

## COMMENTS ON THE UNFPA DRAFT COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR UGANDA

*First regular session 2021*

<b>Comments by Iceland</b>	<b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b>
<p>The Icelandic delegation would like to see more about masculinities and engaging men &amp; boys when it comes to family planning.</p>	<p>UNFPA recognizes the importance of engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality and advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights. The country programme will continue to employ several strategies in promoting positive masculinities and male involvement in the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and young people, including leveraging existing community engagement strategies for promotion of social norms change, such as SASA! Male Action Groups, and engagement of religious and cultural leaders (who are predominantly men) in enhancing access to SRHR, including family-planning services, as well as prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV).</p> <p>This approach is integrated across all areas of the programme, and is explicitly mentioned in paragraph 31 (e): <i>support the roll-out of the male engagement strategy for the active involvement of men and boys to prevent and address gender-based violence</i>, and to increase access to SRHR.</p>
<p>The Icelandic delegation would like to see a reference to sexual orientation/identity when it comes to SRHR.</p>	<p>UNFPA programmes aim to promote universal access to sexual reproductive health and rights for all populations in Uganda, including key and most-at-risk populations.</p> <p>UNFPA will provide technical support for innovative approaches focused on HIV prevention among young people, key and most-at-risk populations, including scaling up of the ‘e-health’ shop and safe ‘bodaboda’ initiatives for young people to access condoms and other reproductive health commodities, among other approaches.</p>
<b>Comments by Sweden</b>	<b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b>
<p>The role of UNFPA in the implementation of Comprehensive Sexual Education must be strengthened, in and out of school.</p>	<p>UNFPA will continue to engage with relevant government and other stakeholders on the issue of sexuality education for both in-school and out-of-school young people in the new country programme. Specifically, UNFPA will collaborate with partners towards the approval of sexuality education guidelines for out-of-school youth, and will support the Government at</p>

	<p>national and district levels to roll out sexuality education to the village level. Paragraph 23 of the country programme document emphasizes interventions for <i>empowering young people to exercise their rights to access integrated sexual and reproductive health services through life-skills training, including sexuality education.</i></p> <p>This builds on work in the previous country programme, where UNFPA supported the development of the National Sexuality Education Framework, approval of in-school sexuality education guidelines, incorporation of sexuality education in the lower secondary school curricula and training of trainers to facilitate roll-out of the guidelines.</p>
<p>UNFPA should be coordinating its work more in line with the governments new program approach as opposed to sector specific.</p>	<p>The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025, which anchors the new country programme, is fully aligned to the National Development Plan III (NDP III). The NDP III has adopted the programme-based programming and budgeting (PBPB) approach that institutionalizes intersectoral collaboration under the guidance of National Planning Authority and oversight from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). UNFPA actively participated in the development of NDP III and adoption of the PBPB approach, and is already participating in the development of the programme implementation action plans (PIAPs) that will facilitate operationalization of the NDP III. Additionally, UNFPA will engage in implementation of the UNSDCF joint workplans, which also takes into account the new shift to PBPB.</p>
<p>Outcome 1: UNFPA should strengthen its work on the more sensitive SRHR issues such as HBTQI and safe abortion, if not explicit there should be a strategy for how to address and work with these issues.</p>	<p>In the new country programme, UNFPA will support strengthening of the health system to <i>provide universal access to and coverage of high-quality integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and gender-based violence services.</i></p> <p>This will address health system capacity building, including for sustainable delivery of comprehensive abortion care, including post abortion care, to the full extent of the law, and is based on a review of the maternal health policy framework and capacity assessments on post-abortion care undertaken in the previous country programme.</p> <p>UNFPA will also sustain a high-level evidence-based advocacy to promote an enabling environment for universal access to rights-based integrated SRH services, for all people, including most-at-risk populations.</p>

<p>Coordination needs to be strengthened between UN organisations.</p>	<p>Through the UN Resident Coordinator system, and the implementation of the UNSDCF and the new country programme, UNFPA will continue to actively coordinate with the other UN agencies.</p> <p>UNFPA will continue to provide leadership and participate in the various strategic output coordination structures designed to leverage and maximize resources of the UN; and the country programme will be implemented in collaboration with United Nations agencies within the framework of ‘Delivering as One.’ This includes the Spotlight initiative, and other joint programmes on gender-based violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and HIV/AIDS.</p>
<p>Coordination with government at all levels, including district level should be strengthened.</p>	<p>The new country programme has been developed in close collaboration with the Government of Uganda, and interventions will be jointly planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated under the leadership of the National Population Council and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.</p> <p>Additionally, the three country programme outcome areas will be co-led with government entities that provide leadership and coordination at both national and subnational levels as follows: Ministry of Health, on Outcome 1 (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights); Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development on Outcome 2 (Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment); and the National Population Council on Outcome 3 (Population Dynamics). Periodic outcome review and coordination meetings with the Government, including at district levels, have been planned as a key component of the programme monitoring framework.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Comments by United States of America</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b></p>
<p>The United States would like to thank UNFPA for sharing its draft country programme document for Uganda, and recognizes that the program focus, key program components, and proposed outputs fit well with Uganda’s demographic, health, and reproductive health needs.</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates the comments from the United States on the alignment of the country programme to Uganda’s demographic, health and reproductive health needs.</p>
<p>Regarding the Programme Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Related to Item 7 of the Programme Rationale, and given that 8% of men also experience sexual violence, it would be strategic to</li> </ul>	<p>UNFPA’s approach to addressing violence against women, girls, men and boys emphasizes the utilization of social and gender transformative</p>

<p>include men here as well. We therefore encourage UNFPA to ensure that men and boys are not left out of these efforts</p>	<p>approaches that are based on the understanding that gender inequality is a root cause of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).</p> <p>Building on previous work on male engagement, the new country programme will continue to promote male involvement in community mobilization around negative social and gender norms, reporting of sexual and gender based violence and the referral mechanism for women, girls, men and boys experiencing violence, as indicated in paragraph 31 of the country programme, which notes that the programme will “<i>support the roll-out of the male engagement strategy for the active involvement of men and boys to prevent and address gender-based violence.</i>”</p>
<p>Regarding the Programme Priorities and Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Item 3 of the Programme Priorities and Partnerships refers to adolescents as aged 15-19 and young people 20-24, but Item 15 only highlights young people. We encourage UNFPA to include “adolescents” as a priority population in Item 15 and to ensure consistency when referring to these demographics</li> </ul>	<p>The country programme targets young people aged 10-24 years, which includes the intersecting age groups of adolescents (10-19 years) and youth (15-24 years). Adolescents are targeted in the programme, given the high levels of vulnerability within this population.</p>
<p><b>Comments by Belgium</b></p>	<p><b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitated by the Dutch Embassy, UNFPA Uganda presented its 9<sup>th</sup> Country Programme Document (CDP) to the donors on 19<sup>th</sup> November. This gave an excellent opportunity to discuss the program and reflect on the link with the bilateral programs on SRHR. Belgium appreciates the good contact with UNFPA in Uganda. This is amongst others the result of Belgium’s 2 years’ chairmanship of the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) – inter development partners working group, for which UNFPA is the Secretariat and which has fostered a good working relationship.</li> <li>Similar to the UNDP and UNICEF country programs, the UNFPA Country Programme (2021-2025) is aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and runs parallel to the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII). Its objectives are in line with the priorities of the Ugandan government and more specifically with</li> </ul>	<p>UNFPA Uganda appreciates the comments received from Belgium, and commits to continued collaboration with the Inter-Development Partners’ Working Group in order to optimize synergies between SRHR development partners.</p> <p>We also appreciate acknowledgement of the organizational improvements identified in the country programme, which will strengthen the reach and engagement at field level.</p>

<p>the national priority of <i>‘Increased household incomes and improved quality of life of Ugandans’</i> and objective 4 <i>‘Enhance the productivity and social well-being of the population’</i> and objective 5 <i>‘Strengthen the role of the State in guiding and facilitating development’</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the country program builds on the successes of the 8<sup>th</sup> country program, it is positive to see that UNFPA is bringing in some organizational improvements. One of them is ensuring a stronger presence in the field with an expansion to 7 field locations. This should ensure a better connection with the field and understanding of the local dynamics. In addition, UNFPA will support detachments of its staff to different ministries to strengthen the capacities and provide expertise.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CPD seems comprehensive taking into account the different angles on population dynamics. Two of the four outcomes are focused on SRHR, whereby both the supply and the demand side will be tackled. This is in line with the results of a study by ENABEL on Family Planning (FP) in West-Nile, whereby it concluded that in order to improve the uptake of FP, a complex set of activities need to be implemented simultaneously from both the demand and supply side of FP.</li> <li>• One of the components under this outcome is to enhance partnerships with religious and cultural leaders and civil society.</li> <li>• This mission wants to emphasize the importance of this component, and in addition advocate for a stronger focus on male engagement in SRHR and fostering positive masculinity. In a male dominated society, a more sustainable impact in SRHR can be realized when men are taken on board in a meaningful way.</li> </ul>	<p>UNFPA takes note of this comment and will continue to strengthen the demand and supply approach to addressing SRHR needs. The country office looks forward to consolidating this approach, using the evidence generated from the study by ENABEL and others.</p> <p>The programme will continue to work with religious institutions, particularly through the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), and will enhance the work with cultural institutions through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and with civil society through the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations.</p> <p>Building on previous work on male engagement, the new country programme will continue to promote male involvement in community mobilization around negative social and gender norms, reporting of sexual and gender based violence and the referral mechanism for women, girls, men and boys experiencing violence. As highlighted in paragraph 31, the programme will <i>“support the roll-out of the male engagement strategy for the active involvement of men and boys to prevent and address gender-based violence.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With regard to the support to the implementation of sexuality education (outcome 2), Belgium would like to see more concrete actions on how UNFPA is planning to support the roll-out and how it can provide a strong support to the Ministry of Education and Sports (for those in school) and to the Ministry of Gender,</li> </ul>	<p>UNFPA Uganda has collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Sports to engage religious and district leaders on sexuality education, and has already begun to support the roll-out of the National Sexuality Education Framework in schools, through orientation and training of teachers in West Nile, Acholi region and South-Western Uganda.</p>

<p>Labour and Social Development (for those out of school) in coordinating this roll-out. Especially for the National Sexuality Education Framework, which has been approved and is currently being implemented, we see that there is still a lot of resistance from religious leaders as well as coordination/harmonization challenges as different partners are involved in the implementation of this framework.</p>	<p>Under the new country programme, UNFPA will continue to support the Ministry in the roll-out process, and its engagement with political, religious and cultural leaders, including through direct work at the district level, and in collaboration with development partners through the Health Development Partners Group, the Inter-Development Partners' Group on SRHR and other platforms.</p> <p>UNFPA will also continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to expedite the approval and roll-out of the SE guidelines for out-of-school youth, including cascading the Guidelines to districts and sub-counties, and collaborating with relevant government ministries and agencies to integrate SE into national youth programmes, including the Youth Livelihood Programme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to final approval, the Belgian Development Cooperation in Uganda will be more active in the field of SRHR in a bilateral bridging program, which will be implemented in the course of 2021-2022. The emphasis will be on increasing information, sensitization and mobilisation in the community about family planning and other SRH services through community engagement and empowering Village Health Teams. In addition, the project aims to increase the capacity of health facilities to offer integrated SRH services. The area of operation will be West-Nile and Rwenzori regions. The objectives are very much in line with UNFPA's CDP (more specifically outcomes 1 and 2), hence coordination will be important to ensure activities are not duplicated, and to strengthen the impact of each other's programs.</li> </ul>	<p>We welcome the opportunity to strengthen collaboration with the Government of Belgium and key partners at regional, district, health facility and community levels in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, and look forward to the project in the West-Nile and Rwenzori regions.</p>
<p><b>Comments from the Netherlands</b></p>	<p><b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b></p>
<p>The Netherlands wishes to endorse UNFPA's Country Programme Document (CPD) for Uganda, supporting the CPD's vision of ensuring universal access, for women and young people in Uganda to high-quality, integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services, and furthermore supporting UNFPA's contribution to the United Nations 'delivering as one' process by</p>	<p>UNFPA Uganda appreciates the endorsement of the CPD by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and its continued support to advancing the SRHR/GBV agenda.</p>

<p>actively participating in the mechanisms that support implementation of the UNSDCF and joint programming.</p> <p>The Netherlands, in particular, appreciates the CPD's prioritization of strengthening the integration, quality improvement, accessibility and availability of sexual and reproductive health services for the most vulnerable populations, including young people and women, and of evidence-based advocacy to increase sustainable financing for family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights services.</p>	
<p>The Netherlands furthermore welcomes UNFPA's objectives to address inequalities and to advance the commitments of the ICPD Programme of Action to inform rights-based policies, programmes and accountability.</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates this comment, and will continue to focus on addressing inequalities, focussing on those furthest behind and advancing the commitments of the ICPD Programme of Action.</p>
<p><b>Comments from the European Union</b></p>	<p><b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b></p>
<p>Some impressive results in the programme currently ending although many of these seem transactional in nature and not necessarily transformative (for example, number of adolescents reached with life skills). Overall support for the priorities although not clear why the economic, skills and other needs of adolescents is not specifically targeted even through a partnership with other UN agencies and partners</p>	<p>Through the Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) clubs, UNFPA is supporting marginalized young people out-of-school, especially girls who have dropped out due to teenage pregnancy, child marriage and inability to afford school fees. The model provides an integrated platform for SRHR/GBV, along with livelihood and economic empowerment. The ELA clubs provide safe spaces where young people access life skills education, financial literacy training, sexual reproductive health education, within a supportive social space that promotes gender equality and women's empowerment. This approach has been endorsed and supported by parents as well as local, cultural, religious and political leaders. After acquiring life and economic skills, the adolescent girls are linked to existing economic empowerment programmes including the Government's Youth Livelihood Programme, Operation Wealth Creation and UN-supported initiatives, which provide them with seed funds for their respective projects.</p> <p>Under the new country programme, UNFPA will scale up the model to reach more adolescents. Further, UNFPA will strengthen the partnership with the Government, including Operation Wealth Creation and the Youth Livelihood Programme and development partners, including the UN agencies, to increase access of the adolescents to capital after they have acquired the necessary life and economic skills.</p>

<p>Gender equality investments seem primarily focused on the absence of harm including child marriage, GBV and FGM. While this is an important result, empowerment will be enhanced significantly through women's access to the economy and employment. UNFPA has an important role in fostering a more conducive environment - jointly with UNDP and other partners - to promote women's economic empowerment and this is something we recommend should be tracked through an indicator.</p>	<p>UNFPA programming on harmful practices, and elimination of GBV is cognizant of the importance of women's access to the economy and employment as a pathway to increasing women's and girls' decision-making and improving the ability to reject violence and demand their rights.</p> <p>Under the new Country Programme, UNFPA will build on previous initiatives such as the empowerment and livelihood assistance programme, and the safe spaces programme, which has integrated livelihood, business, and entrepreneurship, and will continue to pursue joint interventions with UN-Women and UNDP on women's access to economy and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Concurrently, UNFPA will leverage its work on the demographic dividend to advocate for increased access to credit, especially by women and girls.</p>
<p>The programme document makes reference to a number of programmatic activities that are highly political, or which require sustained political leadership and commitment, but it is not clear what UNFPA's response will be to this and whether programmes will include high-level advocacy. For example, the Maternal and Perinatal Death Review process is referenced as "very weak" but not put into a context of political leadership and commitment. It is unsustainable to fund programmes that have insufficient commitment. Ultimately, if there is leadership for this programme, why does it continue to be so weak? If there is limited leadership/ commitment, why is it funded?</p>	<p>The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Health, has prioritized high-impact interventions that focus on quality of care, including maternal and perinatal death review and response. The slow reduction of the maternal mortality ratio in the context of increased institutional deliveries is an indicator of gaps in the quality of services.</p> <p>However, there is strong interest, from both political and technical leadership in the country, to improve the quality of maternal and neonatal services including maternal and perinatal death review and response. UNFPA and partners will continue to support national efforts in this process.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health has already embarked on weekly high-level technical meetings to improve access to high-quality maternal and neonatal health services, including maternal and perinatal death review and response. This initiative has led to improvements in death reviews and reporting, especially from national and regional referral hospitals.</p>
<p>How will Uganda engage with and apply resources from Phase 3 of the Supplies Partnership which is also shifting to a more strategic level to reposition reproductive health as a central strategy for national development?</p>	<p>In Phase 3 of the Supplies partnership, UNFPA-Uganda will strengthen focus on the following strategic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Creating an enabling policy environment and improve governance for financing, service delivery, advocacy programmes, and the effective mobilization of communities and individuals to overcome barriers to access;</li> <li>(b) Strengthening implementation of the various SRH/FP policies and strategies, including the family planning advocacy strategy, the family</li> </ul>



	<p>planning financing strategy and the total market approach strategy to enhance access to family planning services;</p> <p>(c) Supporting the functionality of the maternal and child health coordination structures at national and district levels;</p> <p>(d) Facilitating the implementation of the Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan, 2020-2025 as a key framework for inclusive participation; providing critical direction to Uganda’s family planning programme, and serve as a mobilization tool for all key stakeholders;</p> <p>(e) Strengthening supply-chain management by improving the functionality of electronic Logistics Management Information System for reproductive health commodities</p> <p>(f) Strengthening management systems that utilize reliable disaggregated FP/SRH data to inform decision-making and ensure accountability;</p> <p>(g) Strengthening accountability mechanisms.</p> <p>In addition, UNFPA is undertaking a major change process to strengthen its supply chain. As part of this process, key supply chain functions will be revised and a new unit, responsible for providing coordination and oversight to the entire supply chain at country, regional and global level, will be established. It is expected that the process will result in strengthened systems at country level and more effective last-mile capabilities.</p>
<b>Comments from Germany</b>	<b>UNFPA country/regional office response</b>
<p>Germany fully supports the overall vision of the programme to ensure universal access, for women and young people in Uganda to high-quality, integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services.</p> <p>We also welcome that the programme has been designed in a broad consultation process with key stakeholders and beneficiaries including the Government, adolescents and young people, women, most-at-risk populations and hard-to-reach communities at national and subnational levels.</p> <p>As outlined in the draft the programme is well aligned with the Ugandan government’s national priorities, such as the Uganda</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates the comments from the Government of Germany, and will continue to collaborate with the Government of Uganda, development partners, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders to deliver results for the adolescents, young people, women, men and those most left behind.</p>

National Development Plan 2020/2021-2024/2025, National Vision 2040, African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025.	
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