterate youth; domestic servants/helpers; street youth; orphans; youth infected/affected with HIV/AIDS; rural youth; unemployed youth; youth in schools; youth in security agencies; pastoral and nomadic youth; sex workers; youth in refugee camps; youth who are terminally ill; youth addicted to drugs and substances; youth in the informal sector; and employed youth below the age of 18. The Department of Youth and Children Affairs within the MGLSD is tasked with ensuring the care, protection, and empowerment of children and youth. National Youth Policy 2001, Section 9.0. According to the NDP, out of an estimated 16.8 million children, 7.5 million or 46 percent experience child poverty.

190. National Development Plan, p. 277.

191. International Labour Organization, "Uganda Decent Work Programme," (May 2007), p. 14.

192. The 2002 Population and Housing Census.

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194. Uganda was ranked first among 189 WHO member states in terms of alcohol consumption (four times higher than the world average). Y.E.A.H. Uganda, "Alcohol Consumption in Uganda: Literature Review." March 2007.

195. Uganda Prison Services, "Census of Prisoners in 48 Central Government Prisons, (Sept. 2007), pp. 16, 22.

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198. This information was taken from USAID /NGO partner surveys. See **Annex 11**.

199. According to the 2009 Uganda Human Rights Commission report, the most serious and deeply rooted factor affecting the enjoyment of the rights of PWDs was that of attitude. There were quite a number of cultural and societal beliefs surrounding the causes of disability even when it was a result of an accident, with people sometimes attributing such misfortune to a bad omen.

200. For example, one study found that 37 percent of sex workers in Kampala were HIV-positive, while 10 percent had syphilis. The study was published by the Journal of the American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association in April 2011 <allafrica.com/stories/201105100318.html>.

201. This remand house is located in Kampala. When young people are under 18 years old and commit a crime, they are placed in remand homes in Uganda.

202. Oxfam, "The Karamoja Conflict: Origins, Impact and Solutions." <www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ learning/pastoralism/downloads/karamoja_conflict.pdf>.

203. The northeastern region was used as a proxy for Karamoja, a sub-region of the north of Uganda that has extremely low levels of development. The assessment used the UNHS definition of the northeast, which includes Kotido, Abim, Moroto, Kaabong, Nakapiripiriti, Katwaki, Amuria, Bukedea, Soroti, Kumi, and Kaberamaido districts. This list includes some districts outside of Karamoja in the Iteso region (Amuria, Bukedea, Soroti, and Kumi). Due to UNHS data limitations, it is not possible to separate out the Iteso districts. As Iteso is normally considered to be significantly better off than Karamoja, including these districts in the analysis means that the results here understate the level of poverty in Karamoja.

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205. Mercy Corps, "Alternatives to Conflict in Karamoja and Turkana (ACKT): Baseline Assessment Report," February 2011.

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210. Regional Survey on Equity and Equal Opportunities Capacity Gaps for Vulnerable Groups in Northern Uganda, p. 1. During the civil war in northern Uganda, 1.6 million people were displaced—up to 90 percent of the population in some areas, according to the Northern Uganda Surveys conducted by UBOS in 2004 and 2008.

211. Survey for War Affected Youth, "The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda" (Sept. 2006), pp. 10-12.

212. Chris Blattman, "Uganda: Post-war Youth Vocational Training"<chrisblattman.com/projects/nusaf_yo/>. As noted above, an evaluation of Uganda's largest youth vocational training program is underway.

CONTRIBUTORS