



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND
PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND OUTCOME OF THE
TWENTY – THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)**

**A REPORT IN PREPARATION OF THE FIFTEENTH (15)
ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE BEIJING
DECLARATION AND PLATFORM OF ACTION IN 2010**

GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a report on the progress, by the Government of the Republic of Uganda in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcome of the twenty third special session of the UN General Assembly on Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty first century (2000). The report is written according to specific guidelines provided to National Governments by UN Division for Advancement of Women (DAW) and UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The report is arranged in four (4) main parts namely: -

- Major overall achievements and obstacles
- Progress in the implementation of critical areas of concern
- Institutional Development
- Key challenges and constraints, future actions and initiatives.

PART 1: MAJOR OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS AND OBSTACLES

- 1.1 Over the past five years (2004-2009), Uganda has made significant progress in promotion of gender equality and advancement of women in political, economic and social spheres. This is evidenced by among others, the following:-

- 1.2 Following a referendum in 2005, a multi-party dispensation has been restored in Uganda after 20 years. Consequently multi-party Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 2006. This new scenario has created both opportunities and challenges for women. While it expands the leadership spectrum for women as evident by the increase in the number of women in parliament from 24.7% in 2001, to 31.2% in 2008, emerging challenges include the process of engendering the policies and structures of the different political parties, and coalescing women around women's issues above their party interests and priorities.

- 1.3 Considerable progress has been made by the State Party in enacting legislations to address de jure discrimination although there's still room for improvement. The Land Act 1998, was amended to include sections that increase protection of the rights of women to own, use and inherit land. The Act confers an equitable interest in family land to spouses because it contains a consent clause. The Act also protects the rights of women to use customary land. It further bestows legal recognition on the decisions taken by customary authorities in relation to land held under customary tenure and for such decisions to be valid they must not deny women access to ownership, occupation or use of land or deny them their rights.
- 1.4 The Employment Act, 2006 is another piece of legislation that contains provisions that seek to address discrimination against women in the field of employment. The Act addresses sexual harassment at workplace, increased maternity leave from 45 calendar days to 60 working days on full pay and introduced paternity leave of 4 days for working men. Other significant measures to eliminate de jure discrimination include the enactment of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act-2007 and the National Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 1.5 The Penal Code Act (CAP 120) has recently been amended to cover the offences of simple and aggravated defilement. The latter is an offence committed on a minor and also when the perpetrator is HIV positive. The constitutional court declared provisions of the Penal Code Act and succession Act which were discriminating against women, unconstitutional and therefore illegal¹.

¹ *The Divorce Act required women to prove two grounds when petitioning court for divorce while a man was required to prove only one. The Penal Code Act had different definitions for the offence of criminal adultery for women and men. The definitions effectively approved for a married man to have sexual intercourse with any woman provided the woman is not married, while married women were prohibited from having sexual intercourse with any man regardless of man's marital status.*

The provisions in the Succession Act on heir ship, distribution of intestate estates, appointment of a testamentary guardian, choice of domicile and remarriage while in occupancy of the matrimonial home, were also challenged as discriminating against women.

- 1.6 There are existing policies and mechanisms for stimulating economic growth and poverty reduction for both men and women in Uganda. These include; the Strategic Exports Strategy, the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, the Rural Development strategy, the Medium Term Competitive Strategy for the Private Sector , the Uganda Public Private Partnership Strategy (UP3) and the Micro Finance Outreach Plan. The National Gender Policy of 1997 was revised in 2007 with focus on rights, governance, livelihood and macro –economic management.
- 1.7 The State Party’s commitment to implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been demonstrated by the development of two National Action Plans on Women (NAPW), 1992-2004 and 2006-2010. The goal of the revised NAPW is to achieve equal opportunities for all women in Uganda by empowering them to be active participants and beneficiaries of the social, economic and political developments in Uganda. The NAPW identifies five critical areas for action which should result in women’s empowerment and advancement. These are legal and policy framework and leadership; social and economic empowerment of women; reproductive health, rights and responsibilities; girl child education; peace building conflict resolution and freedom from violence.
- 1.8 Rural water coverage increased from 54.9% in 2002 to 61% in 2006. Access to safe water and sanitation facilities and appropriate management and utilization are necessary conditions for sustainable development.
- 1.9 The Gender mainstreaming strategy which is applied by government in conformity with Uganda Gender Policy has registered plausible achievement in some sectors. For instance the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and National Planning Authority have established positions of Gender Experts in their structures. The Local Government Ministry uses Gender mainstreaming as one of the parameters for assessing performance of the Local Governments (districts and sub counties) in service delivery. The

Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development under the Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit also uses gender as one of the criteria while auditing public expenditure at the national and local government levels. The Local Government Ministry annually carries out assessment of performance against set standards which include gender mainstreaming in local governments development plans and budgets. The findings of the assessment form part of the basis for disbursement of local government grants; and under performance is penalized by reducing the grant or denial of increments. Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development under the Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit also assesses gender equality outcomes while auditing public expenditure at the national and local government levels.

- 1.10 Another key achievement has been institutionalization of Gender Responsive Budgeting. Budgets are core instruments of policy definition and can have significantly different impacts on women and men of different ages, social class, religion and regions. The Gender Budgeting initiative is led by the ministries of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Finance, Planning and Economic Development and has been institutionalized. Ministries and Local governments carry out gender budgeting not as a matter of choice but policy. The Budget call circular that is issued to the ministries and Local Governments every financial year makes its obligatory to conduct gender budgeting.

OBSTACLES

- 1.11 The staffing positions of gender experts in the National Gender Machinery, although increased from 7 in 2004 to 10 in 2009, is still inadequate given the amount of mentoring, and backstopping expertise needed by the sectors and Local Governments in terms of gender mainstreaming and gender auditing.

- 1.12 Inadequate financial resources to enable the national machinery to play its catalytic role in gender mainstreaming and ensuring the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- 1.13 Persistent societal negative attitudes towards gender equality and women's rights. These are manifested in bureaucratic resistance among policy makers, programmers as well as implementers while at household level they continue to be manifested through gender based violence and unequal access to and control over resources.
- 1.14 Whereas sex disaggregated data on education, health and women in decision making in parliament and Cabinet is considerably available, data on economic issues, environmental issues, time use and GBV among others is scarce. Where data is available, the dissemination of sex disaggregated data is done through booklets written in English and distributed to a few government offices, policy makers and programme implementers.

2.0 PART 2: PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

WOMEN AND POVERTY

Actions and Progress

2.1 Government of Uganda has demonstrated commitment to tackling the incidence of poverty among both women and men through the overall development frameworks that guide the country's economic growth strategies. The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) has served as Uganda's overarching development framework from 1997-2008. PEAP was reviewed twice in 2001 and 2004. During this period, concerted effort was made by the PEAP Gender Team (PGT) to engender the PEAP through enhanced analysis of the linkages between gender relations and poverty, and prescribing specific interventions to address gender inequality issues in the sectors. Training was also undertaken to equip key policy and decision makers, planners and programme implementers with gender analytical and planning skills.

Progress:

2.2 National data indicates a positive trend in poverty reduction from 36% in 2002/03 to 31% in 2006. Some insights into the gender dimensions of poverty are drawn from household head based analysis of UNHS data. The analysis shows that the probability of married female headed households moving into poverty and being chronically poor is substantially higher than male headed households.

2.3 Evaluation of the effectiveness of gender strategies undertaken in 2008 in the context of PEAP implementation has established that efforts were progressively strengthened over the 10 year period (1997-2007), through clearer articulation of issues and sector specific actions. Another significant outcome highlighted in the evaluation is the level of importance that gender mainstreaming has taken in resource allocation. Gender and Equity Budgeting has been institutionalized in

the national and Local Government planning and budgeting processes. The main funding modality for Local Governments has been the Local Government Development Programme (LGDP) and recently Local Government Management and Services Delivery (LGMSD) projects. To access grants from the LGDP, Local Governments need to meet certain criteria on gender equality, a condition that has enhanced planning and budgeting for gender responsive interventions at this level.

- 2.4 Government has continued to prioritize agricultural modernization as a strategy to transform the lives of the majority of the population who are subsistence farmers. The Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) has been implemented since 2000 and includes the National Agriculture Services (NAADS) Programme which provides agriculture extension services, institutional development through farmer group formation, agricultural inputs and start up capital. Women are the majority of farmers and represent over 60% of NAADS farmer group members.
- 2.5 Since 2006, the Prosperity for All (PFA) programme has been introduced with initiatives to support rural and urban households to set up small and medium scale enterprises. Women are a specific target group for the programme which includes a microfinance services component to provide credit to members of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs).
- 2.6 The updated Uganda Gender Policy (2007) takes into account the poverty and gender dynamics through its priority action area of Gender and Livelihoods. The Local Economic Development (LED) programme coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government has a component that will be implemented by the MGLSD starting with FY 2009/10 to promote gender equality in local economic development

2.7 The formulation of the National Development Plan (NDP) offers an opportunity for gender mainstreaming in the planned sector activities for the next 5 Years. The emphasis on employment in the National Development Plan (NDP) gives an opportunity to improve the policy framework surrounding women's income, labour and employment.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.8 Meaningful economic empowerment for women entails decision making at the household level. In many cases the men make the decisions as heads of households and this limits women's ability to control assets needed for business and income generating activities.

2.9 Limited access to improved infrastructure increases time spent by women on collecting water and firewood as well as their time commitment to the reproductive economy. There is need for strategies and mechanisms to reduce the workload of women and give them more time to engage in productive activities.

2.10 Better access to gender statistics particularly on poverty, income source and labour force/ occupation is required to allow for clearer understanding of the inequalities and trends and to facilitate further analysis. Such statistics, monitored over time, reveal the actual situation, allow for clearer understanding of the inequalities and enable identification of priority areas of intervention. In addition, absence of gender responsive indicators in some sectors makes it difficult to assess progress in mainstreaming efforts. Mainstreaming gender concerns in the overall national poverty reduction strategy document does not guarantee action will be taken. More effort is needed during formulation and implementation of sector policies and plans, as well as in the execution of the budget.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

2.11 The Government of Uganda is committed to education and training of women as a necessary tool for effective participation in the development processes.

Progress:-

- 2.12 Government has continued to support Universal Primary Education (UPE) which has registered an equitable enrolment in primary school for girls and boys at 49.0% and 50.1% respectively (2008). Government also supports basic education for children in hard to reach areas, pastoral communities and other disadvantaged children. As a result, in 2007 45.8% boys and 53.9% girls from hard to reach areas benefited from basic education.
- 2.13 Introduction of Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007 that has contributed to narrowing enrolment gender disparities in secondary schools from 46% in 2007 to 69% in 2008.
- 2.14 Government has constructed classrooms, laboratories and libraries in selected girls' schools. In a bid to promote science education as well as encourage girls to take practical courses like computer science, electrical and mechanical engineering, a female scholarship scheme with 70% of the awards reserved for science was initiated at Makerere University to increase female enrolment in science. To date out of the 233 female students who have benefited from the scheme, 150 pursued science related subjects.
- 2.15 The Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FAL) that was designed to promote women's literacy has been expanded to cover all the 81 districts. Enrolment has increased from 134,605 (36,276 males and 98,328 females) in 2004/5 to 206,273 (54,334 males and 152,939 females) in 2008.

2.16 The Affirmative action scheme to provide an additional 1.5 points bonus to eligible female candidates at Makerere University,. has been adopted by all public universities under the Joint Admission system. In Makerere University alone, the scheme has raised the percentage of female students from 35% in 1998 to 46% in 2008. Affirmative Action has corrected gender imbalances in the enrolment of female students at the university level and female enrolment increased from 35% in 1998 to 46% in 2008.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.17 Gender disparities continue to be entrenched in the education system particularly between the poor versus the well- to- do, the urban versus the rural, easily accessible versus hard to reach and non conflict versus the conflict areas.

2.18 Girls are further disadvantaged by the negative cultural practices such as heavy domestic workload for women and girls, early marriages and pregnancy and gender biases in families, communities and the school environment.

2.19 Literacy levels for women are still low compared to men. Adult literacy is estimated at 58% for female and 80% for males (UNHS 2005/06)

WOMEN AND HEALTH

Progress;

- 2.20 The Government of Uganda has put in place gender sensitive health policies and programmes to ensure good health for all Ugandans and to promote a healthy and productive life for all. These include the National Health Policy (2007), the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP II), the Population policy, and the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS (2007).
- 2.21 The National Health Policy's core strategy is to ensure increased and equal access for all people to the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package (UNMHCP). The package has several components and among them is sexual and reproductive health and rights. To operationalise the Health Policy, strategic plans and guidelines have been developed. These include the National policy guidelines on Sexual and Reproductive Health; Infant and maternal health strategy and action plan. Government has also formulated a food and nutrition policy and strategy. A national strategy on FGM is being formulated together with legislation to criminalise it.
- 2.22 The Health Sector Strategic Plan II (HSSP II) includes actions to contribute to the reduction of neonatal, infant and maternal morbidity, and mortality, promote advocacy for men and women's sexual and reproductive health rights, as well as sex education for adolescents. The HSSP II has among others, a strategic approach of affirmative action for the attainment of health equity. It gives attention to the most vulnerable groups especially women, children under 5, the poorest quartile of the population, IDPs, orphans and persons with disabilities.
- 2.23 Efforts are on going to upgrade and equip health centres with the drugs and attendant equipment to manage emergency obstetric care, blood transfusions and post-abortion care. National minimum Health care packages and operating theater facilities are available at Health Centre IVs. The idea is to build an efficient functioning referral system.

- 2.24 Efforts have also been made to build a community of skilled health workers to enhance their capacity to support mothers, efforts to strengthen linkage between communities and formal health care systems, mobilizing communities on health seeking behaviour and the extension and improvement of the district health care delivery system.
- 2.25 There has been progress in the area of HIV/AIDS and prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT). Access to ARVs has increased steadily. Statistics from the year 2003-2008 stand at 12,577 for children and 129,499 for adults (females – 83,550 and males - 45,949). The expansion of the PMTCT package beyond saving the unborn child to include quality antenatal care, ARVs for HIV positive mothers and counseling has improved the perspective on maternal health. The PMTCT package includes among others quality antenatal care, ARVs for HIV positive mothers and counseling and support for feeding of infants.
- 2.26 An increase in rural water supply coverage from 55% in FY 2002/03 to 61% in FY 2004/05 is a positive proxy indicator for reducing women’s care burden for water –induced ill health; as well as their ability to save the scarce resources of time.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2.27 As a result of the above efforts, deliveries in health centres have increased from 24.4% in 2002/03 to 29% in 2005/06. Maternal Mortality Rates have dropped from 505 per 100,000 in 2002/03 to 435 per 100,000 in 2006. The number of children who die before their first birthday has reduced from 88 to 75 per 1000 live births during the same period. The fertility rate dropped from 6.9 in 2000 to 6.4 in 2006. Dropping fertility rates could also be partly attributed to the impact of UPE that has increased access for majority of girls who would be giving birth at a relatively early age. Overall demand for family planning has increased from 45% (2001) to 64%.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- 2.28. According to Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC 2008), only 20% of Uganda know their sero-status which affects HIV prevention and management strategic 70% (about 15 million people) would like to know their HIV status but are unable to access the services. The biggest challenges are lack of fund to enhance testing logistics as well as human resource capacity.
- 2.29 Funding for maternal health remains critical, receiving only a fraction of the required amounts within the Health Sector and budget. The health delivery system is particularly strained in the rural areas where the decentralization system and autonomy in resource allocation has not been favourable for women's health issues.
- 2.30 The unmet need for family planning is still high at 14% in 2006. The contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) among married women is 24%. This is due to many factors including cultural and social misconceptions and limited access to information and services.
- 2.31 Limited male involvement in sexual and Reproductive Health care is a major problem. Men are also reluctant to seek voluntary counseling and testing services.
- 2.32 The critical shortage of human resource in the health sector severely constrains the implementation of the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP II) and hence the provision of UNMHCP. Health sector staff are particularly difficult to retain in hard to reach areas. An incentive mechanism has been introduced and this together with strengthened support supervision will help retain and attract staff.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Actions Progress

- 2.27 The Parliament of Uganda enacted a law, the *Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act* (2008). The Act aims at criminalizing the offences of human trafficking as well as protection, assistance and support to victims of trafficking with full respect of their human rights;
- 2.28 The Penal Code Act (Cap 120) was amended in 2006 to cover the offences of simple and aggravated defilement. The classification of offences into two categories was in recognition of the diverse nature of offences (offences against minors below 14 years or with disabilities, infection with STIs or HIV/AIDS etc) In addition, it has conferred jurisdiction to try defilement cases to magistrates in an effort to ensure the speedy dispensation of justice;
- 2.29 A draft Domestic Violence Bill which seeks to criminalize the different forms of domestic violence and to make provisions for appropriate penalties and civil remedies was passed by Cabinet in March 2009. The Bill is awaiting enactment by Parliament (2009);
- 2.30 A draft Marriage and Divorce Bill (containing provisions on Civil, Christian, Hindu and Bahai Marriages) was also cleared by Cabinet for presentation before Parliament in 2009. Another draft Bill providing for the establishment of Khadis Courts to deal with matters relating to Islamic Marriages and Divorce is due for consideration by Cabinet and onward presentation to Parliament in 2009.

2.31 In 2003, the Constitutional Court nullified discriminatory sections of the

Divorce Act which required different grounds for men and women. In 2007, the Constitutional Court nullified the Section on Criminal Adultery in the Penal Code Act and some discriminatory aspects of Succession Act. The Divorce Act required women to prove two grounds when petitioning court for divorce while a man was required to prove only one ground. The Penal Code Act had different definitions for the offence of criminal adultery for women and men. The definitions effectively approved for a married man to have sexual intercourse with any woman provided she is not married, while married women were prohibited from having sexual intercourse with any man regardless of the man's marital status. The provisions in the Succession Act on heirship, distribution of intestate estates, appointment of a testamentary guardian, choice of domicile and remarriage while in occupancy of the matrimonial home, were also challenged as discriminating against women

2.32 Government through the MGLSD has taken a number of measures designed to address Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in its policies and practices Including among others:

- Establishment of an SGBV Reference Group to coordinate all actors in preventing and responding to SGBV;
- Mobilization of men to form Male Action Groups against SGBV at community level
- Nation wide media campaign including electronic, print and artistic performances to raise awareness about SGBV and violence against women. Information, Education and Communication materials have also been produced and disseminated widely (examples at www.mglsd.go.ug);
- Training of health, justice (including Police), and social workers in the prevention and response to SGBV through a survivor centered approach;

- Efforts to establish a model SGBV Recovery Centre (a one stop multi-sectoral (justice, health and psychosocial response facility) at least one national referral hospital are underway through a joint undertaking by MGLSD and Ministry of Health, with support from the United Nations Population Fund.

2.33 In addition to these special projects, other measures to address violence against women have included: increasing protection mechanisms through the establishment of the Police Family Protection Units; and provision of HIV/AIDS post-exposure prophylactic (PEP) kits at Health Centre III and IV;

2.34 The above efforts are complemented by Civil Society Organisations' initiatives, e.g. the National Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative, which aims at strengthening GBV prevention at the community level. Some of the CSOs have undertaken integrated projects which include legal literacy programmes, capacity building, legal aid services, counseling services and shelters for abused women. These initiatives have increased the visibility of GBV; mobilised communities including men in the fight against GBV; and strengthened civil-state relations in the handling of survivors of violence.

2.35 Government is in the process of developing a Bill for the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation through a consultative process with Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholders. A National Strategy for the Elimination of FGM being finalised. Efforts to eliminate FGM have focused on awareness campaigns aimed at changing attitudes and eroding its social acceptability in the communities where it is practiced.

2.36 The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) has been engaged in building capacity of judicial officers to use international instruments when deciding cases involving discrimination against women and or violence against women.

OBSTACLES, GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.37 Violence against women is a symptom of unequal power relations between women and men in society, especially patriarchal societies. It is systematically constructed through knowledge and belief systems. Ending violence against women requires not only policy and legislative efforts, but also sustained mass behavioral change initiatives. The funding of SGBV interventions is however not adequate to expand nationally and sustain the community mobilisation, sensitisation and behavioral change initiatives;

2.38 Attitudinal change is a slow process and therefore transforming society to respect and uphold women's rights is a slow;

2.39 Accessing justice for SGBV survivors the criminal justice system constrained by factors such as costs e.g. for medical examination, legal fees; distance from service providers/institutions; and secondary traumas induced by lengthy procedures and social stigma;

2.40 Uganda is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and diverse country, where different societies have different traditions, values, customs and practices. Developing legislation that standardizes values and norms with the respect to women's rights often meets stiff resistance on grounds of cultural relativity. Fully translating international human rights standards into domestic laws has to navigate the intricacies of cultural relativism;

2.41 Support towards livelihood activities and temporary shelters for SGBV survivors is weak/dismal yet it is critical for comprehensive response. Most of the SGBV interventions focus on clinical management, psycho-social support, access to justice, community mobilisation/sensitisation, legislative reforms, and training of duty bearers.

LESSONS LEARNED

2.42 Violence against women and indeed gender based violence profoundly affects the pace of achieving national development goals. Situating the initiatives to eliminate violence against women within the broader context of promoting economic growth and social development is critical for leveraging support from key decision makers;

2.43 Strengthening coordination of SGBV actors (including traditional/cultural institutions, faith based organisations, government institutions, CSOs etc) is critical for increasing access to services, reducing trauma and promoting recovery among SGBV survivors;

2.44 Involvement of men in SGBV prevention activities is critical for accelerating change in attitudes;

WOMEN AND CONFLICT

Actions and Progress

2.45 The Government of Uganda supported the efforts of women leaders (e.g. Ms. Betty Bigombe) who initially spear headed the peace talks (1994/2004) with the Lords' Resistance Army (LRA) to end the conflict in Northern Uganda. Although women have since not enjoyed such high level representation in the Government negotiating team, Government made provisions for women's participation in the Peace Talks in Juba. In addition to the two women directly on the peace team, women were facilitated to attend some of the meetings;

2.46 Government in partnership with United Nations and international as well as local humanitarian agencies have since 2006 carried out gender violence prevention and response interventions in Northern Uganda districts, under the umbrella of the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), to address the unique conditions and plight of the people in Northern Uganda (about 10 % of all districts). Specific achievement include:

- Numerous trainings have taken place aimed at strengthening the capacity of medical, legal, police,
- Special Police Constables, Local Councils, women's groups, and psycho social support providers among others.
- Pos-rape care equipment and drugs have been procured and distributed in all districts.
- GBV Hotline services exist in half of the districts.
- Data on reported cases of GBV in all the districts is collected on a monthly basis and this data has been used to report on GBV to District Disaster Management Committees, UN OCHA and Protection cluster;

- Established and/or strengthened GBV coordination and referral pathways and networks in all districts
- Developed Standard Operating Procedures for handling of GBV cases.

2.47 Government of Uganda in collaboration with development partners is currently working on different recovery programmes to resettle and rehabilitate the displaced communities in the conflict-affected regions. Special provisions are being made for the most vulnerable groups which include women under the Peace Recovery Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda. The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development has initiated the process of engendering this document; so as to ensure the women equally enjoy the opportunities and benefit from the planned interventions;

2.48 Government developed an action plan for implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) and 1820 and the Goma Declaration (2008). The Action Plan will guide government Ministries, Departments and Agencies as well as other stakeholders, on the requisite interventions to be implemented under the different sector and institutional mandates.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.49 Assessing the impact of interventions in light of the multiple vulnerabilities faced by women and girls, intensified by conflict and displacement e.g. higher fertility rates, illiteracy, lack of skills, dependency, disability etc;

2.50 Inadequate resources for implementation of GBV and gender equality interventions under the Northern Uganda Recovery Programmes and for the Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and 1820;

2.51 Addressing emerging forms of violence (particularly increases in domestic violence) in areas of return. Women are expected to fully play their traditional

gender roles of home care, yet for over two decades they lived in camps where they were 'cared for' by humanitarian agencies.

LESSONS LEARNED

- 2.52 Maintenance of a GBV Information Management System is critical for rationalizing service delivery and facilitation of effective planning and programming;
- 2.53 The need for timely life-saving GBV interventions (e.g. provision of medical care for rape survivors) is critical for the protection of women and girls;
- 2.54 The participation of different sectoral actors and stakeholders in GBV prevention and response activities as well as routine sharing of information through effective coordination mechanisms (with known/designated leadership) is essential for increased access to services by GBV survivors.

WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

Actions and progress

- 2.55 Empirical evidence from macro-economic analysis shows that gender inequality directly and indirectly limits economic growth in Uganda. This has guided Government to focus on pursuing the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment within the framework of the national development goals of accelerating economic growth and wealth creation. Uganda was able to achieve sustained economic growth during this reporting period averaging at 5% with outcomes of reduced poverty levels and increased incomes.
- 2.56 Uganda's economy is predominantly agriculture based, with the majority of households depending mainly on subsistence agriculture as a source of income. The proportion of persons engaged in the agricultural sector has increased significantly from 65.5% in 2002/3 to 73% in 2005/6. Women comprise the majority of the labour force in agriculture, while men form the majority of the labour force in the industry and service sectors.
- 2.57 Land is one of the most important assets in Uganda's agrarian economy. Male headed households are the predominant owners of land having between 80-90% of ownership. The 1992, 1999, and 2003 National Household Surveys showed that women headed households had lower levels of cultivable land than male headed households. Income levels are also significantly lower for women as compared to men at all levels
- 2.58 Government's policy to transform the agriculture sector from subsistence to commercial farming through improved market access has yielded results. Data from the UNHS (2006) shows households reporting improvements in market access for high value agriculture products especially livestock. Access to land for women has been improved through enactment of legislation that gives women rights to family land. The Land Act (Cap 227) and Land Acquisition Act (Cap 226), provides for spousal consent on matters relating to land from which the

family derives sustenance. There are indications that the proportion of women headed households that are landless decreased between 1992 and 2003, suggesting that women's access to land has increased slightly. Women's ownership of registered land has gone up to 20% (2009) from 16% in 2007.

- 2.59 Employment in the Ugandan context is defined as labour within the productive sector. Overall employment of women has grown, but significantly slower than men. MGLSD has drafted a National Employment Policy which proposes to pursue the enhancement of employment opportunities with specific consideration to gender concerns. Implementation of the Employment Act 2006 includes protecting the rights of women in employment including prohibition of sexual harassment at the work place, increment of maternity leave from 60 working days and provision of 4 days paternity leave. Both women and men particularly those in the public sector have benefited from this law since its enactment.
- 2.60 Access to education is a defining factor in employment and to date it is anticipated that income levels of women will improve as the education system continues to produce progressively more educated women. Enrolment ratios of boys to girls in primary schools has equalized, and the secondary school enrolment ratio is progressing towards an equal level.
- 2.61 Government's commitment to improving infrastructure in water and roads facilities is another strategy that has improved the livelihoods of women in the economy particularly with regard to reducing time spent on collecting water and firewood.
- 2.62 An initiative to strengthen the generation of gender statistics for policy formulation, and budgeting and monitoring was started in 2008 and is being coordinated by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics(UBOS) in collaboration with MGLSD and MFPED together with key Sector Ministries and Civil Society Organisations.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- 2.63 Effects of the global economic downturn including higher inflation and increased unemployment has led to a slow down in economic growth rate and increased food prices, all of which threaten gains in women's economic empowerment.
- 2.64 Access to credit is critical for promoting business, entrepreneurship and commercialisation of agriculture. However financial products offered by microfinance institutions do not favour agriculture, the main employer of women. On the other hand, urban women who are benefiting from microfinance lending receive small amounts with very high interest rates.
- 2.65 More women are taking on income generating activities but few men are entering the "care economy". The "overburden" of women is a key component of both individual and household poverty. Understanding the time constraint of women and its implications, and moving to reduce it is fundamental to the poverty eradication drive.
- 2.66 The unequal sharing of roles and responsibilities as well as unequal power relations is highlighted in studies as one of the reasons for moving into poverty. In some instances there is underpayment for women's labour within communities where there is limited awareness about discrimination and knowledge of fair compensation levels.

Way forward:

- 2.67 Government has embarked on a process of articulating a five-year National Development Plan (NDP). An initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development is ongoing to ensure gender responsive policy interventions are integrated in the Plan, which will be costed to ensure funding source through the national budget. Employment and job creation is the major focus of the NDP and over the medium term budgeting period. This provides an important opportunity to improve the policy framework that influences women's income, labour and employment opportunities.

WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKING

Actions and progress

2.68 The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda amended in 2000 guarantees the involvement and participation of women in all spheres of life including social, economic and political. Most of the efforts to empower women originate from the Constitution especially Articles 32, 33 and 108.

Affirmative action in political representation

2.69 In Article 33 (5) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda affirmative action (AA) is provided for and is aimed at redressing gender imbalances in parliamentary representation. The visibility of women in politics has fairly gone up and brought about an increased number of women parliamentarians in the mainstream political arena in the country. In the same Article, sections (1), (2) and (4) seek to eliminate discrimination against women as a human rights issue in the political, economic and social spheres of life.

2.70 Woman Parliamentary representatives from each district have brought a gender perspective to the legislative process in parliament and other parliamentary committees. A number woman have been appointed to positions of ministers, Ambassadors, Directors and Commissioners. These positions have enabled them to draw government's attention to gender issues and concerns with specific emphasis on women. Issues that have been given national attention through projects and government interventions include domestic violence, gender based violence, reproductive health, and human rights.

2.71 Measures to increase women's representation in the political and public life in the country have included *Affirmative action policy* which has expanded leadership opportunities for women thereby challenging the negative traditional stereotypes that women are never expected to be leaders. This has encouraged, more women getting encouraged to venture into local and national politics.

- 2.72 This is evident in the increased number of women competing for the open seats against their male counterparts during the 2006 elections, 15 of whom were successful. The same election had for the first time ever in the country's history ushered in a woman presidential candidate on a multi-party political system. *Advocacy campaigns* by women's organizations for increased representation and participation, using the *Women's Manifesto* and "*Women's Minimum Demands to Political Parties and organizations*", Affirmative action in the Coalition on Political Accountability for Women's position, with a minimum of 40% representation in their party structures.
- 2.73 Other measures include the recent enactment of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act in response to Article 32 (2) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda which demands the State to ensure equality for all and affirmative action based on previous discrimination. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is yet to be operationalised this year, 2009 to guide on discriminatory laws, policies and practices and propose to parliament the adoption for legislation at different levels.
- 2.74 The Equal Opportunities Commission at its operational level will provide an institutional framework for promoting more equitable gender representation in diplomatic services as well as international organizations. The Commission is awaiting appointments into positions to operationalize the Commission.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

- 2.75 In Article 35 of the Constitution, sections (1) (2) and (4) seek to eliminate discrimination against women as a human rights issue in the political, economic and social spheres of life.
- 2.76 The Human Rights of Women was adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in December 2007 by Member States who pledged to integrate human rights of women and a gender perspective in all their work and mechanisms, including periodic reviews. The Human Rights of women are to be mainstreamed in budgets, institutional arrangements; full participation of women, socially, politically and economically at all levels. Uganda was then a signatory to resolution 6/30 in 2006 and at the end of every year a period review has to be submitted to the Human Rights Council.
- 2.77 The government of the Republic of Uganda through the Local Governments Act established Local Government Courts to amicably respond to dispute resolution at the lowest levels to avoid congestion and allow decongestion/backlog of cases in Courts of Law. These local courts are mandated to handle particular cases and refer other cases to higher courts of law. They handle cases related to child maintenance and custody, theft, domestic violence, marital and land disputes.
- 2.78 The Government has empowered different organizations to strengthen and improve access to justice by involving partners such as the Uganda Human Rights Commission and established tribunals, regional offices and provision of legal representation and protection to facilitate the investigation of complaints of human rights violations.

- 2.79 Under the Land Amendment Act of 2004, the Land Act has been amended to include sections that cater for the protection of the rights of women to own, use and inherit land. The Act protects the rights of women to use customary land and women are now able to lodge a caveat on a certificate of title or certificate of customary ownership, indicating that a property is subject to a requirement of consent, prior to any sale and transfer of ownership.
- 2.80 The enactment of the Equal Opportunities Act 2007 and the Equal Opportunities Commission Policy is another important step in the protection of the rights of women. One of the key functions of the Commission is to monitor, evaluate and ensure that policies, laws, plans, programmes and activities, practices, traditions, cultures and customs of both private and public organizations are compliant with equal opportunities and Affirmative Action in groups marginalized on the basis of sex and other criteria.
- 2.81 In 2007, the National Action Plan for implementing the CEDAW was developed with a purpose of guiding all actors in identifying key activities to be implemented under each of the 16 Articles of the Convention. The continued dissemination of the simplified versions of the CEDAW and BPFA, and Uganda's commitment to adhere to the provisions of the CEDAW as demonstrated by the submission of Country status Reports since 1992.
- 2.82 The Declaration on people with Disabilities covers women with disabilities as a special category whose rights need to be protected by the state.
- 2.83 The Uganda Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy are in place. Food security has been emphasized and elevated as a right and priority by government. The Agricultural sector gets more funding because of its direct link to food security.
- 2.84 Advocacy for a fair family law is on-going under the DRB Coalition. There are ongoing initiatives to ensure that women are accorded their full rights in

marriage and at its dissolution. Another step in protecting the human rights of women has been the splitting of the DRB into two pieces of legislation to provide for Civil, Christian, Hindu and Bahai marriages on the one hand; and Islamic marriages and divorce on the other.

- 2.85 The Employment Act, 2006 is a piece of legislation that contains provisions which address women's right to meaningful employment. The Labour Legislation passed by the government contains a number of provisions which comply with the constitutional provisions on economic rights of women. The Employment Act, 2006 has provisions that protect the rights of women in employment for example prohibition of sexual harassment of women, granting Maternity Leave and Paternity Leave; as well as job security after.
- 2.86 The right of women to appropriate health care is addressed under the National Minimum Health Care Package as Sexual and Reproductive Rights Form one of the priority Areas.
- 2.87 The Right to access credit and other financial services is being addressed by the Rural Development Strategy, particularly the Prosperity For All Programme. The Programme aims at improving household incomes through establishing savings and credit cooperatives at every sub county.
- 2.88 The formulation of the Uganda National Culture Policy (2006) is a step in addressing negative customs and practices that impinge on human dignity, such as Female Genital Cutting. One of the core principles of the policy is to ensure social inclusion of all marginalized groups including women. The policy interventions focus on Affirmative Action to ensure that these categories of people participate in and benefit from cultural life.

2.89 The right to access justice for women is guaranteed by the Constitution. Constitutional guarantees on non-discrimination of women are enforced by competent courts, and the constitutional court has been successfully petitioned to repeal laws that discriminate against women. The establishment of tribunals, regional offices and provision of legal representation to facilitate investigations of human rights violations all address the human rights of women. Other strategies include the establishment of the community Liaison Officer in the Police which provides Legal Aid Services in the communities.

WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

Actions and progress

2.90 There are institutional mechanisms in place to support women in media for instance there are enabling laws and policies which support freedom of the press irrespective of gender. The country has an effective policy development system to support gender equality in media although it lacks strict implementation measures. Akin to lack of strict implementation measures the system does not have clear monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms in place.

2.91 At the moment there are no specific measures that have been taken to support research on women and media although some studies to ensure women's access to and participation in the media have been under taken mainly by non-governmental organizations.

2.92 It is also noted that whereas there is a conducive environment for the promotion of gender equality in the country there are no specific policies to support gender equality in the media, more especially women's participation in leadership and decision making positions.

- 2.93 The Government of Uganda promotes and recognises women’s media networks, such as Uganda Media Women Association (UMWA) which has a community Radio Station for purposes of mainly communicating information that promotes women’s and children’s welfare. Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) and Uganda Journalists Association (UJA) are yet other organisations where women participate actively.
- 2.94 The Government of Uganda has avenues to encourage the participation of women in the development of professional guidelines and codes of conduct for media. For example in Uganda there is a media code of conduct on reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE). This code was developed by media women of East African countries namely Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Uganda and was launched by the Minister of State for Children and Youth in 2008.
- 2.95 Training was arranged for journalists on code of reporting following the development of such code of conduct. While there is a positive environment to promote gender equality in Uganda as evidenced in the different policies and legislation there is no strategy of Information Education and Communication to support, Education and communication to support women and the media.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- 2.96 The media is driven by profits and as such less priority is given by media houses to development issues including gender development concerns. Priority issues that “sell” are politics, crime and conflict and popular culture including sports, music and pornography. Media houses such as Mama FM are thus experiencing problems with raising sufficient funding to run their programmes.
- 2.97 There is an increase in negative portrayal of women in the media with more publication of pornographic images in the print media. Hence this form of sexual exploitation of women is promoted together as well as negative perceptions of women.

2.98 The increased access to the internet has had a negative impact on widening the viewing of pornography especially among the urban youth. Although Uganda's media laws provides for prohibition of such publications, enforcement is difficult.

WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Actions and Progress

2.99 Environmental issues have been identified by government as one of the cross-cutting issues to be mainstreamed in all development initiatives at the various stages. To this end, the Ministry of Water and Environment has a Focal Point Person for guiding the Mainstreaming environment within the sectors. IEC materials on environmental issues have been developed and translated into local languages since majority of women in rural areas are illiterate.

2.100 Tree planting campaigns is on going and this has been decentralized to rural areas in order to curb deforestation and increase awareness on its impact on the environment; women and children relate closely with the environment as they directly till the land, fetch water as well as firewood. Their involvement in advocacy campaigns has therefore been identified as a key strategy and priority in addressing issues of environmental degradation.

2.101 In the Water and Sanitation Sector, the presence of women on Water user committees is a matter of policy, and this also includes occupying one of the key positions: Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. This ensures that gender issues are addressed at all stages programme implementation.

2.102 In addition to the above, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Campaign was launched, bringing all actors from various sectors including the National Machinery for Gender equality and Women's empowerment.

2.103 The Farm income Enhancement and Forestry Conservation Project gives loans to start projects. This is meant to empower women as consumers and producers to ensure effective environmental actions. Other agricultural loans have been given to women's groups through government programmes and micro finance institutions. In addition, there is an ongoing Environmental Health Programme in collaboration with the African Medical Research Foundation, with the goal of ensuring sustainable environmental Actions.

2.104 Both the Local Government Assessment and UBOS livestock census use environmental impact and women's equal access and use of resources for evaluating progress of the programmes.

2.105 The Rural Electrification Strategy also aims at reducing pressure on the environment as a source of fuel. The National Agricultural Research Policy focuses on research to produce crop varieties that have high yields, as well as research for technology that responds to needs of women farmers. Also to note are the Efforts of the National Agricultural Research Organization to develop labour saving technology which takes into consideration the multiple roles of women.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.106 Uganda is faced with a problem of land degradation arising from both over cultivation and grazing on land. There is also, extensive clearance of wood and bush lands leading to deforestation. In addition, weak enforcement of land and environmental regulations has increased cultivation on marginal land and encroachment on other common property resources. Women bear the biggest brunt of land degradation including the adverse effects of climate change.

2.107 Modernization efforts have increased the need for energy, and there is an increased demand for electricity and other improved energy sources. However only 10% of the population has access to the national grid and most households and enterprises predominately use charcoal and firewood for cooking and heating purposes. The Rural Electrification Programme is ongoing, but it will take time to reach all rural areas where the majority of women live.

THE GIRL CHILD

Actions and Progress

2.108 The Constitution of Uganda provides for equal treatment of all citizens regardless of sex, age and tribe. The children's Act (1996) emphasizes equal treatment of all children and prohibits all forms of abuse against children. Such abuse includes early marriages, child labour, property inheritance etc. In this regard the draft bill on marriage and divorce was approved by cabinet in 2008 as well as the domestic violence bill. There has also been revision of laws on child labour and child trafficking. The Penal Code was amended to address defilement and any other form of violence against children. The Juvenile Justice Programme is in place whose activities have included renovation of existing child rehabilitation centers in Mbale (Eastern) and Fort portal (South-western Uganda). Furthermore two Rehabilitation centres have been established in Gulu & Arua (Northern Uganda).

2.109 The Government's National Strategy on the Girl Child Education launched in 1999 focuses on quality education for boys and girls, retention of girl children in school for primary education and reduction on absenteeism as well as review curricular and teaching materials to improve the self image girls. The achievements registered to date include; reduction in pupil; textbook ratio from 6:1 in 2000 to 3:1 in 2003; improved sanitation from a pupil: stance ratio of 700:1 in 1997 to 96:1 in 2000 with one third schools having separate facilities; and development of a Handbook for school teachers on mainstreaming gender in education.

2.110 Furthermore, there is an approved government policy on disability (2006) which emphasizes affirmative action for women and girls. To this end the Disability section was created in Ministry of Health in 2007 to assess the magnitude of disability and provide assistive devices. An Education Act 2006 is in place for special attention of children with disabilities. A Special Needs Education Centre was established at Kyambogo which led to the creation of a department of special Needs Education Guidance and Counseling in Ministry of Education to oversee the education of children with disabilities. The Uganda Dictionary on sign language was approved. In addition, separate sanitary facilities in schools for boys and girls with disability are emphasized as a policy. Access to information Act 2006 is in place that recognizes sign language as a language.

2.111 The Orphans and Vulnerable Children Policy 2004 is in place to address issues of Orphans & Vulnerable OVCs. There exists an Expanded Strategic Plan of intervention to implement the OVC policy holistically in the following areas; education, health, legal support, care and protection, psycho- social support, socio economic and food security for the OVC.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

2.112 Cultural practices continue to promote violation of girl child rights such as early marriages, female genital mutilation, unfair distribution of property of the deceased etc. Girl children with disabilities are still more disadvantaged & discriminated than those without disabilities.

LESSONS LEARNED

2.113 Community involvement in the implementation of the Local Government Act assigns roles and responsibilities to duty bearers. For instance, the local councils are responsible for assisting in the distribution of the deceased property to all children without discrimination.

PART 3: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Actions and Progress

- 3.1 In Uganda, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is the National Machinery for Advancement of Women and promotion of gender equality. It coordinates all mechanisms for promotion of gender equality. It participates in public policy formulation on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) through various bodies and institutions. The Ministry is charged with the responsibility to mainstream gender in National Development Plans, sectoral Ministries and Local Government Investment Plans as well as UN Agencies Country Cooperation Frameworks.

- 3.2 The Ministry is directed at Cabinet level with a Minister and a Minister of State. Through this arrangement, the National Machinery is represented in Cabinet which is the highest decision-making body in Government. The Ministry was restructured in 2008. The Division of Gender, in the former department of Gender Culture and Community Development was upgraded to a fully-fledged department of Gender and Women Affairs. The department is mandated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The staffing position of Gender Experts in the department increased from 7 in 2004 to 10 in 2009.

- 3.3 To augment the inadequate human resource in the department and coordinate effectively gender mainstreaming efforts/initiatives in the country, the National Machinery works through task-forces and committees. During the reporting period, the Gender Team responsible for overseeing mainstreaming of gender in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) was expanded and renamed the Gender and Rights Committee. The Gender and Rights Committee is composed of representatives from sector Ministries, Sector Gender Focal Points and representatives from Civil Society Organisations.

3.4 The Gender and Rights Committee plays an advisory role to the National Machinery in mainstreaming gender and promoting women's rights across all sectors of Government, Private Sector and Civil Society Organisations. The other critical role of the Committee is to operationalise the Gender Management System (GMS), a mechanism that was established to effect gender mainstreaming strategy in the Country.

The Gender and Rights Committee facilitates the process of gender mainstreaming through commissioning of studies in order to make a strong case for gender inclusion in the national development agenda. For instance in 2007, the Committee commissioned an evaluation study on the effectiveness of implementing gender responsive strategies in PEAP. The study has identified the gender gaps and has recommendations for inclusion in National Development Plan which is under formulation.

3.5 Other Gender Task Forces exist to oversee implementation of sectoral development plans. These include Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), Gender Technical Subcommittee which monitors inclusion of gender and participation of women in PMA.

The PMA Gender Technical Subcommittee which has been renamed the Gender and Poverty Subcommittee since 2005 prepared position papers on inclusion of gender in PMA, commissioned development of guidelines for mainstreaming gender in the 7 pillars of PMA which include agricultural research and technology development; agricultural advisory services; rural financial services; agro-processing and marketing; agricultural education; sustainable natural resource management and use and supportive physical infrastructure. The Sub-committee has undertaken gender surveys and extended support to the development of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) Gender Strategy.

- 3.6 The Gender Committee on Works and Transport has supported the road sector to mainstream gender in the policy documents. Implementation of gender mainstreaming in the road sub-sector has resulted into an increment in the number of women participating in labour based road construction works. For example, the proportion of female contractors and forepersons has increased from 10 percent to 30 percent. Similarly there has been an increase in the number of women employees as both skilled and unskilled labourers in road construction.
- 3.7 In order to scale up efforts to curb gender based violence in the country, a Gender Based Violence Reference (GBV) group was established in 2006. This is a technical advisory group that coordinates and provides oversight to implementation of GBV interventions. The reference group consists of representation from Justice, Law and Order, Health and Social Development Sectors as well as Civil Society Organisations and Development Partners. The Reference Group has registered a number of achievements such as establishment of training standards, advocating and inclusion of domestic violence module in the UDHS (2005) and the National Household Surveys, coordinating legal, health and psychosocial support responses to GBV. Currently the Group is providing oversight to the national survey on GBV which will furnish the necessary information on the magnitude types and manifestations of GBV in the country. The group has also played a commendable role in advocating for enactment of gender related bills such as the Marriage and Divorce Bill, Domestic Violence Bill, Trafficking in Persons Bill and the Bill on Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation.
- 3.8 Other Gender Task forces include Health Sector Gender Team which has initiated and publishes quarterly Gender and Health Newsletter, to share experiences on gender initiatives, and highlights key challenges of gender in the sector. A gender taskforce was formed this year to guide the National Bureau of

Statistics on collection, packaging and management of gender disaggregated data.

- 3.9 The National Machinery works in collaboration with the Development partners in the Country. The Donor Coordination Group on Gender. This group has rotational chairperson. The group supports national initiatives and identifies areas for support. Currently through efforts of this group on UN, Joint Gender Performance is being formulated, the group is also supporting the initiative to mainstream gender in the National Development Plan – a successor plan to PEAP.
- 3.10 At the Local Government level, institutional mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming process have been established. However, this has been piloted in only six (6) Local Governments out of 80. Such mechanisms include Gender forums, Gender Mainstreaming Task forces and Women Leaders Forums. Significant achievements attributed to these efforts at the Local Government level have been registered. Some examples of these achievements are:-
- Use of School Facility Grant to construct gender responsive and women friendly facilities in primary schools e.g. separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys, and separate staff quarters for female teachers.
 - Targeting men's participation in reproductive health programmes.
 - Promoting labour based road works to enable female owned firms to qualify.
 - Establishment of pre-budget women caucus foras.
- 3.11 The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was established by an Act of Parliament in 2007. It is mandated to eliminate discrimination and inequalities against any individual or group of persons on the grounds of sex, age, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, health status, social or economic standing, political opinion or disability. The Commission can also take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalized on the basis of among other factors gender and age for purposes of redressing the imbalances. Once it

is fully operational, the Commission will monitor, evaluate and ensure that policies, laws, plans, programmes/activities and practices of public and private organisations are compliant with the law.

3.12 On the academic front, the Department of Women and Gender Studies created in 1991, in the Faculty of Social Sciences, provides intellectual leadership in imparting knowledge and skills for creation of gender experts in the country. The department has expanded the scope of the degree programmes from the Masters level to include Bachelors and PHD degrees. The Gender Mainstreaming Division which was established in 2001 in the Academic Registrar's Department at Makerere University, spearheads gender mainstreaming in academic and administrative functions of the University. The main areas of focus include influencing the University to include gender perspectives in curricula of different faculties, access and retention, personnel, space and security of women. The Division implements a female scholarship programme which provides tuition and other fees to girls from poor social economic background offering science courses. Some of the achievements of the Division efforts include inclusion of gender in different faculties e.g. Agriculture, Education, Technology, Medicine and Post graduate Studies. The University has started a special programme at Masters Level on Economics and Gender in the Faculty of Economic Management.

3.13. Uganda returned to multiparty political dispensation in 2006 after 20 years of the Movement Political System which was based on individual merit rather than party representation. Different Political parties established Women's leagues. The ruling party (NRM) as well as the other major opposition political parties have established women leagues to provide a platform for gender balance in the party structures and processes. In the current Parliament a separate sessional Committee of Parliament was established to promote Gender and Social Development with intention of promoting visibility of the National Machinery and allocation of adequate resources for its functions. To ensure

gender inclusion in the legislature, women legislators established a women's caucus, the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA). The association has put in place a system for vetting all bills before parliament for gender responsiveness. Women MPs point out the anomalies during the general debate and at committee stages. Representation on party lines has however led women to emphasize the respective party lines on all issues including gender. Political party loyalties seem to transcend gender ideologies. Women Members of Parliament chairing committees of Parliament increased from 7 in 2005 to 9 in 2006, i.e. 4 chairpersons and 5 deputy chairpersons. Parliament is organized in sessional committees.

- 3.14. The National Women's Council which was established by an Act of Parliament as a unified body which organizes all women and mobilizes them to engage in development activities. During this period, the Women's Council Act, 2002 was amended to cater for the prevailing multiparty political dispensation during election of the office bearers. Elections for the new term will be held this year. The council gets funding from the national budget for activities aimed at empowering women.
- 3.15. To effect the Public-private sector partnerships, Government collaborates with CSOs and NGOs in policy making, planning and service delivery. Women CSOs and NGOs contributed to reformulation of poverty eradication Action Plan (2004), development of Social Sector Development Plan (SDIP) in 2003, as well as other sectoral plans for Health, Education, Agriculture among others. Women CSOS played a major role in negotiating peace accord for Northern Uganda, the development of Northern Uganda Programme for Reconstruction and Development (PRDP(2007-2009). Women under coordination of Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) developed a women's manifesto in 2005, a tool that was used to lobby major political parties for minimum expectations for women from the political parties.

- 3.16 At the regional level, the Government of Uganda is actively participating in efforts aimed at strengthening regional integration. In East African Community legislative Assembly with representatives from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, there are nine Ugandan representatives, four of whom are women. Regional integration provides new opportunities for labour market and trade among others. For women, the present opportunities for engagement is cross border trade and employment. To ensure that gender is captured and addressed in East African Community agreements, the EAC has developed a Gender, Youth and Community Development Strategy.
- 3.17 The major challenge is to optimally use the established structures to effectively coordinate women's issues, identify concrete and common gender agenda, make strategic alliances beyond these structures and routinely position the gender agenda on the country's development agenda.

PART 4: KEY CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS, FUTURE ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

4.1 Uganda has made significant progress in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as highlighted in the report. However, there are significant challenges that require accelerated future action towards realisation of gender equality and women's empowerment.

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK AND LEADERSHIP

4.2 While Uganda has made significant progress in securing and improving the legal status and rights of women through law reform and policy formulation, there is still a big gap between what is contained in the law and various policies and what happens in practise. Failure to introduce reforms in family /personal laws that protect women from all forms of discrimination in their personal and public lives make the achievements of an equal status for women in law and in practice evasive. Challenges persist in the justice delivery systems which negatively affect women's access to justice. Challenges also still exist in cultural beliefs which contribute to the failure of women to use the existing progressive laws to assert their legal status and defend their human rights.

4.3 To address these challenges , Government will; enact laws and policies that advance women's rights to gender equality, undertake legal reforms to improve the status and situation of women in leadership and decision making; continue to build capacities and knowledge of women in leadership and decision making; continue sensitisation and awareness creation of legal rights and operationalise the Equal Opportunities Commission.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

- 4.4 Although a lot has been done in the area of social and economic empowerment of women, and achievements have been registered in improving the social and economic status of women, challenges still exist that call for further actions.
- 4.5 Challenges remain in more equitable access to utilisation and control of productive resources. Gender disaggregated data on trends of land ownership indicate that national holding of registered land by women has grown from 7% in 1991 to 16% in 2004 and to 20% in 2008, but trends in average land acreage by gender of household head indicate that the situation for women's ownership and control over land has not improved. Further while women contribute 55% of active borrowers in microfinance, the average loan size is quite small (US\$ 140) for engagement in large income generating activities. In addition women still face challenges in access and utilisation of extension services.
- 4.6 Government will endeavour to continue facilitating provision of financial services to women including rural women. Efforts will continue to mobilise women in Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) for access to credit. Efforts will also continue to provide security of land tenure to women and strengthen their land rights particularly widows and orphans.

FINANCING GENDER EQUALITY

- 4.7 Adequate financing of gender equality programmes as well as funding Gender machinery has been a big challenge. The Gender machinery has been chronically under funded and as a result, targeted gender equality interventions have a limited coverage, in most cases donor aided pilot projects which cover less than 10% of districts and 1% of lower Local Governments.

4.8 Government will continue to strengthen the capacity of National Machinery to coordinate gender mainstreaming, and mobilise resources that support gender equality and empowerment of women. Public and Private sector will be encouraged to develop and enhance the capacity for the implementation of financing for women's empowerment programmes and gender equality.

HIV/AIDSs

4.9 Although government efforts to address HIV/AIDSs has led to the decline in the prevalence of HIV/AIDSs in Uganda from a peak of 18% in 1992 to 6.4% in 2006, the challenges of HIV/AIDSs burden heavily rests on women and girls. The stereotype gender roles put the burden of care giving to women and girls.

4.10 Government will conduct research and collect sex and age disaggregated data and develop gender sensitive indicators, as appropriate , to inform policy making and conduct assessments to measure progress in the sharing or responsibilities between women and men, including in the context of HIV/AIDSs; will identify the obstacles and stereotypes men may face in assuming increased care giving responsibilities. Behavioural change communication strategies will be developed to encourage change of mind set of both women and men in care giving. Further, appropriate technologies to ease the burden of care for both women and men will be encouraged.

4.11 Existing challenges that exacerbate HIV infection such as the rampant Gender Based Violence will be tackled. A national policy on Sexual and Gender Based Violence will be formulated to guide stakeholders/implementers in programming interventions to address GBV. Sensitisation and awareness creation on GBV will be enhanced to address social tolerance for GBV in communities. Structures such Sexual Gender Based Violence Recovery Centres will be established within referral hospitals to increase access by stakeholders and survivors to information on counselling, social support , treatment and protection against SGBV and other harmful practices in Uganda.

GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA

- 4.12 Availability of sex and gender disaggregated data is critical for effective mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment and yet it has remained a big challenge to be collected and documented for policy development and programme planning.
- 4.13 Efforts will be strengthened to enhance disaggregated data collection and gender planning capacity of planners, statisticians and implementers to collect gender disaggregated data and information and employ gender analysis of sectoral and local government budgets. Gender budgeting and Gender auditing skills capacity building at different levels will be targeted to strengthen gender disaggregated data collection and gender planning challenge.
- 4.14 The country's labour force has increased from 9.8million in 2002/03 to 10.9million persons in 2005/06 representing an annual growth rate of 3.6%. The proportion of females in the labour force remains high though it has declined from 52.6% in 2002/03 to 51.4%% in 2005/06. The annual growth rate for males (4.4%) is one and half times higher than that of females 2.9%).