



National Action Plan for Child Well-Being 2016-2021

Goals. Objectives. Actions.





SURVIVAL

DEVELOPMENT

PROTECTION

PARTICIPATION

IMPLEMENTATION

Uganda is one of the youngest countries in the world with 19 percent of the population under 5 and 49 percent under 15 years of age. Facts show that of the people living in poverty in Uganda, 62 percent are children. One in 19 children dies before his or her first birthday and 33 percent of children under the age of 5 are stunted. Despite Universal Primary Education, only 37 percent of children make it to secondary school. Moreover, 20 percent of females, and 13 percent of males, over the age of 6 have never had any formal education. There is a 70 percent drop out rate in primary schools, and the main causes for girls dropping out of primary school are marriage and pregnancy.

Over the past 20 years, Uganda has introduced policies, reforms, and sector-specific strategies and initiatives intended to facilitate the transition from poverty and vulnerability to prosperity and security. These reforms led to significant achievements in poverty reduction under the Millennium Development Goals, but only limited gains in reducing child mortality, improving access to HIV treatment and preventing malaria. Malnutrition and stunting; children's literacy and advancement to secondary school; and protection of children against abuse, exploitation and violence are areas that still need careful attention.

Uganda's overarching goal is to become a modern and prosperous country by the middle of the century, as reflected in the Vision 2040. **However, Uganda cannot reach this vision or realize the potential rewards of its human capital without investing in critical areas of child development, health, education, and child protection.** The legal and policy reforms in place constitute the legal basis for implementation of the National Action Plan for Child Well-Being.

No entity alone can fulfill the needs and safeguard the rights of children by working in isolation. The National Action Plan aims to engage stakeholders to contribute to key priorities for the survival, protection, development and participation of children in Uganda—all as part of one coherent framework. A holistic and coordinated effort will create a social safety net for children in which all individuals, families, communities, government and leadership have a role to play. Government, local communities, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations must collaborate and complement each other's strengths and expertise. The goals, objectives, priority actions and national targets of the action plan will serve as a guide to achieving common goals and measuring progress through national targets.

Together, we can reach these critical goals, if we act now and with renewed resolve. Commitment to achieve the national targets will lead to greater investment in basic social services and enhanced public-private partnerships to scale up strategies, and provide a healthy, safe and protective environment for Uganda's children. The National Action Plan for Child Well-Being gives clear direction for our collective efforts to build a Uganda in which all children can survive, grow and develop to their full potential, protected from the many threats that jeopardize their future.



SURVIVAL GOAL

Prevent Child Mortality and Promote Children's Health

OBJECTIVE 1: BETTER HEALTH

Increase access and availability of quality child and adolescent health services at facility, community and household level

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Provide prompt, affordable, quality baby- and adolescent-friendly services and life saving commodities

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Promote behavioral change among children and adolescents through comprehensive sexuality education and meaningful engagement with significant adults

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Train health care workers and adolescent peers on provision of child and adolescent friendly health services within the national framework

MEASURABLE ACTION 4

Promote high quality Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)

OBJECTIVE 2: BETTER NUTRITION

Strengthen multi-sector interventions including community actions to address stunting and improve nutrition

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Build a human resource base and enabling environment for multi-sectoral implementation of nutrition interventions

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Create awareness and develop skills to initiate and upscale community-led activities against stunting and malnutrition

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Develop and implement food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG)

MEASURABLE ACTION 4

Strengthen community support for breastfeeding

OBJECTIVE 3: BETTER CARE

Strengthen families' capacities to better care for children

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Increase household economic strengthening opportunities for families that are appropriate to their given situation and context

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Mobilize communities to ensure parents fully immunize children under 1 year of age

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Facilitate parent's ability to get birth certificates for newborn children

NATIONAL TARGETS

1. **Prevalence of low birth weight reduced by 50%**
2. **HIV prevalence among adolescents reduced by 10%**
3. **Adolescent pregnancies decreased by 50%**
4. **Severe cases of stunting reduced by 40%**
5. **Average income among households in the lowest quintile increased by 30%**

Monitoring mechanisms available: HMIS, UDHS, OVC MIS

RELEVANT LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL PLANS

Uganda recognized the right to survival in the following ways:

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995)

The Children Act (Capt.59)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 3, 6, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Government: Develop early warning systems from community to national levels for food and nutrition

Civil Society: Promote access to voluntary family planning and child and youth friendly health services

Private Sector: Expand production of safe, healthy and fortified food products

Community: Promote male involvement in family health services and in food security and nutrition programs

Family: Support education of the girl child through end of secondary school



DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Strengthen Children's Healthy Emotional and Cognitive Development

OBJECTIVE 1: BETTER EDUCATION

Support children's engagement in and benefit from quality development and education opportunities in the home and in the community

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Strengthen parenting practices through positive parenting skills building and psychosocial support

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Increase access in all regions to community and institution based early childhood development services

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Improve proficiency in literacy at primary and secondary levels

MEASURABLE ACTION 4

Increase persistence rates to the end of primary and transition to secondary for girls and boys

NATIONAL TARGETS

- 1. Improved positive parenting practices by 40%**
- 2. Increased access to early childhood development services by 40% in all regions**
- 3. Achieve agreed upon benchmarks for literacy in P3, P6 and S2 by 60% of children**
- 4. Improved primary cycle survival rate to 80%**

Monitoring mechanisms available: EMIS, NAPE, OVC MIS

RELEVANT LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL PLANS

Uganda recognized the right to development in the following ways:

The Education Act

The Second National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions (NSPPI-2) for OVC

The National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy

The Children Act (Capt.59)

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 3, 4, 6, 23, 28, 30, 31)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parliament: Set and enforce compulsory primary school start age

Government: Strengthen systems to monitor quality education at all levels

Civil Society: Advocate for safe and gender sensitive learning environments

Private Sector: Promote family friendly workplace policies and practices

Community: Promote implementation of quality household-based and community-based early childhood development programs

Schools: Establish early warning systems for children at risk of drop-out

Family: Be your child's first teacher and their advocate for education





PROTECTION GOAL

Reduce Risks of Abuse, Exploitation, Violence and Neglect

OBJECTIVE 1: BETTER PREVENTION

Create evidence-based awareness on the impact of violence on child safety, well-being and development

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Develop a coordinated response plan for the national Violence Against Children Survey (VACS)

OBJECTIVE 2: STRONGER FAMILIES

Strengthen family care for children

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Establish Alternative Care Panels in all districts

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Annually enumerate all institutionalized children and assess their care in relation to national standards

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Prevent family separation and place institutionalized and street children into family based care

OBJECTIVE 3: SAFER SCHOOLS

Create a safe learning environment that promotes learner retention

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Promote safe learning environments in primary schools through strategic and on-going engagement with stakeholders

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Develop and implement National Quality Standards for institutional care facilities

MEASURABLE ACTION 3

Conduct annual assessments of childcare institutions, closing those that are seriously sub-standard

OBJECTIVE 4: BETTER ENFORCEMENT

Strengthen Uganda's national child protection system to effectively prevent and respond to abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect against children

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Enact, review and enforce the implementation of existing and new relevant child protection laws, including through development of regulations, procedures and guidance

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Improve access to coordinated and multi-sector services for victims and their families (health, justice, education, social services, etc.)

NATIONAL TARGETS

1. Response plan for VACS developed
2. Reduced gender-based violence in schools by 80%
3. Reduced child marriages by 50%
4. Increased transition of children to family based care by 60%
5. Reduced corporal punishment by 70%

Monitoring mechanisms available: National Labor Force and Child Activities Survey, DHS, OVC MIS, Uganda Annual Police and Crime Safety Report

RELEVANT LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL PLANS

Uganda recognized the right to protection in the following ways:

The Children Act (Capt.59)

The Domestic Violence Act 3, (2010)

The National Council for Children Act (Capt. 60)

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 32, 34, 35)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Government: Impress no tolerance for abuse, violence and exploitation of children through in-service and pre-service programs for teachers

Justice System: Uphold the obligation to ensure accountability in every case of child violence. Harmonize the police, prosecution, court and service delivery data collection and record keeping systems with each other and across jurisdictions

Media: Support dissemination and communication campaigns to ensure children's rights are understood by all, including children

Civil Society: Enable coordination of efforts, information and practice sharing in awareness raising, capacity building and service provision for child protection

Private Sector: Support the national toll-free hotline for victims/survivors of violence against children to provide information, advocacy, support and counseling

Community: Engage different groups in the community to transform social and cultural practices which support, tolerate or excuse violence and child marriages

Schools: Enforce implementation of guidelines on positive discipline and school safety in all schools through support supervision of teachers

Family: Embrace the responsibility to protect their children from violence and seek support to provide adequate nutrition and psychosocial stimulation



PARTICIPATION GOAL

Increase Children's Participation

OBJECTIVE 1: BETTER PARENTING

Support and provide guidance for parents to help children to express their views in a safe and supportive environment where they feel valued and respected

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Strengthen traditions that make it possible for children to access useful information, learn from the wisdom of elders and contribute to decisions through practices anchored in family and community systems

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Promote use of the National Child Participation Guide for Uganda

OBJECTIVE 2: BETTER VOICE

Promote children's voices in civil and political spaces through a range of structures and mechanisms

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Promote meaningful participation by children, including adolescents, in decision-making processes—including in families and schools, and at local and national levels

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Promote efforts to build children's resilience, including promoting gender equality, life skills and child-led advocacy among pre-adolescents and adolescents

NATIONAL TARGETS

- 1. Numbers of policies developed that actively involved and considered the views of children**
- 2. Established Children's Parliament by 2020**
- 3. Reduced peer to peer violence among adolescents (sexual violence, physical violence, bullying) by 50%**

RELEVANT LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL PLANS

Uganda recognized the right to participation by all persons in the following ways:

The Local Government Act (Cap.243)

The Children Act (Capt.59)

The National Child Participation Guide for Uganda

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parliament: Facilitate parliamentary sessions with and for children

Government: Ensure that policy provisions for the participation of children are adhered to at all levels

Civil Society: Include children in advocacy for inclusive participation of children with disabilities and girls

Private Sector: Support gap areas such as civic education, and inclusive opportunities that benefit girls, critically vulnerable children and children with disabilities.

Community: Promote participation of children in authentic appropriate and ethical manner in school governance, civic groups, and other programs that serve the community

Family: Encourage dialogue and participation of children in household decisions





IMPLEMENTATION GOAL

Promote Evidence-Based Programs and Monitoring

OBJECTIVE 1: BETTER RESULTS

Develop a governance structure to monitor progress of national targets on a yearly basis

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Governance committees instituted and active at regional and central levels

OBJECTIVE 2: BETTER LEARNING

Improve collaboration, learning and adapting in implementation

MEASURABLE ACTION 1

Disseminate evidence-based best practices and feed back into program development processes

MEASURABLE ACTION 2

Facilitate district, regional and national, exchanges to support cross-country learning and sharing of best practices on child well-being

MEASURABLE ACTION 3:

Delivery and implementation build on action research and best practices

OBJECTIVE 3: BETTER DATA

Strengthen National Data Systems for Decision Making

NATIONAL TARGETS

1. Established inter-agency, inter-ministerial Coordination Council
2. Established active implementation and review committees in all regions
3. Annual public Action Plan review carried out

Child Well-Being Goals are linked to and support the Sustainable Development Goals



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Our Commitment

In Uganda, children's issues must be a top priority for all program processes, donor and private sector investment plans, and current and future legislative and policy reforms. The National Action Plan for Child Well-Being provides a foundation for implementation of policies and strategies that address issues to ensure a better future for Uganda and Uganda's children. Uganda cannot reach Vision 2040 or realize the potential rewards of its human capital without investing in critical areas of child development.

It will take a cadre of committed individuals and organizations—from the highest levels of government to households and families—to implement solutions that will make a difference in the lives of children. Clearly established roles and responsibilities must be defined and followed such that efforts can be coordinated, implemented and measured to ensure success.

This is a movement for children. We must declare our commitments to this effort, bring the Action Plan to all the regions, districts, sub-counties, parishes, communities and homes throughout Uganda, and become Champions for Children. Every child must have a voice to secure her/his rights. Each parent, every family and all communities must take part and share the responsibility to care for Uganda's children. Government, civil society, religious and traditional leaders together with the private sector must lead the way to safeguard the well-being of children. **This is only the beginning.**

