

Is Uganda ready to implement Agenda 2030?

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Introduction

In September 2015, United Nations (UN) member states adopted [the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) ('Agenda 2030'). Uganda was among the first countries to integrate the agenda in its national planning frameworks, particularly through its [Second National Development Plan \(NDP II\)](#). The principles of sustainable development are also in line with the [Uganda Vision 2040](#).

Agenda 2030 presented Uganda with an opportunity to refocus its development agenda, and address the bottlenecks that hamper development. This briefing highlights six areas extracted from a [report prepared by the Government of Uganda](#) on Uganda's readiness for implementation of Agenda 2030, which was presented at the [High-Level Political Forum 2016](#), held in New York from 11 to 20 July. The briefing highlights opportunities for Uganda's development, as well as challenges and constraints that could impede implementing Agenda 2030.

Multi-sector implementation planning

Uganda's [National Planning Authority \(NPA\)](#) ensures that global commitments on sustainable development are localised and mainstreamed into national development plans. Agenda 2030 for Uganda is being cascaded to sector and local government planning and implementation frameworks, to ensure that these plans align with the national development priorities by aligning processes and issuing certificates of compliance.

Key efforts in this regard include national and local level consultations on localisation of Agenda 2030; national information, education and communication campaigns; high-level policy dialogue engagements; institutional capacity development; and revitalised engagement with the private sector and civil society.

The Government of Uganda has developed and disseminated development planning guidelines for integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into sector and local government development plans. NDP II provides the national strategic direction and guidance for planning at decentralised levels, hence enabling integration of Agenda 2030.

Coordination

Although the government has ensured that sectors mainstream the national development priorities in their sector development plans, there are still gaps in coordinating implementation at the sector level. So far, just three out of 17 sectors have sector development plans aligned to NDP II.¹

The government has put a National Coordination Policy in place to guide the coordination framework on SDGs in addition to other government programmes. This aims to enhance public service delivery and effective implementation of national planning frameworks and programmes. Five technical working groups have also been set up to coordinate, monitor and evaluate progress on SDG implementation with representatives from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Office of the Prime Minister and the NPA. These working groups can coordinate their activities through partnerships and joint analysis to reduce duplication of work and increase efficiency. The NPA will act as the clearinghouse through which SDG interventions will be coordinated to ensure that stakeholders' plans are synchronised.

A delivery unit has also been set up in the Office of the Prime Minister to fast track implementation of core projects, presidential initiatives, and key sector results, further facilitating implementing the SDGs.

Data and reporting

With regard to data availability for SDG indicators, a quick assessment of Uganda revealed that data is available for only 80 (35%) of the 230 indicators. The country lacks data on 113 indicators that are relevant to Uganda. Another 37 indicators are either for global monitoring or not applicable to Uganda's situation, for example Goal 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. This low level of data availability is partly associated with the absence of internationally accepted methodology for computations of some indicators, limited national capacities in managing administrative data

¹ as stated in the [Certificate of Compliance for the Annual Budget](#)

and weak civil registration systems. Data collection can be increased internally through collaboration with non-governmental organisations and especially civil society organisations that deal with data and have operations at the grassroots level, for example using the [Development Initiatives' Development Data Hub](#) and the participatory budgeting clubs under the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group to collect data.

In some cases where data *is* available, it is not disaggregated by income level, sex, age, gender, regional distribution and residence (urban/rural). Moreover, only 33 indicators where data is available (of 80 indicators) have baseline information. Where indicators do have baseline information, they are characterised by limited data disaggregation and time lags.

Agenda 2030 presents opportunities for Uganda that require innovation and renewed commitment. At a side-event during the High-Level Political Forum, Development Initiatives launched its [P20 Initiative](#): this emphasises the need to end poverty by focusing on the people in the poorest 20% of the world's population. For this to happen, data need to be collected categorised by age, sex, gender, and location, among other characteristics, in order to identify the people in the poorest 20% and ensure that [no one is left behind](#), especially from the most vulnerable sections of society, which do not benefit from economic progress.

Being at the frontline of service delivery, Uganda's local governments were decentralised to enhance local economic development and expand local revenue bases. The government plans to empower the local governments to collect more disaggregated data through building their technical capacity, increasing financing, promoting local economic development and community mobilisation, and improving planned urban development, among others measures. The government will also finalise developing the National Standard Indicator Framework to facilitate data capturing and management. However, it will require external support to provide the resources and capacity to do so.

Reporting will also be emphasised at both national and local government levels through quarterly, semi-annual, annual, performance and evaluation reports like the annual National Development Report, the Government Annual Performance Report, SDG Progress Report, annual sector performance reports and statistical abstracts. These create an opportunity for non-government actors to follow-up on this reporting and track progress of implementation.

Population mobilisation

While the Government of Uganda has made efforts to popularise and rally support for the National Development Agenda, there is still lack of public understanding and knowledge of Agenda 2030 and SDGs. Citizens and stakeholders are not sufficiently empowered to access information, participate meaningfully, or understand their roles in the process of development.

To address the 'leave no one behind' agenda, the country has emphasised participation and a concerted effort build partnerships between government and other groups including women, children, youth, older persons, people living with HIV/AIDS, persons with disabilities (including persons with albinism) and single parents. The Certificate of Compliance is urging the social development sector to scale up its budget and effectively mobilise communities for effective participation, and to strengthen culture and creativity.

Partnerships

Uganda's commitment to implementing Agenda 2030 recognises that concerted efforts and partnerships are needed to achieve the desired development goals and targets. Uganda intends to partner with the international community in delivering this global development agenda.

Uganda has taken steps to strengthen mechanisms for managing partnerships with development partners through the Uganda Partnership Policy (2013). These efforts aim to strengthen the country's financial resource mobilisation to fund ongoing and new interventions targeted towards achieving Agenda 2030. For example, the European Union held a political dialogue with the Uganda government in [June 2016](#) where both parties re-affirmed their commitment to fully implement the Agenda 2030 and continue promoting trade and investment.

Human and financial resources

The Government of Uganda with support from UNDP has trained sectors and local governments on the SDGs and provided technical backstopping to local governments for quality assurance of development plans. This is contained under the UN Development Assistance Framework for Uganda, where UNDP has set out to improve the quality of human capital through skills development, innovation and creativity. Integrating Agenda 2030 will continue to trickle down to sector and local government planning frameworks, with increased capacity building.

This is in line with continuous mobilisation of finances through implementing investment promotion regimes, promoting technological transfer and regional and international cooperation; promoting non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading systems; and ensuring policy coherence and multilateral stakeholder partnerships.

Given this level of readiness, successful implementation and achievement of Agenda 2030 by the Government of Uganda will require joint efforts from both government and non-government actors, in addition to the macroeconomic, social and geopolitical forces that will greatly impact this agenda. These efforts will ensure that Uganda is well-placed to monitor and deliver the SDGs.

Read the full report on [Uganda's readiness for implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#).

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