

**UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT ON NATIONAL YOUTH  
CONSULTATION MEETING**

**HELD**

**IN PREPARATION FOR THE ADF CONFERENCE**

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### ACRONYMS

CYP	-	Commonwealth Youth Programme
EALA	-	East African Legislative Assembly
FDC	-	Forum for Democratic Change
NEC	-	National Executive Committee
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
NYC	-	National Youth Council
NUSAF-		Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
PCY	-	Programme for Children and Youth
PMA	-	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNSA	-	Uganda National Students Association
UPE	-	Universal Primary Education
UPPET-		Universal Post Primary Education and Training
WPAY	-	World Programme of Action on Youth
YES	-	Youth Entrepreneurship Skills.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Youth present an opportunity for a sustained effort to participate in the country's development process because they possess greater energy, workforce and potential. In Uganda, youth and young people constitute 78% of Uganda's population which is about 27 Million people. (Population Census 2002). In Uganda youth are defined as all young persons between the ages of 18 –30 yrs. (National Youth Council Statute 1993, The 1995 constitution of Republic of Uganda.)

The National Youth consultation workshop with youth took place from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at Colline Hotel in Mukono District near Kampala City. It was organised by the National Youth Council in conjunction with Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and with support from UNDP.

The main purpose of the workshop was to seek for views of the Youth on issues that affect them and their communities and thus impinge on the development process of the country. The views of the youth are then to be compiled and presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> African Development Forum in Addis Ababa-Ethiopia, next month. The youth form a significantly bigger number of the population of the developing countries and cannot therefore be ignored as partners in both socio-economic and political arenas. Any one who thinks positively about the youth, youth issues and youth participation should be highly applauded as a development partner. The cross-cutting issues that the meeting sought to consult on included:-

1. Youth and political participation.
2. Youth, education and life skills.
3. Youth, conflict resolution and peace building.
4. World programme of Action on Youth.
5. Youth and economic development.
6. Youth, Gender and social development; and
7. Youth and regional integration.

## 1.1 WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- To raise awareness and discuss issues of development concern to youth at national and regional level
- To inform the youth about MDG's indicators and the fifth African Development forum
- To prepare a national report on youth issues and participation.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

The Methodology used in handling the above topics outlined involved presentations by Professionals and knowledgeable personalities from both government departments and the private sector. The approaches involved:

- Questions and Answers.
- Focus Group discussion; and
- Plenary sessions where the youth agreed on common grounds after each presentation.

## 1.3 PARTICIPATION

The workshop drew participants from the following categories of youth:

- All District Youth leaders (Chairpersons).
- Youth NGO's.
- Female Youth leaders.
- Youth members of Parliament.
- Guild Presidents of Universities.
- Regional Students' leaders.

## 2.0. OVER VIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PLAN OF ACTION ON YOUTH:

2.1 The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development is responsible for youth affairs in Uganda. Within the ministry a department for youth affairs was created in 1998 to coordinate youth issues in Uganda. There is a minister of State responsible for youth affairs working closely under the over all supervision of the senior minister.

The department of youth is responsible for policy formulation, standard setting, quality assurance and training of youth in the country.

2.2 The National Youth Council was established by an Act of Parliament in 1993 to organise the youth for socio-economic development. The council has structures covering all the local council units in the country and leadership to these structures are accessed democratically through regular elections. The establishment of the youth councils opened further avenues for the youth to take part in the decision making process at all levels of governance.

2.3 The constitution of Uganda provides for affirmative policy for all the marginalised group including the youth. This policy has ensured the representation of the youth in the national assembly by five MPs and at the district local councils by 2 youth councillors. This has further enabled the youth to present their views and concerns for considerations.

2.4 The government formulated and implemented the National Youth Policy in 2000 to provide guidance on the implementation of youth empowerment programme in the country. The mission of the policy is youth empowerment through education, training and capacity building.

2.5 Uganda's policy framework for poverty reduction is summarised in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which was first, developed in 1997. PEAP provides a frame that guides the formulation of appropriate

poverty reducing strategies. The youth being among the poor people in Uganda, they are targeted by PEAP as a group.

2.6 The plan for modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) is another multi-sectoral strategy and operational framework for poverty eradication. Uganda is predominantly an agricultural country with more than 85 percent of the population depending on subsistence farming as their main source of livelihood. Measures to eliminate poverty countrywide must therefore address the agricultural sector. Women constitute more than half of the country's population and contribute 70 percent to the agricultural production. The PMA has set out principles governing the public and private sector's roles. The priority areas for public action are;

- (i) Research and technology development
- (ii) Advisory services
- (iii) Agricultural education
- (iv) Improving access to markets
- (v) Improving access to rural finance
- (vi) Sustainable natural resource utilization and management, with special focus on land utilization, water for production, forestry and environment.

2.7 Furthermore, GoU through MoGLSD developed a social Development Sector Investment Plan (SDIP), which promotes issues of social protection, gender equality and equity and human rights of the poor and vulnerable. This plan emphasises mobilisation of communities to participate in development programmes and demand for services accountability; reduction in inequality and exclusion; creating enabling environment for increased employment opportunities; protection of vulnerable persons from deprivation and livelihood risks as well as gender mainstreaming in other sector plans.

2.8 Other sector wide approaches and plans that have been developed include Health Sector Strategies Plan (HSSP), Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) and Justice, Law and Order Sector Plan (JLOSP). Interventions to implement these plans are discussed in Section 2.

2.9 Poverty eradication programmes and activities are implemented through a decentralised framework. Local governments determine local development priorities, plans and budgets and implement local programmes using conditional, unconditional and equalisation grants as well as locally generated revenue.

### **Key constraints and challenges:**

- The main challenge to the implementation of the World Programme of Action on Youth in Uganda has been financial constraints. The budgetary supply towards the ministry responsible for youth has not been commensurate to the volume of work and the expectations of the youth. Consequently, most of the planned youth programmes remain unimplemented.
- The country's current population is estimated to be 27 million people of which about 78 percent are below the age of 30 years. This pose a big challenge to the economy since the country's economic growth is not commensurate to the growth in population. The high population of the youth exerts high pressure on social services and increases the burden of dependants on the few working adults.
- The UPPAP report of 2000 has categorised the majority of the youth among the poor and vulnerable people in Uganda. The youth have a limited access to factors of production due to their lack of ownership of collateral. This problem is further exacerbated by the high population growth rate.

- Youth unemployment in Uganda is still unacceptably high. Recent studies by the MoGLSD indicate that 380000 youth are released in the job market each year to compete for the estimated 90000 jobs available. The frustration of unemployment has resulted into high crime rate and in some cases insecurity in some parts of the country.
- The HIV/ AIDS prevalence rate at 6.7 percent is very high. The impact of this disease has been manifested in the high population of orphans, absenteeism in work places and the overstretching of the health facilities.
- The recent wave of instability in some parts of the country notably northern Karamoja has disrupted normal economic activities of the people. The youth have been got victims and perpetrators of violence and hence their ability to engage in meaningful programmes is seriously reduces.

## **3.0 PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON YOUTH (WPAY)**

### **3.1 Introduction**

WPAY is a framework formulated for all countries to follow as a guide in developing and planning on youth issues. Youth issues and concerns are cross cutting and generally similar world over. What is most desirable, however is the involvement of the Youth in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the programmes and activities that identified to solve their problems.

Uganda is already on the move to implement the WPAY. For instance Article 30 of the Ugandan Constitution guarantees the right to education to all persons. UPE and UPPE are yet other government programmes to enable most youth access education and practical skills. Youth have also benefited from the introduction of distance education offered by most Universities and Commonwealth Youth Programme [CYP]

World Programme of Action on Youth has several key areas that include among others; Education, Health, Environment, Employment, Hunger and Poverty.

### **3.2 Education**

**What steps has the government taken in promoting education for all young people?**

- Article 34 (2) of the Constitution provides that a child (young person) is entitled to basic education, the responsibility of the state and the parents.
- Universalizing primary education. (U.P.E)

- Introduction of new curriculum with more subjects, more opportunity to pupils to have knowledge as well as practical skills for self-sustenance in case they do not go beyond primary school education.
- Distance education has been promoted by all the Universities. The Commonwealth Youth Program has supported government in the involvement of youth in long distance education.
- Government has promoted skills development through projects like Promotion of Children and Youth (PCY) in Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD)
- Youth have been trained in different skills. carpentry & joinery, tailoring, basic HIV/AIDS life skills, Many universities have been set. In these institutions, sponsorship of students has been increased from 2000 to 4000 through "Window 1" and all National Teachers' colleges are fully government sponsored.
- The government has targeted the hard to reach groups with specific programmes tailored to suit particular situations.
- Three specific alternative education programs with flexible approach and curriculum have been developed to reach out to children who are in unique situations (COPE) targets children who have never attended school or have dropped out of school before acquiring basic skills
- The Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja region (ABEK) was introduced with support of Action Aid Organization in an effort to increase literacy levels in Karamoja region and flexibility in the curriculum.
- The Basic Education for Urban Poor Areas (BEUPA) is implemented in Kampala and targets slum dwellers and other disadvantaged children in the urban and semi-urban areas. The curriculum focuses on practical employable skills as well as basic literacy.

### 3.3 Employment

- Two major schemes have been in operation since the inception of the World Programme Action Plan for Youth, the Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme (YES) and the more recent youth component of the Northern Ugandan Social Action Fund (NUSAF). The first scheme was designed as a loan scheme for young entrepreneurs, whereas the second is a grant scheme targeting all people in the war torn northern parts of Uganda. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) also operates a pre-vocational training programme which supports the young people with tools after the completion of their courses.
- The youth component of the Northern Ugandan Social Action Fund has only recently been launched, some youth groups have already benefited from the funds, but it is too early into the scheme to verify a sustainable success.
- In 2001 the Ugandan cabinet passed the National Youth Policy, which contains 8 so called priority areas. One of them is the promotion of employment and entrepreneurship. The MoGLSD has developed a draft National Action Plan on Youth as a result of the policy with a strong emphasis is put on this topic.
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- The government of Uganda introduces successively computer technology as a subject into the school curriculum. Together with NGOs, such as School net, Uganda promotes the use of IT amongst young people. The MoGLSD has launched an IT and web-based career guidance tool for young people in 2004. However, access to computer technology remains a problem, particularly in all areas outside the major towns. In the conflict ridden northern part of the country, access to Internet is not possible.

### 3.4 HUNGER AND POVERTY

*What types of government incentives and programmes are available for young people in rural areas? What have been the successes and constraints?*

- Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA). Components of this programme are also geared towards the needs of young people, who can benefit from specialised training and extension services and, in specific cases from financial support. The PMA is a community based approach; young people are included as a target group.

- In cooperation with NGOs, the MoGLSD provides a programme for young people not only on agricultural matters, but also on the formation of youth cooperatives in the field of agriculture. This establishes a linkage between business support services and the knowledge of appropriate technology in agriculture. The young people benefit from dedicated extension services.
- The Ugandan Industrial Research Institute develops special approaches for agricultural activities for young people, which take into account the particular background of this group with respect to investment capacity, training and access to land.

### 3.5 HEALTH

- The Government of Uganda developed and adopted a National Health policy and a Health Sector Strategic Plan 2000-2005. The main aim of the plan is to reduce morbidity and mortality from the major causes of ill health in Uganda as a contribution to poverty eradication. The young people are the main target group for the provision of the basic health services.

#### What types of health services are available?

- The main type of services available to the young people include immunization against the six killer diseases (measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, polio and tetanus), STD treatment, family planning services for those in the reproductive age group, health education and counseling for those in the age group of 10-24. Other basic health services provided are basic hygiene, safe water and proper sanitation.
- Both government and NGOs provide these services but the NGOs are supported by Government to provide these services.

- The basic health services provided are youth friendly in most of the districts in the country.
- In those districts young people are aware of the availability of those services as a result of high sensitization about youth friendly services.
- The constraints for accessing youth friendly services include but not limited to : lack of youth friendly services programs in some districts, and lack of health services and other youth workers who are trained in provision of youth friendly services and long walking distances for accessing the services as youth friendly centers are not distributed throughout the country.
- Government provides basic medication and contraceptives in the country. Most of the services are free and where they are charged, the government strongly subsidizes them and only a user charge is paid.
- Young people are taught about healthy life styles include legal, social and health consequences of behaviour that poses health risks. For instance life skills are provided and general awareness about poor sanitation, poor hygiene and risky sexual behavioral practices.
- This information is provided right from primary level up to ordinary level education. And in some courses, this information is provided in some courses. The information is also given out in the entire community through sensitization seminars and workshops.
- There are government and Non-governmental organization programmes that teach healthy life skills. However there are constraints of having such programmes in schools. Young people learn about healthy lifestyles purely for passing exams. The young do not necessarily develop the required behavioral practices.
- In community settings, where the sensitizations have a greater impact on positive behavioural practices, there is a very high cost of mobilizing the young people for awareness creation.

- There are programmes in both government and Non-governmental organizations that address taboos in discussing sexual and reproductive health. In the programmes both parents and children are provided with correct and accurate sexual and reproductive health information. A lot of emphasis is put on opening up of communication channels between young people and adults on sexual and reproductive health issues.
- There is a lot of information and services available to young people to help them understand their sexuality. These information covers but not limited to child growth and development, adolescent growth, development and sexual challenges, family planning methods, safer sexual practices, cultural factors that impact of youth sexual and reproductive health, adolescent hygiene, STI/HIV/AIDS among the young people, etc. Both government and NGOs carry out these programmes. At times both the government and other development partners including NGOs jointly fund the programmes.
- Young people have access to youth friendly services. A number of youth workers and health service providers have been trained in provision of youth friendly services.
- Youth centers have also been established in some areas in the country to specifically provide sexual and reproductive health services to the youth.
- Young people in Uganda are greatly involved in sexual and reproductive health programmes. They participate in programme development and implementation in provision of accurate and correct information; youth/adolescent peer educators are the ones to create awareness among their fellow young people.
- There are a number of government policies for promoting healthy lifestyles. These include; National Reproductive Health Policy, National Youth Policy and National Gender Policy.

- The health policy discourages drug and alcohol abuse. There is no policy that bans the advertisement of tobacco and alcohol.
- Information among the adverse effects of drug and alcohol abuse is almost universal among the 15 – 24 year old young persons.
- Measures to prevent all forms of violence, which include physical, sexual, mental neglect etc, are addressed through the constitution, the penal code and the Children’s Act. Section 6(2) of the Children’s Act states that “It shall be the duty of any person having custody of a child to protect the child from discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect”. There are Government and NGO programmes to sensitize communities on the rights of children and their responsibility
- The Children’s Act does not address genital mutilation specifically but outlaws all social and customary practices that are harmful to the child’s health. Section 8 of that Act states that “It shall be unlawful to subject a child to social or customary practices that are harmful to the child’s health”

### 3.6 ENVIRONMENT

- Environment education has only been introduced in schools but integrated in subjects like science in primary schools, geography in secondary schools. Only selected teachers and some district inspectors of schools have been trained on environment education. A teachers’ manual for environment education has been developed by the National Environment Authority (NEMA)
- Young people are encouraged to participate in decision making processes with regards to the environment by electing representative at local and District councils and in parliament. Among the nine members of the local council executive there is one person designated to be in charge of environmental issues.

Basically young people's participation is limited because the representation is very small in the local councils and even in parliament.

### **3.7 DRUG ABUSE**

- In Uganda, there is particularly one NGO, Uganda Youth Development Link that conducts drug prevention activities for young people. The activities comprise counseling, skill training and sports activities and they are carried out in schools (clubs with a juvenile head and selected peer educators) as well as in informal settings (slum areas, street children). Youth are able to directly participate in the designing and implementing of activities as they are strongly based on a peer-education approach. Selected leaders receive a specialized training on drug prevention and peer education and subsequently guide the activities of their youth group. The peer setting makes sure, that the activities directly respond to the interests and concerns of the youth.
- Uganda Youth Development Link also provides IEC materials (local languages and English) and training for various stakeholders. The NGO cooperates with the Uganda Police Force and the Ministry of Health, e.g. to transfer youth to hospital, if necessary.

#### **Action 2: Providing of appropriate training**

- Training for medical and paramedical students on the proper handling of drugs and the diagnosis of substance abuse is mainly included in the training curricula at University and in paramedical schools
- Governmental institutions such as the National Hospital or Health Centres provide immediate treatment for drug addicts. NGOs or doctors transfer youth there.

- Rehabilitative Services are provided particularly by one organization, Kids in Need. The NGO provides an in-patient service and cares for accommodation and food for the youth. They provide counseling sessions in groups and in individual settings and conduct visits to follow up with the family.
- Drug taking behavior is prohibited by the Penal Code and are charged or transferred to hospital if medical treatment is needed. Also, drug taking behavior in the remand home is prohibited and is addressed in the regular counseling. Serious cases are transferred from the remand homes to hospital for treatment

### 3.8 JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

- The Children's Act, which is a vehicle of reformed laws for Uganda's children; underpins the CRC principles with regard to the administration of Juvenile Justice. The principle of best interest of the child is well laid out in the Act. It provides for equal treatment for all children irrespective of sex, ability, religion, tribe, rural or urban, nationality or marital status of parents
- The right to be subjected to torture or other cruel inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, (Art 37 a). Uganda has the legal framework to protect children/ youth from torture and inhuman treatment **Art. 24** of the Constitution provides that no person shall be subjected to any form of torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. This is also augmented by **section 6** of the Children's Act. It provides for the protection of children from violence and abuse. Awareness campaigns have been undertaken in the media to advocate against physical or any other type of violence against children.
- Under the diversion strategy, the Juvenile Justice reforms are well applied. The strategy emphasises the use of non-custodial measures and

promotion of community based responses to children, youth in conflict with the law in a manner, which is acceptable, accessible, and affordable. It is based on the principle of restorative justice as against retributive methods. The concern is that children in conflict with the law should be handled in a manner that rehabilitates them and that enhances their integration within society

- All persons below 18 years who have conflicted with the law are committed to remand homes. While there, they have access to formal education and vocational skills training.
- Yes the Uganda Human Rights Commission visits all prisons including Children's Remand Homes. The Commission is supported by Uganda Child Rights networks and other NGOs.
- The National Rehabilitation Centre, which is a centre for the detention of young people, is expected to comply with all the provisions of the United Nations rules for the protection of Juveniles deprived of their liberty.

### **3.9 LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES**

- The government, particularly through the MOGLD, promotes meaningful leisure time activities in a selection of programmes. The National Youth Policy states that a National Sports Policy, which is currently under development, will address the particular needs of young people and promote healthy and social sports
- The MoGLSD has developed guidelines on youth centres both, on community and district level. Youth centres may be funded through the government upon application by the district youth officer / liaison officer. The youth centres operate with a high level of youth participation and are demand oriented in their programmes.

- Music, dance and drama are promoted through the youth centres, but also as a possible means of income for youth groups. Some successful drama groups have been sustainable in the country. The MoGLSD offers, through its culture department, a number of awareness programmes on the benefits of MDD and subsequent training courses for youth group leaders.
- NGOs working with children and youth have modified and adapted MDD approaches in their work. These approaches are also used to support traumatised children in the northern region of the country.
- MoGLSD conducts regular youth exchange programmes, media workshops and in cooperation with the civil society, yearly festivals.
- Traditional youth groups and music bands are featured in district based events through the departments of community development.
- The government encourages schools to carry out extracurricular activities, numerous schools offer leisure time programmes outside school hours. At the moment, the government of Uganda does not provide mainstreamed funds for the inclusion of those activities in the curriculum, due to financial constraints in the education sector.
- The national television runs features on youth issues and seasons with a programme called 'youth talk' have been produced.

### **3.10 GLOBALISATION**

- Realizing the negative effects of Globalisation on young people, the Government of the republic of Uganda ratified in 2002 the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child on pornography. Measures are being taken by the Department of Information, Office of the President to control the inflow as well as accessibility of pornographic materials to young people.
- The effects of globalisation on young people is well covered in the National Youth Policy of Uganda and its Action Plan.

- “Government has realized that there’s a lot of influence from the western world, through the media and are continuously and inappropriately exposed to pornographic materials. This coupled with changing family structures, disruption etc, and challenge traditional control on behaviors of the youth. This leaves youth in a generation with no clear cultural identity or value, often conflicting with society and established structures (National Youth Policy, 2001)
- Uganda has incorporated ICT in its Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESIP). As a measure to promote the use of ICT media, the Ugandan government has waived all import duties and taxes on equipment.
- Difficulties for the application of any intervention regarding ICT remain in those areas, which are ravaged by civil strife.
- The National Youth Policy points out that ICT is part of the globalisation process and encourages particularly the NGO sector to engage itself in this area.
- In 2004, the MoGLSD has developed an IT based career guidance tool, which combines vocational skills training information with attitude and aptitude components. The ‘JoBoYo’ tool will be applied throughout the country.
- Uganda, being a mainly agriculture based country, is only slowly able to develop IT applications, services and equipment.
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### 3.11 HIV/AIDS PREVENTION, CARE AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Governments agreed to " By 2003, ensure the development and implementation of multi sectoral national strategies and financing plans for combating HIV/AIDS"
- Government agreed to " By 2003, integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment and support and impact mitigation priorities into the mainstream of development planning..."
- Governments agreed to " By 2003, establish time bound national targets to achieve the internationally agreed global prevention goal to reduce by 2005 HIV Prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 in the most affected countries by 25 per cent and by 25 percent globally by 2010..."
- Governments agreed to " By 2003, establish national prevention targets, recognizing and addressing factors leading to the spread of the epidemic and increasing peoples vulnerability, to reduce HIV incidence for those identifiable groups..."
- In 1992 Uganda Aids Commission was established by an act of Parliament to coordinate a multi-sectoral approach in the fight against HIV. In 1993, the Government established a Strategy document called the multi-sectoral approach to the control of AIDS (MACA).
- The Government has a number of policies in prevention of HIV and management of AIDS.
- The government protects the rights of people living with AIDS (PLWAS) from any form of discrimination in all aspects of life.
- The government also protects the rights of PLHIV. For instance the sero-status of a person cannot be announced to any other person without the express authority of the affected person.

- It is also government policy to provide ARV to persons living with HIV. However, due to little financial resources not all people benefit.
- In development of HIV/AIDS policies all stakeholders including young people living with HIV/AIDS are involved. Policy development is usually participatory processes that bring together people from different walks of life.

### **3.12 YOUTH AND CONFLICT PREVENTION**

- Yes the Uganda Armed Forces Act out-laws the recruitment of children below 18 into the Armed Forces.
- Government programmes, which seek to prevent the root causes are first of all pronounced in the National Constitution Article XXIX.
- The programmes to tackle root causes of conflicts e.g. removal of guns from one tribe, which is abusing illegal guns in their possession to terrorize the neighboring tribes/districts may be one good example but all the rest are either handled legally in courts of law, administratively by District authorities, religiously by religious leaders or culturally by clan leaders. Above all, the spirit of tolerance and consultations often prevails over threatening conflicts.

### **3.13 SUPPORTING INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS**

- The government of Uganda has various policies, which support the importance of intergenerational coherence between the young and older generations.
- The orphans and vulnerable Children's policy (Draft 2003), supports
- Through both government and civil society initiatives, young people are given the chance to participate and therefore interact with older people.

Through the Government programme for social and economic development for young people (The Programme for the Promotion of Children and Youth), young people are encouraged to work hand in hand with their communities as well as plan and get involved in the decision making processes. This in itself closes the gap between the two generations. The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) POLICY looks at both older person and children as vulnerable groups that need support and protection.

- This is a new area where government has just developed a policy and guidelines for elderly persons. Government has encouraged formation association of elderly persons and is currently strengthening them at district and sub county administrative levels. The government supports elderly associations with income generating activities. It has in place a literacy program for the elderly as well as a program on HIV/AIDS related issues.

### **3.14 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS:**

So far, several achievements have been registered, in addition to the above, for instance;

- Pupil enrolment in Primary education significantly rose from about 2.7m before to over 7.2m after start of UPE.
- Most youth have acquired, knowledge, skills and better attitude change, through formal education, workshops, and seminars.
- NUSAF recently launched a youth component to benefit the youth of Northern Uganda.
- PCY has designed several income generating activities to benefit the youth. The
- Youth Truck is one of the projects PCY is using to mobilise and sensitise the youth on several issues that affect them, social-economically.

- PMA has been designed to majorly target the youth, and a success story can be drawn from the youth of Kayunga district who grow fruits and vegetables.
- National Health Policy and family planning services have also been designed to improve on the welfare and health of the youth.

### **3.15 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:**

- > Difficulty in providing education to the Youth in Karamoja, a Nomadic society and to the slum dwellers in urban and peri-urban centres.
- > Armed conflict and displacement in Northern and some parts of Eastern Uganda have negatively impacted on the access to education in the region.
- > Inadequate implementation of the National Youth Policy due to lack of funds to finance its action plan.
- > Lack of adequate skills on Project planning for the youth, which is a pre-requisite for them to access NUSAF funds.
- > High retirement age of 60 years that deters youth from easy access of jobs.

### **3.16 WAY FORWARD:**

- Resources should be made available for the youth programmes.
- Youth structures/desks should be put in place and/or activated to make them more functional in all Government departments to handle the cross cutting youth issues.

- The youth structures should not be for mere tokenism but must be funded to realise their goals and objectives.
- There should be political commitment and youth participation in politics must be with good political orientation.
- Government must provide more access to basic education and invest more in vocational training and streamline the education system to have work transitions while at school so that the issues of work experience do not arise.
- There should be a standard minimum wage and favourable terms and conditions of service at all work places, to avoid exploitation of the youth.
- The establishment of job centres through which the youth can access information on job opportunities and other relevant information of the youth concern.
- The youth should adopt and instil in themselves the culture of saving for future investment.
- Youth should be involved in all decision-making bodies, commissions and boards at all levels.
- The Anti-corruption Agencies should be strengthened at all levels for effective fight against corruption.
- Regular meetings/conferences should be organised for continuous dialogue on how to tackle the many problems/challenges faced by young people.
- Youth should avoid partisan feelings in order to promote greater unity, communication, coordination and collaboration among the youth.
- Youth should influence the policy makers to lower the retirement age from the current 60 years to 55 years.

## 4.0 YOUTH AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

### 4.1 Introduction:

The growth of democracy and good governance in Uganda has been characterized by ups and downs. From the days when the country gained independence from her British Colonial Masters in 1962, Uganda has had significant changes in national governance and leadership systems. Different political systems have been tried including the multiparty parliamentary system (1992); the single party (1969); the dictatorship (1971-79); the movement system (1986-2005) and back to a multiparty system (starting July 2005).

Similarly, change of political leadership has been through elections, military coups and guerrilla wars. It is clear that governance in Uganda is not benched on enduring democratic systems but rather, the country has kept testing and trying various alternatives to governance and leadership.

The National Resistance Movement led by President Yoweri Museveni took control of government in Uganda in 1986 by the use force and has led the country for a period of 20 years. Within the 20 years, Uganda has achieved considerable levels of progress in the evolution of democracy, good governance and leadership institutions compared to the years before 1986. However, up to present, the country is still locked in a number of democracy and governance challenges. Political conflicts and the use of force as a means of addressing political differences still exist.

## 4.2 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS:

- ◆ The government of Uganda established and institutionalised the National Youth Council (NYC) structure in 1993 by the Act of Parliament. The structures are at Village level, Sub County, District levels to National level. It is a structure through which youth nurture practise and develop their leadership skills and self-empowerment.
- ◆ The local government Act of 1997 provides for youth representation in Local Council Governance in all districts of Uganda. Two youth, a female and a male are represented.
- ◆ The Government has formulated and implemented the National Youth Policy (2002) to streamline and guide the operations and development of the National Youth Council. The policy has enabled the NYC to prioritise intervention of the youth issues.
- ◆ Government has provided for youth representation in the Parliament of Uganda. Five youth members of Parliament are represented on regional basis.
- ◆ The structures and representations have inspired the youth and enabled their issues and concerns be addressed at various levels.
- ◆ The youth have taken advantage of their numerical strength (66% of the voting population) to get entrenched in most leadership positions at both local and central governance. In the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliament for example, 50 M.P's are youthful at below 35 years.

## 4.3 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:

- Traditionally, the youth are discouraged and scared off from joining politics at all levels by elders, who refer to politics as a "dirty game". This is

mainly so due to the “dark” history of politics in the country that was punctuated by undemocratic and violent practises.

- Difficulties in cleaning up politics and making it free of intimidation, manipulation, bribery and lies entrenched by limited Civic Education, ignorance, poverty and greed.
- Ineffectiveness and incapacitation of youth structures right from village levels to the Parliament. The extent of representation of youth issues at different fora by their youth leaders is still questionable. This is largely due to poor leadership skills and inadequate funding.
- Political pluralism is a new development in Uganda’s politics, having been abandoned in the country about 26 years ago. The majority of youth in Uganda were either not yet born or were too young by that time and do not have sufficient knowledge on the functions, operations and importance of Multi-parties in enhancing democratic governance.
- The multiparty dispensation in Uganda will make youth participation even more complex due to different and unclear political ideologies.
- There is no open thinking and free will opportunities for youth to express themselves independently as all party members are bound by official party positions whether they agree with such positions or not. For example; Hon, Otto of FDC is now in trouble with his party due to his independent thinking.
- The continued marginalisation of youth over the years has been made worse by the divisive arrangement of having young people camped into Youth leagues, that has split their numerical strength and subjected them to greater manipulation by the older people.

#### 4.4 WAY FORWARD AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The workshop agreed that more opportunities should be extended to the youth so as to make more meaningful contribution towards political development in the country.
- NYC should fully sensitise the youth on multi-party democracy in Uganda through workshops and continuous civic education.
- The capacities of youth structures should be strengthened to enable effective and efficient representation and implementation of youth programmes. Currently, youth leaders are like "beggars" and as it is, *"He who provides may also disappoint."* *"And a beggar has no choice."*
- International youth cooperation and networking should be enhanced to ensure socio-cultural relationships and development of best practises for economic development
- The youth should break the cycle of Inferiority complex and appreciate the importance of leadership orientation by the elders. They must therefore view elders as assets and partners rather than competitors and rivals. The youth should also stop blaming the government and other key development partners but instead ensure effective positive communication for better relations.
- Youth should seek for more information, develop effective communication skills and further their education to avoid political embarrassment due to poor qualifications.
- Youth should join politics for National goals and development rather than personal gains and aspirations curtails the national development process.
- Government should empower the youth as per WPAY not merely as a favour but as a right.

- The political “heavy weights” should desist from manipulating, diverting, disintegrating and disorganising the youth.
- The youth should take advantage of their numbers and present a Presidential candidate in the next Presidential elections.
- Peer education should be encouraged to empower the youth.
- The youth need a bigger network rather than ‘Caucuses’ which have now emerged according to parties, political organisations and has sacrificed the talents and abilities of the youth.
- There should be greater unity, communication, coordination and collaboration among the youth in order to be more active and relevant in the Multi-party politics.

## 5.0 YOUTH, EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS:

### 5.1. Introduction

Education is a fundamental key to development and is a gateway to life skills. The government's strategy of education is to ensure a high level of literacy and numeracy in the country to empower its citizens and ensure rapid socio-economic and political development. Life skills needs, a condition for survival and personal development can be acquired through formal and non-formal education.

The government of Uganda has of late put more emphasis in education by liberalising the sector and encouraging private investment in Primary, Secondary and Higher Institutions of learning. Wider access of education has further been achieved through UPE and government scholarships at Secondary schools and Higher Institutions of learning.

### 5.2 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS:

- The constitution of Uganda Article 30, states, *"All persons have a right to education"*. And as such, the Ugandan government has developed an elaborate education system that provides for a life long education process.
- The Government Policy on the liberalisation of education has greatly enabled and encouraged private investors to establish educational institutions in all the districts of Uganda. The number of Universities increased from one to 18 registered Universities today. Private primary, and secondary schools and private Tertiary Institutions have in addition greatly increased on the number of education institutions.
- Liberalisation of education has improved on the accessibility of education. The overall enrolment has in schools and Universities had greatly

increased. Today, students do not have to travel long distances to the nearest school, or drop out of school due to lack of vacancies.

- The Government of Uganda, has established 5 public Universities in all the regions of the country; Kyambogo and Makerere Universities in the Central region, Gulu University in Northern region, and MUST in Mbarara in the Western region, and IUIU, Busitema Universities in Eastern region.
- The start up of UPE programme in 1997 has greatly increased on the enrolment and specifically improved on the access to education by the poor parents. The enrolment rose from 2.7 million before to about 7.2 million after. UPE also addressed the problem of Gender discrimination by ensuring equal opportunities for both male and female.
- Government is implementing a policy of affirmative action by offering female students extra 1.5 points for admissions to public Universities. This policy has enabled and guaranteed female youth access to University education, when they would have otherwise dropped out due to socio-cultural factors.
- Government has introduced a policy to promote science subjects and education in secondary and tertiary schools and encourages students to do more relevant and marketable courses in higher institutions of learning. This policy is aimed at accelerating economic growth and unemployment access.
- All plans and arrangements have been finalised to introduce Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET) by February 2007. This will increase on enrolment and access to education and also reduce on the level school of school dropout.

### 5.3 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

- Perhaps the biggest challenge is the poor quality of education in particularly UPE.
- Inadequate resources to enable infrastructure and programmes development is yet another problem. The education department greatly depends on donor funding to about 52%.
- Unemployment is still a real problem in the country despite government's intervention to liberalise the economy and encourage private investment.
- Poor payments and welfare provisions to the teachers in Private Institutions.
- Students' unrests and strikes in schools due to mainly poor feeding and accommodation.
- Inadequate and poor science laboratories and equipments in most rural schools.
- The education curriculum is still not practical oriented and produces job seekers rather than job makers.

### 5.4 WAY FORWARD:

- Emphasis should be put on ICT training and education as a global priority.
- Non-formal education should be encouraged, so as to open further access to education especially by the disadvantaged.
- The youth should target relevant courses like entrepreneurship and science courses.
- That Vocational Education and Training be promoted at all levels of our education system.

- That the implementation of the Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET) be handled very carefully and critically in order to ensure access to education.
- That the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Policy be re-designed to improve quality and retention.
- That more emphasis should be put in life skills training, career guidance and counselling in schools/institutions.
- That better motivation of teachers be established to boost their morale to produce better results.
- That there should be increased access to Higher Education through more scholarships or/and loan schemes to facilitate more young people in acquiring Higher Education.
- That both public and private resources should be mobilised to invest in natural, Technological/Scientific and Social research at Higher Institutions of learning.
- That Internship, Industrial training and hands-on practise should be matters of public policy to enable the youth acquire the required experiences always demanded in the job markets.
- There is need to re-orient and revolutionarise the educational curriculum to make it relevant to the needs of the present time.

## 6.0 YOUTH, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE BUILDING:

### 6.1 Introduction

Youth may be described as the most sensitive and volatile group in any society that any leadership or environment should recognise or be obvious of the capacity, capability or potentiality to promote peace or violence.

This means that in any effort towards conflict resolution or peace building, the youth should be an integral part of the entire process.

This is because conflict is a dynamic process of social interaction involving a struggle over value, claims, status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals. Conflict is the pursuit of incompatible goals by different people or groups where parties or both sides may resort to the uses of force.

Conflict causes untold suffering to the youth as many lose parents in the process and entire families destroyed. Children are separated from their parents with the girls raped, defiled and others forced to become child soldiers and wives.

The education process of young people is usually disrupted and the other social services and infrastructure are crippled in a way that perpetuates more and more suffering.

The unfortunate thing is that in most of the conflicts especially at community, National and International levels; the youth are always at the fore front and on either sides. The strikes and violence in schools and institutions of higher learning is usually perpetuated by students.

On the other hand, students have been forcefully abducted, i.e Aboke Girls, UTC Kichwamba where many are killed in cold blood in the process. The amazing thing here is that even the abductors and killers are usually youth.

## **6.2 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS:**

Uganda is becoming a success story in conflict resolution and peace building issues to the extent that;

1. Students now participate in school/institutional management and decision-making processes through the school/Guild councils and/ or representation of the governing bodies of their respective schools.
2. The Government has, since 1993, initiated by an Act of Parliament, the National Youth Council with structures from village to National level. This makes young people more disciplined, patriotic and responsible citizens.
3. The formation of Uganda Human Rights and Amnesty Commissions are mitigating efforts towards conflict resolution and peace building.
4. Conflict resolution and peace building is now part of the school curriculum where the youth acquire knowledge, skills and attitude in good time to contribute positively in maintaining peace in society.
5. Psycho-social Therapy and promotion of sports and cultural interactions has also brought about mutual relationships and better understanding among communities of which the youth are majority.
6. Government established the Amnesty commission to provide amnesty to the rebels especially the youth who were forcefully abducted especially by the LRA rebels in northern Uganda.
7. The government has embarked on peace talks and negotiation with the LRA rebels to find a negotiated settlement to the problems of insecurity in northern Uganda.

### 6.3 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:

- Modernisation and globalisation have exposed the youth to modern technology, where they get exposed to dangerous foreign cultures.
- Unemployment is so rampant that the redundant youth are easily swayed to join violent rebellions with the promise of making their lives better. Some have been promised jobs in Congo but ended up in military camps!
- The National income cannot provide adequate budgetary line for welfare services which would keep the youth fairly content.
- Irresponsible parenting has also left the youth gambling with life issues on their own without any parental guidance since many parents are always too busy with other things. Parents have left the upbringing of their children to teachers and the world.
- Rampant poverty also remains a very big challenge. Everybody is struggling for the national "cake", which is also never enough. Others believe there are those "eating" while others suffer.
- There is also lack of entrepreneur programmes to keep young people innovating development solutions for themselves.
- The HIV/AIDS pandemic has also caused a situation of desperacy and made people more reckless and violet in difference.

### 6.4 WAY FORWARD:

As a way forward, the workshop agreed;

- To be security conscious.
- To be law abiding citizens.
- To report to the authorities bad elements who may try to disrupt peace, Security and stability.

- To engage in productive/constructive activities that are beneficial to themselves and community at large.
- To always seek dialogue and reconciliation as a process of transforming intolerable human relationship into constructive life.
- To identify and implement peaceful solutions for resolving conflict.
- To identify and avoid dangerous situations (e.g. theft, drug abuse etc).
- To evaluate violent solutions that appears to be successful as depicted in the media (e.g. critical thinking).
- To resist pressure from peers and adults to use violent behaviour (e.g. Life skills).
- To prevent crime in the community.
- To reduce prejudice and increase tolerance for diversity.
- To be tolerant and accommodative.

## **7.0 YOUTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The major challenges of the youth in Africa and Uganda in particular are poverty, ignorance and disease, which require a critical focus.

Most African workers are extremely poor and opportunity for economic development can only be created to them by investments in the current technological changes and advancement. Africa is trapped in economic backwardness a situation that is unpleasant and in order to succeed in economic development; there is need to improve on manpower and economic planning.

In real development it is not the resources that matter, but the people who should be given knowledge, skills, and attitudes to transform the resources into finished goods and services to make life better. With all the resources available, under development can still prevail due to corruption, laziness and wastage.

The Democratic Republic of Congo for example has a lot of natural resources but is still under developed compared to other countries in Africa.

### **7.2 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS:**

- The youth entrepreneur skill was established by the government to provide microfinance to the youth to finance their small scale businesses . YES has greatly benefited the youth that formed business groups and associations to improve on their economic status.
- Microfinance institutions have been encouraged by government to provide loans to people, the youth inclusive at low interests. This has enabled the

youth to access loans to finance their projects of income generating activities such as “boda boda”, Agriculture, schools.

- The government of Uganda, has put in place a policy to externalise the labour force and enable Ugandans legitimately access the labour market of other countries. This policy is already bearing positive results as youth have got employment opportunities in countries like Iraq.
- Government is addressing the aspect of experience which is one of the requirements for recruitment and selection of employees. The students shall now be placed in government departments for their internships to enable them get enough experience. Public service has also dropped the requirement of experience in some jobs.
- Government enacted the poverty Eradication Plan (PEAP) to provide a general guideline to sectoral ministries on poverty reducing strategies. The PEAP has five pillars which are aimed at fast tracking the poverty reduction effort of the poor which include the youth. A number of programmes emanating from PEAP have been put in place. This include plan for the modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), Universal Primary Education (UPE), National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET).

### **7.3 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:**

- Rampant unemployment is perhaps the worst of the youth problem. This is mainly due to the country's education system that prepares, job seekers rather than job makers. But also due to the slow economic growth and development.
- High cost of education that has led high rate of school drop outs at all levels of education. Poor parents and guardians have to raise the high school fees amidst difficulties.

- The youth between the retirement age at 60 years as being unrealistic given that the life expectancy is estimated of 47 years in Uganda. Meaning that many youth are unable to access formal employment in their life time.
- The government strategy for along time has been limited to political empowerment of the youth to the detriment of their economic participation. This has created a situation where the youth glorify politics of the expense of economic development. This is manifested in the overwhelming number of youth who view politics as a source of employment.
- Many youth have no access to the major factors of production such as land, capital and entrepreneurship skills. This has impacted negatively in their abilities to engage in economic activities.
- The trend of rural urban migration by the youth has resulted in to the abandonment of Agriculture to the elderly men and women. This has resulted into high population of un employed youth in the urban areas leading into high crime rate and pressure on the available social services and amenities.

#### **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYFORWARD:**

- The youth recommend the establishment of jobs and productivity centres to and the process of information dissemination and skills development. The absence of these centres has resulted into uneven distribution of opportunities in the country.
- The current retirement age of 60 years is inconsistent with the over all life expectancy of 47 years. In order to open VP more employment opportunities for the youth within the public sectors, retirement age should be reduced to 55 years.
- There is need for the establishment of a youth development bank, to facilitate the provision of financial series to the youth. This will partly

solace the problem of accessibility to start-up capital as a result of their lack of collateral.

- A full and independent ministry of youth development be established in Uganda. The current ministry under which the youth belong is overloaded with too much concern which in most cases tend to overshadow the youth needs. An independent ministry for youth will ensure focused planning and implementation of youth development programmes.

## **8.0 YOUTH, GENDER AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **8.1 Introduction**

Gender is described as socially and culturally defined roles, attributes and privileges of females and males; with existing biological differences between women and men which different societies construe as a set of social expectations about behaviours, activities, rights, power and resources they possess.

In Uganda most communities and institutions have discriminated their people according to gender. Women in particular have been greatly discriminated upon most especially in employment and other functions of responsibility.

Young people in Uganda (according to Uganda poverty profile 2000), constitute over 80% of the population, 54% under 18 years and 26% between 18 and 35 years of age. The Human rights approach requires that each gender has a right to participate in the development processes; but the male gender is usually more advantaged culturally than the female gender.

Societal norms put a heavy burden on girls than boys where the labour contribution of women are hardly monetised and yet the seemingly "impressive" economic growth rates indicators of social development reveal significant gaps in

translating the growth indicators into better livelihoods for the marginalized and vulnerable groups of whom the youth form a significant component.

Young people constitute 79% of the poorest population of Uganda, which implies that incentives created by the country's growing economy are not equally accessible by all sections of the population.

The youth are most affected due to:

- (i) Limited access to productive assets.
- (ii) Inadequate education or vocational skills.
- (iii) Early marriages, which have affected most communities.
- (iv) Ignorance and lack of information; and
- (v) Traditional roles ascribed by society especially on female youth.

The needs, responsibilities, roles and power of female and male youth affect their economic activities in fundamental ways and their ability as individuals to respond to incentives of the market and provide for themselves through among others-land, skills, education, attitude and capital which most Ugandan youth lack.

The National machinery for Gender Mainstreaming and Advancement of Women in Uganda is the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). The National Machinery coordinated and oversees the implementation of gender equality and women's advancement programmes nationally. Since 1995, the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GUO) has registered remarkable progress in the field of gender equality and women's advancement.

## 8.2 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:

- Inequality in poverty trends between youth and other members of society, with the youth facing double burden of being young and poor.
- Funding allocated for the implementation of social development programmes by the government is still inadequate.
- The decentralised framework of service delivery has affected the standard and quality of social development services, mainly because of inadequate funding by the local authorities.
- Female youth are still disadvantaged more than their male counterparts. This is manifested in their lack of participation in youth council activities and their high prevalence rates in HIV/AIDS.
- Formal Education among youth in Secondary and tertiary levels is still a challenge for achieving gender equality. At Secondary level, girlchild education is still a big problem with more boys enrolment than their female counterparts. The situation is even worse at university and other tertiary institutions of learning.

## 8.3 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS PROGRESS:

- Government developed and has been implementing a National Gender Policy since 1997. The policy is based on the recognition that gender is a development concept and determines the social roles and relations of women and men, which impact on development. The policy is an integral part of national development policy, complements all sectoral policies and provides a framework for designing, planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programmes with a gender perspective. Its main goal is to mainstream gender concerns in national development process in order to improve the social, legal/civic, political, economic,

cultural conditions of all people of Uganda particularly women. It emphasises commitment to gender responsive planning and is designed to ensure the integration of gender perspective in all mainstream areas of development. Subsequently, cabinet directed that all national laws should gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Over the report period, GUO put in place a Constitution that upholds all the principles of gender equality and is a basis of all the national laws. The Constitution guarantees economic, social and political, as well as civil rights of women (chapter 4). The Constitution also provides for affirmative action (Article 33) to redress imbalances created as a result of history, tradition and on basis of gender.
- Article 78 provides for affirmative action in decision making by reserve seats for women representatives in parliament and local government councils (Article 180 b, c). The Local Governments Act (1997) operationalises the constitutional provisions in Article 180 (b,c).
- To put into effect the Constitution, a number of laws have been enacted. Those that are inconsistent with the Constitution have been or are amended. These laws are discussed in Section 2 under the legal framework and decision making critical area of concern.

## 9.0 YOUTH AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

### 9.1 Introduction

The East African Countries are working towards a Political Federation, which is the highest level of Integration of the independent nation states of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, plus Rwanda and Burundi which may join later.

The following legal and institutional framework have so far been put in place to enhance the integration process;

- East African Customs Union.
- Common Market to enhance Macro-economic Policies.
- Monetary Union to facilitate Macro-economic convergence.
- Currency convertibility – Working towards a common currency.
- The East African Legislative Assembly.
- East African – Court of Justice.
- Heads of States summit, which is working on a clear balance of interests and power.
- Memorandum of understanding on security and catastrophes that may arise.

### 9.2 Benefits Of East African Federation.

- Establishment of legal and institutional framework
- Accelerated economic growth and development.
- Creation of greater employment opportunities.
- East Africa is a great tourist and investment destination.
- East African has a bigger market for enhanced trade and investment.
- Exploitation of synergy and removal of duplication.

### 9.3 KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES:

#### ❖ **Language barrier:**

Kenya and Tanzania have nationalised Swahili as a common language, leaving Uganda and possibly Rwanda and Burundi behind.

#### ❖ **Political instability in Uganda:**

While Kenya and Tanzania have been stable since independence, Uganda has been experiencing political turmoil since Independence.

#### ❖ **Development gap:**

The development gap among the countries was also cited as a challenge, Kenya and Tanzania are at a higher economic status than Uganda.

#### ❖ **Personal plans:**

Personal centred plans, ambitions and interests of some leaders may affect the integration effort.

#### ❖ **Divergent political ideologies:**

Divergent Political Ideologies and the issue of term limits for Presidents may further affect the integration.

#### ❖ **Ethnic differences and character:**

There is a lot of ethnic difference between the people of the Great Lakes region.

#### ❖ **Different Education Systems:**

The Education system of the countries in the Great Lakes region differs.

### 9.4 WAY FORWARD:

As a way forward, it was recommended;

- That the youth should be change agents and advocates of integration.
- That there should be institutional linkages through collaboration with youth counterparts of the other sister countries.

- That the youth should be sensitised and involved in consultations on all integration issues.
- That the Swahili language should be emphasised on the curriculum to enable all countries have it as a common language.
- That inter-regional activities such as sports, games, cultural gala be promoted to encourage closer ties and better communication.
- That the transport communications infrastructure should be harmonised to promote regional integration with full youth participation.
- That the civil society should be involved in social mobilisation and publicity of the grass root people about regional integration.
- That strong youth structures should be established at all levels to coordinate issues of youth involvement in regional integration.
- That the education systems of the different countries should be harmonised on a common standard.

## 10.0 CLOSING REMARKS

\*The Hon. Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs Officiated over the closing ceremony and raised the following remarks;-

- He acknowledged the support given by UNDP and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development and thanked them for the funding of the meeting.
- In this meeting, the entire political high command of the youth leadership in Uganda who have made his work as a new minister very easy due to their co-operation.

- He called for unity of purpose and action, which together would cause a positive change in this country since more young people have now been empowered ideologically and otherwise.
- With youth in decision-making, there must be proper networking among all youth and other stakeholders to facilitate/ formulate your programmes into development.
- The youth need to shift away from sports, games and seminars to real economic empowerment so as to be job makers and NOT job seekers.
- He advised the youth to approach unemployment issues through leadership, management and entrepreneurial skills for self-sustenance.
- The Minister further urged the youth to come up with strong proposals for economic empowerment through co-operation activities for wealth creation for all.
- He called for a review of programmes such as Entandikwa, youth entrepreneurship scheme etc that previously failed so that the youth can build strong partnerships for viable and productive ventures.
- The minister further advised the new generation not to remain in their comfort zones but to work with other people for the total transformation and development of Africa.
- He encouraged the youth to capture every moment and not waste time and opportunities while they still access the chance.
- He appealed to the youth to avoid political differences in youth matters since the problems that affect young people are beyond party/ sectarian difference.
- He called upon the youth to feel free to always interact with him at all times as he will try to always avail himself.
- He then thanked the youth for their vigilant participation in this workshop.

## 11.0 CONCLUSION:

In conclusion therefore, the youth of Uganda just like those of any other African country should be encouraged to actively participate in all issues of concern to themselves, their communities, country at large. Nobody should, whether by omission or commission frustrate their efforts to contribute towards socio-economic and political transformation and development of the country.

Society has for long marginalized, manipulated and exploited youth people for their own selfish gains. The youth should be involved in policy formulation and implementation as development partners now.