

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

# **THE NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY**

*A Vision for Youth In The 21st Century*

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

KAMPALA, 2001

## **PREFACE**

The lives of millions of Ugandan Youth are marred by poverty, inadequate education and skills, inadequate work/employment opportunities, exploitation, diseases, civil unrest and gender discrimination. The environment they live in brings both new possibilities and new risks that undermine the traditional social support that helps the Youth prepare for, negotiate and explore the opportunities and demands of their passage to adulthood.

Given this situation, investment in Youth is not only a social obligation but also rewarding in economic sense. This is because the Youth are the country's most valuable asset, are an integral component of the development process and they provide for and safeguard the future of the nation.

This calls for all stakeholders to make a concerted effort to plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and strengthen activities of the Youth; with the Youth.

This policy has been developed as a step forward to invest in the Youth. It provides an operational framework to all the actors with a set of realistic guidelines from which action programmes and services can be developed to facilitate meaningful involvement of Youth in national development efforts and to respond to their various needs and problems.

The process of developing this policy has been consultative, participatory and inclusive in terms of the involvement of key stakeholders and has been spearheaded by the Department of Youth and Children Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, with diligent support from the National Youth Policy Task Force. Their special roles and efforts are recognised and appreciated.

The vision and sets of actions contained in this document gives me a strong inspiration to wait for that moment when all Youth of Uganda are nurtured, protected, educated, equipped with skills and economically, politically and socially empowered. I long to see them gainfully employed and actively participating in the development of the country.

I therefore call on all the stakeholders to constantly use and refer to this policy document as a source of strength and inspiration for advancing the youth of Uganda in the 21st century.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based Organisation
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NUSU	National Union of Students of Uganda
NUYO	National Union of Youth Organisation
NYP	National Youth Policy
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UYDO	Uganda Youth Development Organisation
YCS	Young Christian Students
YES	Youth Enterprise (Credit) Scheme
YFU	Young Farmers Union
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Historical Background

Since independence, Uganda has lacked an explicit, coherent, and comprehensive National Youth Policy (NYP) to guide and ensure sustainable youth development. Youth planning has been organisation-based and reactive to prevailing circumstances.

However, National Planning for youth development dates back to the 1960s when Government established a section of Youth within the Ministry of Culture and Community Development. The Government also established three Youth Organisations namely: National Union of Youth Organisation (NUYO), which was replaced by Uganda Youth Development Organisation (UYDO) in the 1970s; National Union of Students of Uganda (NUSU) and Youth Farmers Union (YFU). NUYO targeted out-of-school youth between the ages 13-30 years, Young Farmers Union (YFU) targeted in and out-of-school youth between 10-25 years while National Union of Students of Uganda (NUSU) targeted youth in Secondary and Tertiary Institutions.

Each of these youth bodies fell under the mandate of different Ministries. The NUYO was under the Ministry of Culture and Community Development, the YFU was under the Ministry of Agriculture, while NUSU was under the Ministry of Education.

These programmes because of strong economic base the country enjoyed at the time, received substantial and extensive support from Government in terms of resources and facilities. They also enjoyed support from International Agencies like Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) towards the YFU programme, United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for girls and vocational training.

At the time there were also a few local Non Governmental Organisation (NGOs). Most of these were mainly based on the UK model e.g. the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides movement, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Boys and Girls Brigade and the St. John's Ambulance services. Others were religious based like the Young Christian Students (YCS). All these bodies aimed at character formation and inculcating religious value in the youth.

Therefore, while the 1960s saw dynamic youth programmes in Uganda, the strengths of these programmes were dependent on the heavy investment by Government and NGOs. They tried to address the broad range of social and economic needs of the youth, they were rural focused and provided opportunities for the most disadvantaged out of school youth.

Like most sectors, youth services/programmes lagged behind during the period of economic mismanagement and civil strife in Uganda. Terms like 'magendo', 'bayaye', street children/Youth, cropped up in Uganda's vocabulary.

Many youth dropped out of school to do 'magendo' and education lost meaning. A number of them joined armed struggles and came to be commonly known as 'kadogos'. Rural-urban migration of the youth increased. New diseases like the Human Immune-deficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) surfaced, the worst hit population group being those between 12 - 30 years. Many households came to be headed by young people in circumstances where adults were claimed by AIDS or the armed struggles.

Programmes for youth declined and some collapsed. They were characterized by lack of funding. The general breakdown of the social, economic and political fabric of society meant a loss of the support system that sustained youth programmes in the decade of the 1960s. Manipulation of the youth by some politicians also created suspicions towards Government instituted youth bodies.

In 1986, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government made a radical departure in organising the youth. A Youth Affairs section within the then Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports was upgraded to a department level to be headed by a Commissioner. A structure for Youth mobilisation was reinstated that was all embracing and whose membership was by virtue of Ugandan citizenship aged 18-30 years, and not by registration or belonging to a society. A National Youth Council Statute was passed by Parliament in 1993 and election of youth representatives from grassroots to national level and the legislature were effected.

While the NRM Government put in place structures to empower the youth, socially and economically, these have not been accompanied by sufficient resources. Both the department responsible for youth and the National Youth Council lack adequate resources. While a number of measures have been adopted to address

the concerns of the youth such as the skills and enterprise development Programmes, the Youth Enterprise (Credit) Scheme (YES), these efforts are still insufficient to meet the varied needs of the majority of youth.

It should also be noted that unlike in the past, the period between the late 1980s to 1990s saw many youth serving organisations and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) emerge which, while doing commendable jobs, work independently of each other. Their efforts are fragmented and do not reach all the youth. Other Internationally supported youth initiatives especially in the areas of Health and Credit Schemes are being implemented in a number of districts. These like the efforts of NGOs are limited in scope and address only selected areas of needs of the youth. They are holistic and are not countrywide.

In addition the Government policy on decentralisation transferred responsibilities of youth service provisions and resourcing to local authorities thus calling for new methods and techniques to youth development.

It was against this background that the Government decided to come out with an explicit and coordinated National Youth Policy. A policy that would address the developmental needs of the youth in a comprehensive manner.

Accordingly, in November 1997 a Youth Policy Committee was inaugurated. The committee prepared a framework to guide the process of the policy formulation between 1997-2000.

## **2.0 THE YOUTH OF UGANDA: A SITUATION ANALYSIS**

As part of preparing the National Youth Policy, activities such as review of literature on Youth policies and Programmes; consultation with the youth and other stakeholders; convening of a National Youth Policy workshop, and a Consensus Conference were carried out. Arising out of those activities the following youth situation was established:

### **2.1 Youth Population**

The youth 15-19 years constitute about 29% of the 21.6 million estimated Uganda's population. Of these, females constitute 53% and males 47%. Most of the youth live in rural areas.

### **2.2 Youth and Migration**

A trend of rural-urban migration by the youth is observable. The major causes for this migration pattern are:

- Search for better social services and amenities like Education and Health services;
- Search for employment and/or business opportunities;
- Insecurity;
- Domestic Violence;
- Parental Neglect.

However, most of the youth fail to get jobs and end up in urban slums and streets. They engage in unproductive or anti social activities like prostitution, thuggery, drugs and substance abuse. They increase pressure on the few urban facilities and amenities.

### **2.3 Youth, Poverty, Employment and Productivity**

Poverty, Unemployment and underemployment are the main problems affecting the youth. The major causes of these problems are:

- Lack of employable skills;
- Lack of access to resources like land and capital;
- Lack of focus by the existing programmes on the informal sector and agriculture;
- Overemphasis on experience and lack of apprenticeship schemes;

- Negative attitudes by the Youth towards work especially in agriculture;
- Lack of a comprehensive Employment Policy;
- Negative cultural attitudes such as gender discrimination.

## **2.4 Youth, Education and Training**

Prior to the launch of Universal Primary Education (UPE), the Primary Education system suffered from low enrolment and completion rates; and lack of relevance in the whole Education Curriculum in meeting the real life aspirations, demands and society needs. The rural female and disadvantaged youth tended to benefit less from the system. By 1990, 24.3% of males and 34.7% of females above 6 years were not attending school. Only 2.9 million out of 3.9 million were enrolled in school irrespective of age. Amongst those attending school, the dropout rates for females was higher than that of male counterparts with disparities becoming larger with the education ladder. Even the affirmative action of 1.5 points to female students on entry to Makerere University has not adequately addressed the imbalance. Overall two thirds of the youth 67.8 are literate. Like in the general population, male youth are more literate than female youth at 76.7% and 59.9% respectively.

The salient issues experienced by the youth in the area of education and training include:

- i) Skewedness of education and training institutions in favour of urban areas;
- ii) Lack of equity and accessibility to education and training facilities;
- iii) Lack of vocationalisation of education at all levels;
- iv) Inadequate education and training facilities;
- v) Shortage of personnel with quality practical skills training.

## **2.5 Youth and Health**

According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS, 1995) the youth in Uganda contribute significantly to the number of morbidity and mortality cases. Their health problems and needs are of basic nature as well as specific in such issues as sexual and reproductive health, substance/drug abuse and mental health. Many suffer from Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and about 47% of the 1.8 million HIV/AIDS cases are youth, with female being more infected and vulnerable than their male counterparts.

Teenage pregnancy stands at 43% (UDHS, 1995), while maternal morbidity and mortality has persistently re-mained high at 506/100,000 live births - many of which cases are youth. All these are partly because the youth exhibit early sexual debut averaged at 16 years for girls and 17.6 years for boys.

The factors contributing to this situation are:

- Inadequate health facilities;
- High costs of health services;
- Lack of youth friendly health services;
- Lack of relevant health information;
- Negative cultural practices.

## **2.6 Youth, Participation and Decision Making**

Trend analysis of involvement and participation in leadership and decision making since independence shows that the youth were mostly marginalized and their involvement seen only as beneficiaries of programmes/service rather than as active participants in the development process. The National Youth Council statute was enacted in 1993 as a platform to organise youth into a unified body to participate in the

development process. But still participation or representation of the youth less than 25 years of age or those who are illiterate or semi illiterate in the position of leadership at all levels is limited. The low participation of the youth in decision-making is mainly due to:

- i) Lack of leadership and management skills;
- ii) Organisational regulatory barriers and impediments;
- iii) Low resource allocation to Youth Programmes.

## **2.7 Youth, Leisure, Sports and Recreation**

Most Ugandan Youth especially the rural youth and those out of school have not had the blessing and opportunity to experience planned and programmed physical activities geared to enhance life and good health. This is a result of lack of an appropriate Sports Policy, recreational and leisure facilities, sports training institutions and lack of adequate funding to promote sports for all.

## **2.8 Youth, Society and Culture**

Uganda being a multi-ethnic country with 56 different ethnic groups has so many divergent beliefs and practices. These include issues of early non-consensual marriage where over 50% of Ugandan women marry before 18 years, while their male counterparts marry at 23 years. Other negative practices include wife inheritance/sharing or replacement, Female Genital Mutilation, with associated rituals and culture that teaches females submissiveness rather than assertiveness.

The urban youth are also experiencing a lot of influence from Western culture through the media and are continuously and inappropriately exposed to pornographic materials. This coupled with changing family structures, disruptions etc. challenge traditional control on behaviours of youth. This leaves them in a generation with no clear cultural identity or values often conflicting with society and established structures.

Furthermore the youth in nomadic and pastoral communities experience unique conditions such as lack of education and health facilities and engage in cattle rustling which warrant special consideration.

## **2.9 Youth and Crime**

63% of the in-mates are youth. This locks out a large number of otherwise productive age group that could contribute positively to national development. Male youth feature more prominently in crime figures than the female counterparts. The underlying factors in all these crimes are:

- Internal conflicts;
- Unemployment;
- Lack of guidance and counselling;
- Redundancy;
- Poverty.

Due to erosion in our culture and social support system, the country now witnesses a lot of cases of delinquencies, street youth, sex workers, drug addicts, orphans and other disadvantaged youth who are left to cater for themselves and sometimes their younger ones.

## **2.10 Youth and Environment**

Youth involvement in environmental degradation in their efforts to earn a living through uncontrollable charcoal burning, brick making, wetland destruction etc. has had a negative effect on sustainable environment management.



## **2.11 Youth and Gender**

The prevailing social-economic environment of the youth mainly favours the participation and development of the male youth. For example the female youth are mainly involved in domestic/reproductive work like collecting firewood and water, cooking and caring for the children and the sick, all activities which confine them in homes and do not expose them to outside opportunities that would enhance their participation in productive household/community management and leadership development.

Furthermore in the area of health, female youth are more prone to morbidity and mortality than male youth. Many female youth have limited access to reproductive health services especially if they are unmarried and still in schools. The health service providers tend to be judgmental to them and this discourages them from seeking services.

## **3.0 POLICY DEFINITION OF THE YOUTH**

*This National Youth Policy defines youth as all young persons; female and male aged 12 to 30 years. This is a period of great emotional, physical and psychological changes that require societal support for a safe passage from adolescent to full adulthood.*

The definition does not look at youth as a homogeneous group with clear-cut age brackets but rather as a process of change or a period of time where an individual's potential, vigor, adventurism, experimentation with increased risks and vulnerabilities show themselves in a socially meaningful pattern.

The definition considers youth and child to be mutually inclusive at some stage of their lives. So this definition reinforces the definition of a child and seeks to nurture, protect, and ensure their welfare. It seeks to prepare and empower the youth to be able to take on socio-cultural, economic, civic, political and adult roles and autonomy. It also reflects the reality on ground that the family and extended kinship ties loosen due to the different factors many young people by the age of 12 years have assumed adult responsibilities. This definition does not in any way undermine nor seek to change the legislative definition and interpretation of a child as stipulated in the children Statute, 1996 and age of consent or voting as provided for in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. It simply provides a basis for the development and preparation of young people for adult responsibility.

Finally, this definition of youth takes into account programmatic issues and is in harmony with a number of operational and strategic definitions of major youth programmes in the country including other International Agencies like the United Nations (UN) which defines the youth as persons between 15-24 years and the Commonwealth Youth Programme definition of 15-29 years.

## **4.0 NATIONAL COMMITMENT AND RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY**

The Policy recognises the large number, strategic importance and immense potential in the youth for the development of the country. It however notes that youth have only been inadequately involved and their resources less harnessed in the socio-economic development and in the promotion of peace, democracy, good governance and upholding the values of the society. The Policy therefore advocates for mobilisation of resources to promote youth participation and integration in the mainstream of national development.

The Policy notes with concern the problems that affect the youth and their increased gendered risks and vulnerabilities due to socio-economic, political, cultural, and other factors. It notes too that the youth are powerless, most lack education and proper health care, they are unskilled with limited employment opportunities and options and lack control over resources.

The Policy therefore seeks to create awareness on these youth concerns/ needs and to define a place for the youth in society and national development. The Policy appreciates the efforts of the various actors in the youth field, the Government Departments, Non Governmental Organisations, CBOs, the Private Sector, Donor Agencies, Religious and Cultural Institutions, Youth themselves and adults in improving the condition of the youth in Uganda. It however notes that these efforts are not well guided, are inadequate, with ill defined functional coordination and collaboration mechanisms; hitherto leaving many gaps in the implementation process.

This Policy therefore seeks to guide, harmonise, complement, enhance and promote the distinctive yet complementary actions and roles of all the stakeholders at all levels in youth development to enhance effectiveness of all efforts.

This Policy has been formulated based on the National Development Objectives and Principles of State Policy as enshrined in Uganda's 1995 Constitution, the National Youth Council Statute (1993) and Vision 2025. It commits Government to fulfill its national obligations in development of the youth, as was agreed upon at the International Conference on Population and Development (1994); the World Programme of Action for Youth to the year 2000 and beyond; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); the Commonwealth Programme of Action for Youth Empowerment to the year 2005; the Lisbon Declaration (1998); and the East African Cooperation Treaty (1999)

This Policy provides a framework for development of a National Action Plan for the Youth that spells out the strategic areas for actions, target groups and implementation modalities.

## **5.0 PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE POLICY**

The National Youth Policy is intended not to substitute sectoral plans, but to prioritize public actions through comprehensive and multi-sectoral responses for the objective of integrating the youth and working with them in national development. The implementation of this Policy will be consistent with national laws and development priorities.

The following key principles underlie the policy:

### **5.1 Respect of Cultural, Religious and Ethical Values**

The Policy will respect the various cultural, religious and ethical values and cultural background of the people and will remain in conformity with universally recognized human rights without distinction of any kind such as gender, origin, age, language, religion, political affiliation or social status.

### **5.2 Equity and Accessibility**

The Policy seeks to promote the principle of equity in opportunities and in distribution of programmes, services and resources. It serves to promote equal access to socio-economic and employment opportunities commensurate with ability, potential and needs of the youth.

### **5.3 Gender Inclusiveness**

The Policy underscores the need to address disadvantaged and marginalised youth. It seeks to promote the principle of advancing gender equality including elimination of gender discrimination and violence.

### **5.4 Good Governance and National Unity**

The Policy serves to promote the values of consciousness, selflessness, voluntarism and pursuit of good moral conduct. The Policy seeks to promote the values of good governance, a just and tolerant society and promotion of transparency and accountability, spirit of self-reliance, unity, national solidarity, patriotism and a sense of belonging.

### **5.5 Youth Participation**

The Policy seeks to promote youth participation in democratic processes as well as in community and civic affairs and ensuring that youth programmes are youth centred.

### **5.6 Youth Empowerment**

The Policy advocates for creation of a supportive socio-cultural, economic and political environment that will empower the youth to be partners in development.

## **5.7 Teamwork and Partnership**

The Policy underscores the promotion of teamwork and collaboration among all the stakeholders.

## **6.0 RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS**

### **6.1 Rights**

The NYP seeks to provide for the following Youth rights:

- Right to life;
- Right to meaningful Education;
- Right to better health;
- Right to marriage at the legal age of consent;
- Right to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse;
- Right to seek meaningful employment without discrimination;
- Right to adequate shelter, food and clothing;
- Right to freedom of speech, expression and association;
- Right to participation in making of decisions that affect their lives;
- Right to protection from social, economic and political manipulation;
- Right to individual ownership and protection of property;
- Right to protection from forceful recruitment into the forces;
- Observance of all other rights in the Uganda Constitution of 1995 and the U.N. declaration of human rights.

### **6.2 Responsibilities of Youth**

The rights of youth in Uganda come with responsibilities. The NYP while promoting youth rights also encourages them to understand and fulfill their responsibilities, thus, the youth should:

- Train and socialise in order to learn different skills;
- Be patriotic and loyal to Uganda and promote her well-being;
- Contribute to the social economic development at all levels;
- Create and promote respect for humanity, sustain peaceful coexistence, national unity and stability;
- Take steps to protect the environment;
- Engage in supporting and protecting the disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society;
- Promote democracy and the rule of law;
- Create gainful employment;
- Take advantage of available education and training opportunities;

- Develop positive attitude towards work;
- Avoid careless sexual practices.

### **6.3 Obligations of Adults and Parents**

- Promote responsible parenthood;
- Provide basic and material needs of the youth;
- Provide useful guidance and counselling to the youth;
- Train and socialize the youth into different skills;
- Provide financial support to youth projects;
- Offer room for youth participation at all levels.

## **7.0 MISSION , GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

### **7.1 Mission**

The mission of this policy is 'Youth Empowerment.'

### **7.2 Goal**

To provide an appropriate framework for enabling youth to develop social, economic, cultural and political skills so as to enhance their participation in the overall development process and improve their quality of life.

### **7.3 Objectives**

- i) To initiate, strengthen and streamline all programmes and services targeting the youth;
- ii) To promote social and economic empowerment of the youth;
- iii) To build capacity and provide relevant training and information to the stakeholders;
- iv) To promote growth in the development of the youth through actions that protect ; empower and prepare them for adulthood;
- v) To provide psycho-social support and other services to youth in conflict situations, difficult circumstances and to the disadvantaged groups;
- vi) To increase youth involvement in decision--making, leadership, community based and other development programmes;
- vii) To mobilise resources for youth programmes and projects at all levels.

## **8.0 STRATEGIC/PRIORITY AREAS**

The successful implementation of this National Youth Policy largely depends on the strategic/priority areas and action points developed to address the policy mission, goal and objectives outlined above. The strategic areas and action points are as follows:

### **8.1 Education, Training and Capacity Building**

- Advocate for increased accessibility to Education both formal and non-formal and career guidance;
- Support vocational training and establishment of internship and apprenticeship to enable the youth acquire a range of skills and essential tools;
- Mobilise and conscientise the youth, parents and school authorities to take advantage of available education and training opportunities at all levels and to support the girl child education

and retention in schools;

- Promote creation of youth skills centres in all districts to enable youth, their leaders, workers and youth organizations to access information and acquire practical skills;
- Promote appropriate Functional Literacy Programmes and special training for youth who are illiterate and migrants including pastoralists, the internally displaced persons, refugees, street children and the disabled.

## **8.2 Employment and Enterprise Development**

Advocate for formulation and implementation of an appropriate National Employment Policy that addresses and responds to the concerns of the youth such as:

- Discrimination on the basis of age, gender and experience;
- Institute effective measures to prohibit and eliminate child labour and also protect young women and men against any other forms of exploitation;
- Promote income generating activities among the youth by supporting appropriate Micro Credit Financial Institutions that extend credit facilities to the youth;
- Promote youth enterprise development through enterprise education and establishment of information services;
- Advocate for creation of a Youth Trust Bank;
- Support implementation of the 1998 Land Act to increase access, ownership and rights of the youth while encouraging the adoption of modern agricultural knowledge;
- Provide youth who are farmers with market information and agricultural extension services;
- Establish a loan scheme for youth students in Tertiary Institutions.

## **8.3 Youth Involvement, Participation and Leadership**

- Advocate for increased effective youth representation and participation in key positions of decision-making, leadership and management at all levels of Government and in the civil society;
- Advocate for review of and harmonisation of National Youth Council statute 1993, the Local Government Act 1997 and the Decentralisation Policy to support the Youth Council structures and other Youth Programmes;
- Strengthen and promote Youth Network at all levels and ensure their integration with Internal Networks;
- Promote and support youth institutions for peace and conflict resolution;
- Advocate for realisation of the rights of the Youth with disabilities and ensure their participation in all Youth programmes.

## **8.4 Health Programmes**

- Advocate for the improvement, provision and expansion of access to services including information, guidance and counselling and make them youth friendly by removing all legal, regulatory, structural, medical and attitudinal barriers to accessing such services;
- Equip the youth with appropriate life skills and mobilise adults, families, communities, institutions and policy makers to create a safe and supportive environment for growth and development of the youth;

- Advocate for the promotion of innovative ways of mobilizing resources for services for the youth emphasizing the partnership with Central, and Local Government, NGOs and Private sector;
- Ensure full protection of young women and men from all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and promoting the psychological recovery and the social and economic reintegration of the victim;
- Build partnerships and coordination among stakeholders involved in youth health and development;
- Advocate for adoption and implementation of the Adolescent Health Policy.

### **8.5 Management, Coordination and Partnership**

- Establish and strengthen institutions dealing with youth development through institutional capacity building programmes and ensure coordination and networking at all levels;
- Institute and strengthen national and district capacities to gather, analyse, disseminate and use youth related data and set up a data bank;
- Advocate for increased resource allocation and support for youth programmes and activities;
- Lobby for integration of youth concerns into central and local levels, planning and budgetary provisions.

### **8.6 Youth, Society and Culture**

- Promote respect for various cultural, religious and political differences and identities and instill the spirit of tolerance and unity in diversity among the youth;
- Advocate for a conducive socio-cultural environment that involves the youth and protects them against harmful traditional practices, beliefs and cultural based gender discrimination and practices;
- Support the rehabilitation of the youth who are in conflict with the law;
- Advocate for a strict Drug Control Policy;
- Collaborate with the youth, Youth Service Organisations; Parents and the Community on rehabilitation of drug abusers focusing on social reintegration;
- Encourage youth artistic and cultural expression through support of arts and cultural festivals, competitions and other activities that promote the cultural heritage, identities and national pride;
- Support appropriate measures to prevent crime and deal with young offenders;
- Increase awareness, protect and safeguard the rights of the youth as well as their obligations to the community and communities responsibilities to them;
- Ensure that programmes and services are accessed to refugee youth population and those who are internally displaced with particular attention to their needs of basic social services such as education, health services, skills training etc.;
- Advocate for alternative prison services for youth such as community service and policing for minor offences.

### **8.7 Recreation, Sports and Leisure**

- Advocate for formulation and implementation of a National Sports Policy that addresses sports for all;
- Encourage organisations to promote development of sports, traditional and modern, for

recreations and competition among the youth;

- Promote sports, recreation and leisure activities and develop models that appeal to young people;
- Preserve and promote positive traditional sport.

#### **8.8. Environmental Conservation**

- Advocate for sustainable utilisation of the environment through promotion of youth education and awareness on the dangers of environmental degradation;
- Promote conservation of the natural resources- - soil, forest, biomass, water, wildlife, wetlands, etc. through such activities as afforestation, reafforestation and proper waste management by the youth.

### **9.0 PRIORITY TARGET GROUPS**

The National Youth Policy provides a unique opportunity for improving the quality of life of all Ugandan youth. However, certain categories of the youth have been identified for special attention due to their vulnerability and circumstances of living. These groups therefore need special programmes. They include:

- School dropouts and out of school youth;
- The female youth;
- Urban youth migrants;
- Youth in situations of armed conflict and disaster areas;
- Youth in-mates and those just released from prisons;
- Youth with disabilities;
- The illiterate youth;
- Domestic servants/helpers;
- The street youth;
- Orphans;
- Youth infected/affected with HIV/AIDS;
- The rural youth;
- The unemployed youth;
- Youth in schools/ training institutions;
- 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;
- Employed youth below the age of 18.

## **10.0 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK**

The implementation of this National Youth Policy seeks to provide a framework for planning and action for all agencies and organisations involved in youth work at both central and local levels. It provides a basis for integration and engages efforts of NGOs and other groups committed to youth development. The policy will where necessary, utilize existing structures for its implementation and will stress the need for gender balance and youth representation and participation in its implementation mechanisms.

### **10.1 National Framework**

At the National level, the Ministry responsible for youth affairs will oversee implementation of this policy. In order to realize its coordination role, the Ministry will establish and chair a multi sectoral committee composed of the following institutions:

#### **Membership**

- Line Ministries (The Ministries responsible for Employment, Education, Health, Agriculture, Local Government, Finance, Defence and Information);
- The National Youth Council;
- Relevant Statutory Bodies;
- Representative(s) of Donor Agencies;
- Representative(s) of youth NGOs;
- Representatives of Cultural Institutions;
- Representatives of the Private sector;
- Representatives of the Urban Authorities Association;
- Representatives of the Local Authorities Association;
- Member(s) of Parliament;
- Representative(s) of Religious Institutions.

#### **Functions**

This committee is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Ensure coordination and collaboration on Youth Policy implementation and providing a forum for consultation on youth issues;
- Conduct periodic reviews on the implementation of the National Youth Policy;
- Ensure that Government sectoral and organization plans integrate youth concerns and that they are youth friendly;
- Oversee the implementation of the National Youth Action Plan;
- Advocate for youth concerns and resources for implementation of the policy, programmes and services that are of benefit to the youth.

#### **Meetings**

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs will call and chair periodical meetings of the committee.



The Government Department responsible for youth affairs will act as secretariat to the committee. Each of the line ministries and organisations in this committee will ensure that a youth focal person not below the rank of Principal in the institution reports on the activities of the institution which relate to the National Youth Policy. The focal person will work with the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs and the Multi-sectoral committee to promote and ensure implementation of components of the Policy that falls under its mandate.

## **10.2 District and sub-county Framework**

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1997 and the Decentralisation Policy, an appropriate existing structure within the District and sub-county will be identified to oversee implementation of this National Youth Policy. The functions of the committee at National Level will be accordingly delegated to the identified district and sub-county committees.

The committees are mandated to co-opt any other member as and when necessary. The membership should closely reflect the profile of membership at National Level.

The Department responsible for Youth Affairs at the district and lower levels will perform the duties/functions of the department responsible for youth affairs at the National level, and ensure implementation of this policy at these lower levels in liaison with sector departments and youth service organisations i.e. NGOs and Community Based Organisations.

## **10.3 Role of Government Sector Ministries, Institutions and Statutory Bodies**

### **10.3.1 Ministry Responsible for Youth Affairs**

The Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs will be the Government lead agency for implementation of this National Youth Policy. In particular the Ministry will be responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation and reviewing of the National Youth Policy and developing a National Action Plan with appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators;
- Initiating and promoting coordination, collaboration and networking among all the stakeholders;
- Providing technical guidance and support supervision in the development, implementation and evaluation of youth programmes in the country;
- Advocating for and mobilizing resources for youth programmes;
- Advocating for youth participation and representation in all structures of leadership, governance and management;
- Ensuring that other sectorial policies integrate youth concerns and remain friendly and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the youth;
- Working closely with Youth Councils at all levels and other youth organizations at all levels in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Youth Policy;
- Promoting research, documentation and serve as depository for information and data on youth and youth issues in collaboration with other organization within and outside the country;
- Raising awareness and mobilizing support for and among the youth;
- Monitoring and evaluating youth programmes;
- Instituting and supporting appropriate measures aimed at training youth, youth workers and overall skill development for the youth including regional and international training opportunities or fellowships;
- Ensuring that any other aspect of the policy that falls within its mandate are implemented.

### **10.3.2 Other line Ministries, Institutions and Statutory Bodies**

These will on the basis of their mandate address issues that fall under their areas of competence and responsibility and ensure adequate representation and participation of youth in their programmes/activities. They will also ensure that sectoral plans and budgets address youth concerns.

### **10.4 The Youth Councils**

The Youth Councils at National, District and Sub-County levels will play a fundamental role in implementation of this policy. They will in particular perform the following function:

- Mobilise, sensitise and organise the youth of Uganda in a unified body for political, economic and socio-cultural activities;
- Gainfully engage the youth in activities that are of benefit to them and the nation;
- Protect the youth against any kind of manipulation;
- Advocate for and mobilise resources to support and fund Youth Council Programmes and activities;
- Liaise with development organisations to ensure that youth gain access to resources, services and programmes;
- Promote relations between youth organisations within Uganda and other bodies inside and outside Uganda with similar objectives or interests;
- Inspire and promote in the youth the spirit of unity, patriotism and voluntarism;
- Act as a voice and bridge to ensure that Government and other decision/policy makers are kept informed of the views and aspiration of the youth.

### **10.5 Private Sector**

Considering the vanguard role of the Private Sector in national development, the following functions will be carried out by this sector:

- Provide opportunities for employment;
- Initiate credit schemes;
- Offer training and apprenticeship opportunities;
- Promote entrepreneurship development.

### **10.6 Non-Governmental Organisations**

Recognising the crucial role that NGOs and CBOs play in youth development, the following are the functions that they will carry out in implementing the policy:

- Integrate youth concerns in their programmes;
- Initiate credit schemes for the youth;
- Offer training to the youth;
- Mobilise resources for youth programmes;
- Support youth entrepreneurship development.

### **10.7 Religious Institutions**

This Policy recognises the important role Religious Institutions play in the moral, social and economic development of the youth. It accordingly entrusts them with the following functions:

- Moral and spiritual guidance of the youth;
- Provision of training;
- Provision of life skills to the youth;
- Provision of life skills to the youth;
- Provision of support to youth programmes and activities.

### **10.8 International development Partners and Inter--Government Agencies**

This Policy recognises the vital role of the International Development Partner and Inter-Government Agencies in promotion of youth development in Uganda. In line with this, the Policy charges them with the following responsibilities:

- Advocacy for youth development programmes;
- Technical support;
- Financial and logistical support.

### **11.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

The National Youth Policy requires monitoring and critical review of its performance. This is to ensure that it remains responsive to the needs, aspirations and capacity of the youth and to the direction of the broader development objectives of the Government of the Republic of Uganda. Appropriate indicators will be developed within the action plan to guide the Policy implementation. Review of this Policy will be done after three years.