

THE SECOND UGANDA ANNUAL SDG CONFERENCE 2023



Date: June 23-24, 2023

Conference Report

Conference Pictorial



H.E. Vice President Jessica Epelu Alupo



Rt. Hon Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja



Lady Justice Catherine Bamugemereire



Rt. Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba, Minister General Duties



H.E. Susan Ngongi Namondo, UN Resident Coordinator



Ms. Rose Alega, Ag Permanent Secretary OPM



Dr. Albert Byamugisha, Head SDG Secretariat



Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I extend my greetings and gratitude to all participants and stakeholders who joined us for the second Uganda Annual SDG Conference 2023 (UASDGC23) in June 2023. I am delighted to share this foreword for the conference report, which encapsulates the essence of our collective commitment to sustainable development. This report stands as a testament to the collective dedication of the esteemed participants who converged to deliberate on these crucial global agendas. This report distills the essence of those discussions into actionable insights. From policy recommendations to innovative approaches, from case studies to success stories, every facet of the conference finds its place within these pages. It is our hope that this report will provide guidance to policymakers, practitioners, and advocates alike in accelerating progress on the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

The conference brought together representatives from the Government of Uganda, the development partners, Civil Society Organizations, youth and women, media, the Private Sector among others. This collaborative effort showcased our dedication to fostering inclusive and innovative actions both at the national and continental levels, aimed at accelerating the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063. During the conference, we utilized the recently concluded Mid-term Review of the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII) to inform our discussions and shape the development of the fourth National Development Plan. This approach demonstrated our commitment to integrating our efforts strategically aligning our objectives and Leaving No One Behind to ensure greater impact in pursuit of the SDGs.

As we forge ahead, let us remember that the journey towards sustainable development requires unwavering commitment, continuous learning, and collective action. Let us embrace the challenges with determination, confident in the knowledge that together, we can build a better and more sustainable future for all Ugandans.

The discussion from the Conference fed into Uganda's Presentations and Side events during the High Level Political Forum in July 2023. For the UN SDG Summit 2023 scheduled for September 2023, the conference has positioned us to contribute actively to this important global milestone. By reflecting on our progress, showcasing innovative approaches, and identifying areas for improvement, we are better equipped to align our efforts with the 2030 Agenda.

As we near the completion of NDPIII implementation and embark on preparations for NDPIV, this conference has provided an invaluable platform to assess our achievements, evaluate successful strategies, and discuss necessary adjustments to accelerate our progress. Our determination to achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2063 objectives remains steadfast.

Together, we have set a path for a better future for Uganda and its people.

Ms. Alenga Rose
Ag. Permanent Secretary
Office of the Prime Minister

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Introduction

In the past seven years of SDG implementation, Uganda has made considerable progress with an improved Global ranking of 136 out of 163 countries (from 143/163 in 2021), an average score of 54.9 in 2022 and considered in the 5th position in Africa with regard to the Government's commitment to the coordination and implementation of SDGs. This has been achieved through the SDG localization efforts by various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), coordinated by the Office of the Prime Minister in partnership with the United Nations, Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector. Whereas realization of sustainable development is also echoed in the African Union's Agenda 2063, which was adopted in 2013, there are still gaps in its domestication due to limited awareness at national and sub-national levels. With ten-years now into its implementation, it is evident that countries need to enhance awareness and sensitization on not only SDGs but also Agenda 2063 at local, national, regional, and continental levels – as a prerequisite for deepening ownership among the African people. As such, the African Union and the United Nations have strengthened their partnership for cooperation to implement activities and programmes for Africa's inclusive, broad-based and sustainable development (AU-UN Framework on implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030).

Considering the above, and the need of strengthening participation, partnerships, monitoring and reporting, the Government of Uganda, together with its development partners, initiated a national annual platform (SDG Conference) in June 2022 to provide a platform for reflection and mutual accountability on the two Agendas.

Therefore, in June 2023, the Government of Uganda through the National SDG Secretariat in the Office of the Prime Minister, in collaboration with the United Nations Agencies (UNRCO, World Health Organization, UNDP, UN Women), Embassy of Denmark, SDG Champions, Uganda National NGO Forum, Bank of Uganda, World Vision, Save the Children among others in June 2023. The conference focused on promoting inclusive national and continental actions for accelerated delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. The conference aimed to address the mid-term progress of the SDGs, leaving no one behind, and the implementation of NDPIII.

The High Level Political Forum in July 2023 and the SDG Summit 2023, scheduled for September 2023, were highlighted as important milestones in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The conference aimed to contribute to the High Level Political Forum and the SDG Summit by reflecting on the progress made so far, showcasing innovative approaches, and identifying areas that require improvement. With NDPIII implementation nearing its fourth quarter and preparations for NDPIV underway, the conference provided a platform for stakeholders to assess achievements, evaluate strategies that have been effective, and discuss necessary changes to accelerate implementation and achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2063 objectives.

In addition to aligning with the SDG Summit and the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the conference emphasized leaving no one behind and integrating regional frameworks for the successful delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Keynote Address and Official Opening of the Conference by H.E the Vice President of the republic of Uganda



H.E the Vice President Jessica Rose Epel Alupo opening the 2nd SDG Conference on behalf of H.E the President of the Republic of Uganda

Her Excellency Jessica Alupo, Vice President, delivered the keynote address at the conference on behalf of H.E the President of Uganda, expressing the government's deep appreciation for the presence and contributions of all stakeholders, including international representatives and civil society organizations (CSOs). She emphasized the importance of financial inclusion in the Parish Development Model (PDM) and the government's commitment to including 39% of households outside the money economy. However, the government is aware of concerns among rural communities that participating in PDM may result in loss of land or onerous obligations through SACCOs. Therefore, she called upon religious leaders and stakeholders to sensitize these communities and assure them that such fears are unfounded.

H.E. the Vice President stressed that qualitative and quantitative growth in society is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With these key messages delivered, she officially declared the conference open.

Recommendations by H.E. Jessica Alupo

In her address, H.E. Jessica Alupo made a specific recommendation for Rt. Hon. Justine Kasule, to engage with the SDG Secretariat to sensitize grassroots people on how the Parish Development Model (PDM) works, particularly concerning the payback of funds extended through the program. This recommendation aims to ensure that all segments of society understand the principles and benefits of PDM and can actively participate in its implementation.

Commitments by H.E. Jessica Alupo

H.E. Jessica Alupo committed to sharing the issues and recommendations presented by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) with the Cabinet. This commitment underscores the government's dedication to acting on the feedback received during the conference and taking necessary actions to address concerns and improve the implementation of sustainable development initiatives.

Statement by the Hon Chief Justice presented by Hon. Lady Justice Catherine Bamugemereire of the Court of Appeal



Lady Justice Catherine Bamugemereire delivering a statement on behalf of the Chief Justice

In the statement delivered on behalf of the Hon Chief Justice, Hon. Justice Catherine Bamugemereire of the Court of Appeal emphasized the significance of SDG 16, which calls upon the judiciary to play a vital role in promoting a peaceful and inclusive society for sustainable development. Under the Administration of Justice Programme in NDP III, a framework has been established to facilitate the implementation of SDGs, fostering collaboration among institutions in the justice chain.

The Ministry of Justice has taken strides towards improving access to justice in Uganda. Notably, 429 courts have been gazetted, with 251 of them currently operational. The judiciary has adopted a decentralized approach, ensuring that justice services are accessible across the country. This includes the establishment of 7 high court divisions, 20 high court circuits, 82 Chief Magistrate courts, and 140 grade 1 courts that are operational. For the first time, Karamoja region now boasts a high court sitting in Moroto, and a Magistrates Court has been set up in Buvuma.

To ensure effective implementation of SDGs, the Hon Chief Justice presented a series of recommendations. These include seeking support from all sector players to address gaps in delivering SDGs, particularly in handling organized crime and cross-border offenses that require a comprehensive 360-degree approach. Additionally, the expansion of remand homes is crucial to ensure that juveniles have access to justice. Strengthening partnerships with non-state actors will also enhance the judiciary's impact, especially in dealing with cases related to climate change and environmental degradation. To promote fair trials and protect witnesses, the enactment of a witness protection law is deemed essential.

The Hon Chief Justice also presented commitments aimed at enhancing the efficiency and accessibility of the judicial system. The automation of court processes through the Electronic Court Case Management Information System (ECCMIS) is currently underway, with plans to roll out this initiative throughout the country. Furthermore, promoting Alternative Dispute

Resolution mechanisms as an alternative to prolonged litigation is seen as an effective way to expedite justice delivery. Commitments also include expanding court coverage in the country from the current 70% to 80% by the end of FY 2024/2025. Additionally, the establishment of Regional Courts of Appeal in Mbarara and Gulu, along with operationalizing Grade One Courts in each constituency and Chief Magistrates in every district, will further enhance access to justice and promote a more inclusive society.

The statement by the Hon Chief Justice, as presented by Hon. Lady Justice Catherine Bamugemereire, highlights the judiciary's critical role in achieving the SDGs and sets forth recommendations and commitments that align with Uganda's efforts to ensure a just and sustainable society for all its citizens.

Address and Statement by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, Robinah Nabbanja



Rt Hon Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja delivering a closing statement at the 2nd SDG Conference.

In her address and closing statement, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja emphasized the significance of Uganda's first SDG conference held in June 2022, which united all arms of government and relevant sector players to deliberate on SDG implementation. Following this landmark event, the Cabinet made crucial recommendations to enhance the nation's sustainable development efforts.

The key messages conveyed by the Prime Minister included the initiation of a national assessment of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) to identify marginalized and vulnerable communities, with the report set to be launched in July 2023. Additionally, she noted that the Cabinet underscored the importance of integrating Agenda 2063, the African Union's development agenda, into the National Development Goals Coordination Framework. This integration will align Uganda's development priorities with those of the broader African continent, fostering cooperation and resource sharing among African countries.

Furthermore, the Cabinet expressed the commitment to organize the SDG conference annually to accelerate progress towards the goals. Notably, the conference's effectiveness was credited to the Regional SDG festivals that embraced a bottom-up approach, prioritizing the perspectives of grassroots people in the decision-making process.

The government's dedication to achieving the SDGs was evident through the development of a comprehensive SDG coordination framework and roadmap. This framework has served as a guiding document, facilitating the integration of SDGs into national policies, plans, and programs. In her closing statement, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja commended the exemplary work of the SDG Secretariat and all partners including the UN family, the National NGO Forum, the SDG champions in coordinating the nation's efforts towards sustainable development.

Statement by Rt. Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba on the Outcome of the Regional SDG Festivals and Forums



Rt Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba (Minister for General Duties & Focal Point Minister for SDGs) presenting the outcome document from the Regional SDG Festivals.

Rt. Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba, representing the Prime Minister, Hon. Robinah Nabanja addressed the conference on the significant outcomes of the regional SDG festivals and forums held in four regional centers of Uganda: Mubende in Central Uganda, Lira in Northern Uganda, Mbarara in Western Uganda, and Jinja in Eastern Uganda. These consultations involved leaders from all districts in the respective regions and played a vital role in popularizing the SDGs at the grassroots level.

The events included various activities such as the Youth Skilling Event, People's Baraza, and Public Processions, among others. Rt. Hon Lumumba expressed gratitude to the government of Denmark for its support in collaboration with the SDG Secretariat and SDG champions, who played a crucial role in leading these activities. Additionally, she acknowledged the support from Development Partners, UN Resident Coordinator's Office and UN Systems in Uganda, CSOs, Uganda National NGO Forum, World Vision, and IRCU, all of which contributed to the success of the consultations.

The Stakeholders Forum held during the regional events brought local leaders together to discuss the acceleration of SDG delivery through government programs. The participants recognized that although Uganda is at the mid-point of the 2030 Agenda, most SDGs are currently off-track. Emphasizing the importance of the Parish Development Model (PDM), participants identified it as Uganda's rescue plan for poverty eradication and for effectively targeting SDG delivery at the household level.

Acknowledging government efforts to address poverty through infrastructural developments and Agricultural Extension Programmes, participants provided valuable insights by highlighting both successes and shortfalls in their respective areas. The compilation of these inputs will be shared with Cabinet to inform future policies and strategies.

The proposed solutions and recommendations by participants included increasing investment in education, especially in technical education and promoting organized settlement and urban planning in cities by regulating land development and construction projects. The need for more support for vulnerable groups in Northern and Central regions was underscored, recognizing the unique challenges faced by these communities.

Participants called for child-friendly policies and implementation to promote child welfare and development, ensuring access to education, healthcare, and other essential services. They stressed the importance of tackling issues like child labor, child marriage, and child abuse, which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Addressing economic growth, participants emphasized the need for increased investment in manufacturing and innovation, expediting the construction of Regional Industrial Parks promised in the NRM manifesto during the last campaigns.

Rt. Hon Lumumba highlighted the importance of promoting inclusivity, mentioning the establishment of Presidential Industrial Skilling Hubs aimed at equipping people with vocational skills free of charge. As recommendations, Rt. Hon Lumumba urged the involvement of security agencies as stakeholders in discussions on accelerating SDG delivery. She also committed to simplifying the SDGs for the ordinary people and operationalizing SDG localization guidelines, along with annual voluntary reviews to address challenges in SDG acceleration.

The outcomes of the regional SDG festivals and forums reflected the voices and aspirations of grassroots communities, providing valuable input to guide Uganda's efforts in achieving the SDGs and fostering inclusive and sustainable development across the nation.

Regional SDG Festivals

In preparation for the 2023 National SDG Conference, the Office of the Prime Minister, in collaboration with the SDG Secretariat and the Uganda National NGO Forum, partnered with the SDG champions, World Vision Uganda, Bank of Uganda, Local Governments, Regional Advocacy Networks, Esara Microfinance, Innovation Village, Dependable Foundation and the Royal Danish Embassy to organize four regional SDG Festivals across Uganda. These collaborations provided a platform to bring together the technical expertise and political support of all stakeholders, contributing to the effective implementation of the festivals. The festivals were held in Western Uganda (Mbarara City), Eastern Uganda (Jinja City), Central Uganda (Mubende District), and Northern Uganda (Lira City).

During the regional Peoples' SDG Festivals, a series of activities took place over three days from 15th May to 8th June 2023. These activities included SDG walks, tree planting, citizen parliaments, and stakeholder forums, all aimed at engaging and mobilizing citizens in each region. Additionally, pre-event activities such as regional caravans and radio talk shows were conducted to rally participation and raise awareness about the SDGs among local communities. By localizing and contextualizing the SDGs, these events sought to enhance citizens' understanding and commitment to sustainable development in their specific regions.

Introductory Remarks by Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister



Ms. Rose Alenga, the acting Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister delivering Introductory Remarks

Ms. Rose Alenga, the acting Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, delivered the introductory remarks, setting the stage for the day's discussions. In her statement, she outlined the key messages and highlights of the conference.

Purpose of the Conference

The primary objectives of the conference were threefold:

- i) To review the mid-term status of the implementation of the SDGs in Uganda. This assessment aimed to gauge the progress made so far and identify areas that require further attention and intervention.
- ii) To review national and regional actions and commitments for the integrated implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This review would facilitate the alignment of Uganda's development goals with the broader aspirations of the African continent.
- iii) To share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. By exchanging knowledge and insights, participants could enhance the effectiveness of their strategies and initiatives.

Commitments by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)

Ms. Rose Alenga reaffirmed OPM's dedication to the successful attainment of the SDGs in Uganda. The commitments outlined by OPM were as follows:

- i) **Supervise Implementation of the SDG Coordination Framework:** OPM will take the lead in coordinating government ministries, departments, and agencies to ensure a harmonized and cohesive approach to SDG implementation.
- ii) **Coordinate Monitoring and Assessment of Implementation of the 2030 Agenda:** OPM will be responsible for overseeing the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made in achieving the 2030 Agenda's targets and indicators.

- iii) Build Strategic Partnerships for Financing and Innovation for the SDGs: Recognizing the importance of adequate funding and innovative approaches, OPM will actively seek strategic partnerships to mobilize resources and drive innovation in SDG initiatives.
- iv) Provide Technical Support and Advice to Stakeholders: OPM will extend its support and advisory services to Ministries, Departments, and Agencies, as well as engage with the private sector and academic institutions. The aim is to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and serve as a convergence center and hub for SDG information for all stakeholders.

Statement by H.E Susan Ngongi Namondo, the UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda



H.E Susan Ngongi Namondo The Resident Coordinator making a statement on behalf on the UN family in Uganda

H.E Susan Ngongi Namondo, the UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda, addressed the conference with a series of crucial recommendations and commitments to advance development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Recommendations by the UN in Uganda

- i) The UN stressed the importance of equipping public institutions to leverage digital technologies in an inclusive manner to drive development efforts. Embracing digital solutions can enhance service delivery and ensure that no one is left behind in accessing essential services and opportunities.
- ii) The UN called for the establishment of a more effective development partnership architecture that promotes regular dialogue, accountability, and trust between the public sector and supportive development partners. Strengthening partnerships will foster collaboration and coordinated efforts towards achieving the SDGs.
- iii) The private sector was encouraged to integrate sustainability into its business practices and strategies, and the government was urged to create an enabling environment that facilitates sustainable practices. Aligning business operations with sustainable principles will contribute to the achievement of environmentally conscious development goals.
- iv) While data availability has improved, the UN emphasized the need to embrace new innovative data sources and adopt data governance and protection policies to address the associated risks. This approach is essential to ensure the delivery of at least 90% of the SDG targets in Uganda by 2027.
- v) The government was urged to increase financing for data and statistics by 50% from current levels by 2030. In support of this commitment, the UN and Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) have already entered a joint program worth 42 million to consolidate support for national statistics.

- vi) The UN emphasized the urgency of renewed efforts to protect the environment. Sustainable development requires collective action to preserve natural resources and safeguard the ecosystem for future generations.

Commitments by the UN in Uganda

The UN reaffirmed its commitment to bolstering development financing and supporting the government in implementing the recently released Public Investment Financing strategy. This commitment demonstrates the UN's dedication to providing assistance and resources to enhance Uganda's development efforts.

H.E Susan Ngongi Namondo's statement encapsulated the UN's strong commitment to collaborating with the Ugandan government and various stakeholders to drive sustainable development. The recommendations and commitments put forth by the UN in Uganda will serve as crucial guidelines for the nation's journey towards achieving the SDGs and creating a more prosperous and equitable future for all citizens.

Civil Society statement on the implementation of SDGs in Uganda



Dr Moses Isooba, Executive Director, Uganda National NGO Forum making a statement on behalf of Civil Society in Uganda

Dr. Moses Isooba, the Executive Director of the Uganda National NGO Forum made a statement on behalf of Civil Society in Uganda, on the implementation of SDGs in Uganda. The statement acknowledged the government's efforts in coordinating SDG implementation at the sub national and national levels and bringing together various stakeholders, including government, civil society, development partners, youth, and the private sector. CSOs emphasized the need for multi-stakeholder engagement and the principle of "Leave No One Behind" as integral to SDG realization. They highlighted their active role in popularizing and localizing the SDGs in Uganda through initiatives like the "Tondeka Mabega" campaign and Global Days of Action. CSOs also commended the recent SDG Joint Initiative that birthed the Regional and National SDG Festivals aimed at creating awareness and localizing the SDGs at the grassroots level. They raised key issues arising from the festivals, including challenges in accessing funds for the Parish Development Model, quality education, healthcare services, governance issues, and poor infrastructure. CSOs called for a conducive environment for their operations and partnership with the government to advance sustainable development. They expressed their commitment to working with the government towards achieving the Agenda 2030 and ensuring no Ugandan is left behind in development processes.

Statement by the Inter-Religious Council (IRCU) on Accelerating SDG Implementation



Bishop Joshua Lwere delivering a statement on behalf of the Inter Religious Council of Uganda

Bishop Joshua Lwere, representing Archbishop Kaziimba Mugalu, delivered a powerful statement on behalf of the Inter-Religious Council (IRCU) outlining recommendations and commitments to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Uganda.

Recommendations by the Inter-Religious Council

The IRCU put forward several key recommendations to drive progress towards the SDGs:

- i) **Setting Annual Food Production Targets:** To ensure food security, technocrats should establish annual food production targets for each subcounty, including targets for export. This proactive approach aims to guarantee food sufficiency and mitigate hunger and malnutrition in the country.
- ii) **Establishing a Platform for Mutual Accountability:** The IRCU advocates for the creation of a platform dedicated to issues of mutual accountability through the implementation of the Uganda National Dialogue. This platform will facilitate constructive discussions and actions, fostering collaboration among various stakeholders to address pressing challenges.
- iii) **Addressing Demographic Dividend:** To combat the demographic dividend challenge, the government should establish a Post-University Tertiary National Program. This program will focus on mindset change and equipping fresh graduates with the necessary skills for the job market, thereby increasing employability. Making participation in this program a requirement for hiring in the public service can further enhance its impact.
- iv) **Promoting Inclusivity (SDG 16):** The IRCU urges the government to allocate more resources towards promoting inclusivity, with a focus on achieving SDG 16, which emphasizes peace, justice, and strong institutions. This commitment to inclusivity will ensure that no one is left behind in the development process.
- v) **Enabling Policies and Regulations for Food Production and Storage:** To counter food insecurity, the government should enact enabling policies and regulations

related to food production and storage. These measures will bolster agricultural practices and ensure adequate food supplies for the nation.

Commitments by the Inter-Religious Council

The IRCU also made concrete commitments to support SDG implementation in Uganda:

- i) **Strengthening Religious Structures:** The IRCU pledged to further strengthen religious structures to build resilience against shocks and stresses. Additionally, they will enhance the knowledge and skills of congregations to actively participate in government programs aimed at SDG implementation. By leveraging their strong community networks, the religious institutions can play a vital role in fostering grassroots support and awareness for sustainable development initiatives.
- ii) **Building Partnerships:** The IRCU is committed to offering its faith-based structures and systems to build partnerships with the government and other actors. These partnerships will serve various purposes, including social mobilization, mindset change, advocacy, and practical implementation of the SDGs. By working together, the IRCU seeks to harness the collective efforts of religious institutions and other stakeholders to drive sustainable development and create a positive impact on society.

The Inter-Religious Council's statement reflects a sincere dedication to the successful realization of the SDGs in Uganda. Their recommendations and commitments underscore the importance of collaboration, inclusivity, and proactive measures to address pressing challenges and achieve sustainable development for all Ugandans.

Statement from the Private Sector Foundation (PSFU) by Humphrey Nzeyi, Chairman Board of Private Sector Foundation Uganda

In a remarkable statement at the conference, Humphrey Nzeyi, Chairman of the Board of the Private Sector Foundation (PSFU), outlined the significant commitments made by the private sector towards sustainable development in Uganda.



Mr. Humphrey Nzeyi delivering a statement on behalf of the private sector in Uganda

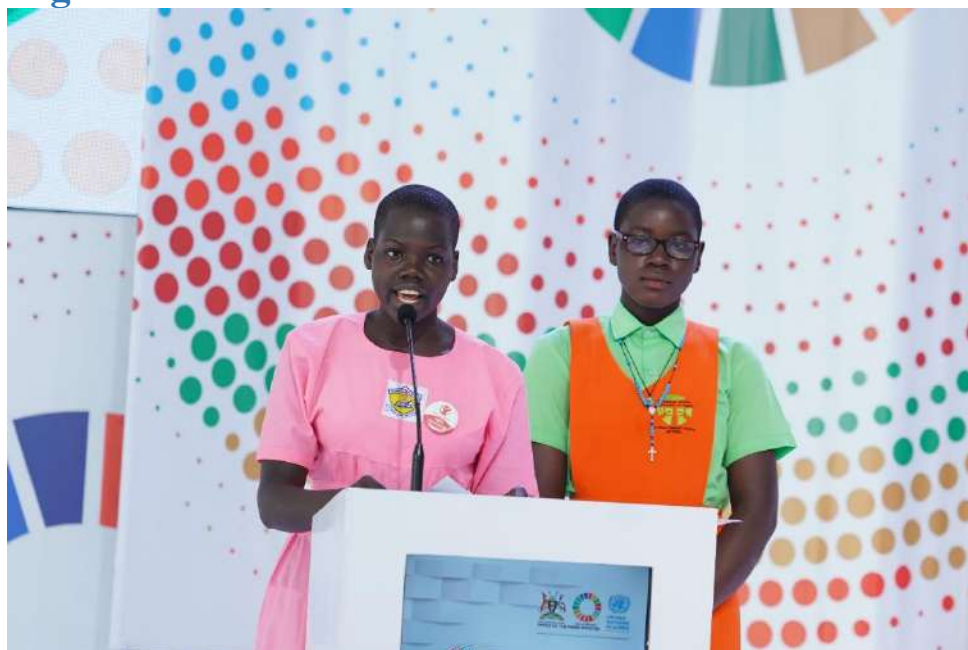
Commitments from the Private Sector Foundation (PSFU)

- i. **Lead Firm Structure Project:** PSFU pledged to implement the Lead Firm Structure Project, with the goal of creating 300,000 dignified jobs, of which 70% will be reserved for women. This initiative demonstrates the private sector's commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the workforce.
- ii. **Skills Development Facility:** Another crucial commitment from PSFU is the implementation of the Skills Development Facility, aimed at creating 1,600 direct jobs. This initiative seeks to address unemployment challenges by providing specialized training and skill development opportunities for individuals seeking employment.
- iii. **Generating Growth Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs (GROW):** PSFU is fully dedicated to implementing the GROW initiative, which aims to foster the growth of women entrepreneurs. Through targeted support and resources, GROW will empower women entrepreneurs to thrive and contribute significantly to the country's economic development.
- iv. **Investment for Industrial Transformation and Employment (INVITE):** PSFU is actively promoting the recently approved INVITE initiative, which focuses on attracting private sector investment and generating employment opportunities. This initiative seeks to create a conducive environment for businesses to flourish, contributing to economic growth and job creation.

- v. **Mobilizing the Private Sector for SDG Achievement:** PSFU has taken the lead in organizing and mobilizing the private sector to actively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Uganda. By fostering collaboration and partnership between the private sector and other stakeholders, PSFU is working towards collective efforts to address social and environmental challenges in the country.

Humphrey Nzeyi's statement reflected the private sector's strong commitment to making a positive impact on Uganda's sustainable development journey. The comprehensive initiatives and projects undertaken by PSFU demonstrate their dedication to inclusive growth, job creation, and the realization of the SDGs. Through these commitments, the private sector is poised to play a pivotal role in driving Uganda's progress towards a more prosperous and equitable future for all.

Statement from Children by Naomi Safi, Speaker of Children's Rights Council



Naomi Safi a primary school pupil delivering a statement on behalf of Children

In a heartfelt message, Naomi Safi, the Speaker of the Children's Rights Council from a UPE school, conveyed several key points reflecting the perspectives of the children of Uganda. In this remarkable statement, the children highlighted their gratitude for the government's efforts in education and access to clean water, while also drawing attention to the crucial need for improved facilities and infrastructure to support the well-being and empowerment of girls in the educational system.

- i. **Commendation for USE and UPE:** The Government of Uganda was highly appreciated for its efforts in implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) policies, which have provided equal opportunities for both girls and boys to access education. The children acknowledged the importance of education in empowering them for a brighter future.
- ii. **Commendation for Access to Clean Water:** The government's commitment to ensuring access to clean water in rural areas through boreholes, wells, and running water was acknowledged and praised. Access to clean water is essential for the health and well-being of children and their communities.
- iii. **Call for Adequate Sanitary Ware:** Naomi Safi emphasized the need for the government to provide adequate sanitary ware and cleaning equipment for girl schools to promote personal hygiene. Access to proper sanitation facilities is crucial for girls' dignity, health, and comfort while attending school.
- iv. **Advocacy for Separate Rooms for Girls and Female Teachers:** The children called for the government to provide separate rooms for girls and female teachers for private use. Having designated private spaces ensures the safety and privacy of girls and female educators, contributing to a conducive learning environment.

Presentation of the Assessment Report on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) by Dr. Albert Byamugisha (Head of SDG Secretariat)



Dr Albert Byamugisha making the Leave No One Behind Presentation

Report Background

"Leaving no one behind" is a central principle of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015. It emphasizes the commitment to ensuring that the benefits of sustainable development reach all individuals, communities, and segments of society, especially those who are most vulnerable or marginalized. This principle recognizes that progress toward sustainable development cannot be considered successful if certain groups or individuals are excluded or left behind in the process.

In the context of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015, the presentation of the Assessment Report on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) was a pivotal for discussions towards the achievement of the Conference Objectives. The SDGs set forth a transformative agenda aiming to address social, economic, and environmental challenges, with the ultimate goal of eradicating poverty, protecting the planet, and fostering peace and prosperity through global partnerships by 2030. Key principles underpinning the SDGs, as outlined in the report, include universality, integration, leaving no one behind, interconnectedness, and indivisibility. These principles underscore the inclusive and interconnected nature of the SDGs, emphasizing that no one should be left behind in the journey towards sustainable development.

Key Findings of the Report

The presentation by Albert Byamugisha, Head of the SDG Secretariat, shed light on critical findings regarding Leaving No One Behind:

- i. **LNOB as a Key SDG Principle:** The report emphasized that Leaving No One Behind is not just one among many principles; it stands as a core tenet of the SDGs. The commitment to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized



populations is at the heart of the global development agenda.

- ii. **Sub-groups Affected:** The assessment identified specific sub-groups that continue to face significant challenges in accessing development opportunities and services. These vulnerable groups include Persons living with HIV/AIDS, Rural and Urban poor, Persons belonging to ethnic minorities, Persons with disabilities, the elderly, orphans and vulnerable children, Youth & Women, Refugees, IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), and the working poor. The report underscored the urgency of addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by these groups.
- iii. **Barriers to Inclusion:** The report highlighted that many LNOBs continue to suffer due to policy, legal, and institutional dysfunction, which hinders their full inclusion in development and humanitarian delivery mechanisms. This finding stressed the importance of addressing structural barriers to ensure equal opportunities for all.

Recommendations from the Report

To address the challenges identified in the assessment, the report presented the following recommendations:

- i. **Increasing Awareness of Opportunities and Rights:** Enhancing awareness among LNOBs about available opportunities, such as the Parish Development Model (PDM), and their rights and responsibilities is crucial. Empowering these communities with knowledge can help them better advocate for their needs and access essential services.
- ii. **Inclusion in Decision-Making Processes:** The report advocated for the inclusion of LNOBs in budgeting, planning, and implementation of SDG interventions. By involving these communities in decision-making processes, their unique perspectives and needs can be better integrated into development initiatives.
- iii. **Increased Funding and Infrastructure Support:** Addressing the challenges faced by LNOBs requires sufficient funding, infrastructure expansion, and rehabilitation efforts. Adequate investment in projects and programs specifically tailored to support vulnerable populations is essential.
- iv. **Strengthened Partnerships:** Collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders at national and international levels were emphasized in the report. Stronger partnerships can mobilize resources, expertise, and knowledge, ensuring more effective and sustainable approaches to address the needs of LNOBs.

Key Messages

- **Leave no one behind (LNOB)** is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **LNOB** not only entails reaching **the poorest of the poor but also requires combating discrimination and rising inequalities within and amongst countries** and their root causes.
- The government of Uganda has implemented various strategies to address poverty in all its forms. These include the Bona Bagagawale, Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), Uganda Women Empowerment Programme (UWEP), Social Assistance Grant for the Elderly (SAGE), National Special Grant for Persons with Disabilities, Emyooga, Operation Wealth Creation, and the Parish Development Model (PDM). These initiatives aim to provide support, empowerment, and economic opportunities to different segments of the population, including youth, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and communities at large. By implementing these programs, the government demonstrates its commitment to uplifting vulnerable groups and creating a more inclusive and prosperous society, ultimately working towards the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms.

The presentation of the Assessment Report on Leaving No One Behind served as a call to action, urging all participants and stakeholders to prioritize and strategize efforts to uplift the most vulnerable in society. By taking decisive steps to integrate LNOB principles into policies and actions, Uganda can work towards fulfilling the promise of the SDGs and creating a truly inclusive and equitable society for all its citizens. Overall, "leaving no one behind" is a commitment to creating a more just and equitable world, where the benefits of development are shared by all. It recognizes that achieving the SDGs requires addressing both the immediate needs of vulnerable groups and the underlying factors that perpetuate their marginalization. It is a call for transformative change that ensures no one is excluded from the opportunity to lead a dignified and fulfilling life.

High-Level Panel Discussion on LNOB through Localization of SDGs and Partnerships

The High-Level Panel Discussion on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) through Localization of SDGs and Partnerships brought together distinguished panelists who shared valuable insights and perspectives on achieving inclusivity and sustainable development in Uganda.



The panelists included: a) Professor Eria Hisali, representing Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University (MUK). b) Hon. Charles Oleny Ojok, representing Dr. Joseph Muvawala, Executive Director of the National Planning Authority (NPA). c) Evelyn Letio, representing Dr. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Country Representative in

Uganda, from UN Women. d) Dr. Chris Mukiza, Executive Director of Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). e) Her Excellency Dr. Signe Winding Alberg, Danish Ambassador to Uganda.

The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Muhumuza Fred, an economist working with MUBs.

a) The focus of MUK in the Parish Development Model (PDM) labs.

Professor Eria Hisali, representing MUK, explained that with the support of UNDP, MUK is actively engaged in the PDM policy laboratory. This platform serves to test and recommend interventions that can enhance the implementation of the PDM. The ideas are derived from background papers, international experiences, and feedback from the public, and are guided by a steering committee led by Prof. Ezra Suruma and a Technical Committee consisting of various stakeholders.

b) UBOS's efforts in building systems that are all inclusive for grassroots people.

Dr. Chris Mukiza, Executive Director of UBOS, shared that Uganda has made progress in providing 121 out of the 2001 indicators for monitoring SDG performance, with the aim of reaching 150 indicators by the end of the year. Strategic plans are being developed to cover all indicators in the National Development Plan. The challenge lies in ensuring that stakeholders use the data effectively for decision-making. UBOS is working with partners to develop Citizen-Generated Data, ensuring the inclusion of minorities in data collection, and will count all minorities in the upcoming National Population Census.

c) Implications of the global gender social norm index on SDG implementation.

Evelyn Letio from UN Women highlighted that close to 90% of women and men hold biases in gender social norms, impacting areas like political inclination, education, economics,

employment, and physical integrity. Despite initiatives, Uganda has not witnessed significant shifts in biases in the last decade. She emphasized the need to challenge deep-seated gender norms to implement the SDGs effectively.

d) Reflections on SDG localization efforts.

HE. Signe Winding Alberg emphasized the importance of empowering local actors by shifting power and resources towards them. The engagement of local actors is exemplified by the local SDG festivities held in various regions across Uganda. Denmark is developing programs for 2023-2027 closely aligned with national development programs and supporting civil society organizations, including local ones.

e) Lessons from the NDP III mid-term review.

Hon. Charles Oleny Ojok acknowledged that Uganda ranks high in alignment with development planning processes to Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. The mid-term review revealed challenges caused by shocks such as COVID-19, floods, and international events, affecting plan implementation. The review also provided valuable lessons, including focusing on key priorities, reducing reliance on debt financing, and completing high-impact projects.

The panel discussion concluded with recommendations from both the panelists and the audience, highlighting the importance of evidence-based advocacy, human rights-based approaches, and accountability mechanisms. UBOS committed to leveraging real-time accessibility of data, while NPA pledged to popularize local population participation in SDG implementation.

Rt. Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba, on behalf of the government, promised to create platforms for local government and stakeholders to contribute to and benefit from the PDM lab's products and to roll out programs focused on nutrition. Overall, the high-level panel discussion provided valuable insights, commitments, and recommendations to further drive SDG localization efforts and partnerships in Uganda, bringing the nation one step closer to achieving its sustainable development goals.

Key Messages from the Panelists' Discussions

Panelist 1: Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor Makerere University

- The implementation of government programs that reduce vulnerability requires academic perspectives and insights.
- The parish development model has emerged as a promising strategy for reducing vulnerability and driving inclusiveness at the local level.
- Academic institutions like Makerere University can contribute through research, knowledge sharing, and capacity building to support the successful implementation of government programs.

Panelist 2: Dr. Joseph Muvawala, Executive Director, NPA

The mid-term review of the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII) provides an opportunity to assess progress, identify challenges, and inform the development of the fourth national development plan (NDPIV).

- Reducing vulnerabilities and inequalities should be a key focus in NDPIII and NDPIV to ensure inclusive and sustainable development.
- The government and stakeholders need to collaborate effectively to address vulnerabilities and ensure that development programs benefit all segments of society.

Panelist 3: Dr. Paulina Chiwangu, Country Representative, UN Women

- SDG5, which focuses on gender equality and empowering women and girls, presents an opportunity to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.
- Consolidating gains and opportunities for SDG5 requires concerted efforts in areas such as promoting women's leadership, eliminating gender-based violence, and ensuring equal access to education and economic opportunities.
- Uganda needs to prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment across all sectors to make significant progress towards the SDGs.

Panelist 4: Dr. Chris Mukiza, Executive Director, UBOS

- Leaving no one behind in the pursuit of the SDGs requires reliable and disaggregated data.
- Data and statistics play a crucial role in identifying vulnerable groups, monitoring progress, and designing targeted interventions.
- UBOS, as the national statistical agency, is committed to providing accurate and timely data to support evidence-based decision-making and ensure inclusivity in the implementation of SDGs.

Panelist 5: HE, Signe Winding Albjerg, Ambassador of Denmark to Uganda

- Development partners have a vital role to play in supporting the localization of the SDGs in Uganda.
- Effective partnerships between the government, civil society, and development partners are essential for mobilizing resources, sharing expertise, and aligning efforts towards the SDGs.
- Denmark, as a development partner, is committed to working closely with Uganda to promote sustainable development and achieve the SDGs.

Presentation by Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs on SDG Acceleration in Uganda



Prof Jeffrey Sachs delivering a keynote address during the 2nd Uganda SDG Conference 2023

Renowned economist, Director for Sustainable Development at Columbia University and President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Jeffrey D. Sachs, delivered a compelling presentation on SDG acceleration, outlining key messages and recommendations to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Key Message

Sachs emphasized that the SDGs can be effectively summarized into six major areas of investment, namely Education, Health, Energy and Industry, Sustainable Agriculture and Land use, Urban Infrastructure, and Digital Technologies with universal access to connectivity. These areas are crucial for achieving sustainable development and improving the well-being of communities worldwide. He stressed that governments play a pivotal role in each of these areas by calculating the resources and efforts needed to achieve these goals and effectively allocate resources.

Recommendations from Prof Jeffrey D. Sachs

Drawing on his expertise, Jeffrey D. Sachs offered two crucial recommendations to catalyze SDG acceleration:

- i) First, he called for the collaboration between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other development partners with Finance Ministries to develop SDG-focused finance strategies. These strategies would enable governments to align their financial resources and budgets with the priority areas identified under the SDGs, ensuring a targeted and efficient allocation of funds.
- ii) Secondly, Sachs urged development partners to issue bigger and longer-term, low-interest credit facilities. These bold financing mechanisms would allow countries to invest in transformative projects and implement sustainable development initiatives effectively.

Jeffrey D. Sachs' insightful recommendations serve as a powerful call to action for international institutions and governments to work together in accelerating progress towards the SDGs. By aligning financial strategies and providing innovative financing mechanisms, the global community can make significant strides in achieving a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

High-Level Panel Discussion on Leveraging Science, Technology, and Information for Accelerated Delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 of the African Union

The High-Level Panel Discussion on leveraging science, technology, and information for the accelerated delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 brought together esteemed panelists representing various sectors. The panelists included Dr. Amina Zawedde (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of ICT), Kimani Muturi (CEO, TEXPAD), Japheth Kawanguzi (Team Leader, Innovation Village), Dr. Wakabi Wayiragala (Executive Director, CIPESA), Heriberto Tapia from UNDP Human Development Report Office, and Professor Ariho Alex (CEO, African Agribusiness Incubators Network). The discussion was skillfully moderated by Dr. Victoria Ssekitooleko, an agribusiness and rural development professional.

Keynote Address by Professor Ariho Alex



Prof Ariho Alex delivering a keynote address on leveraging science, technology, and information for the accelerated delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063

Professor Ariho Alex commenced the discussion with key findings from a preliminary assessment of SDG targets. Only about 12% of the SDGs are currently on track, while close to 50% show progress. However, concerning is the fact that 30% of the SDGs have either shown no movement or regressed. Under current trends, a staggering 575 million people are projected to be living in extreme poverty by 2030. On a more positive note, the world's population of smartphone users stands at 6.92 billion, representing 86.11% of the global population.

Key Message by Professor Ariho Alex

Professor Ariho emphasized the pivotal role of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) in advancing research and knowledge, promoting sustainable development, enhancing productivity and efficiency, strengthening resilience and preparedness, bridging information gaps, fostering innovation ecosystems, and encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing. He highlighted the potential of STI in Africa, particularly in driving digital solutions for agriculture, precision agriculture, agro-processing, Climate-Smart Agriculture, farmer training, and capacity building. To achieve success in the SDGs, Professor Ariho outlined critical factors, including an innovative positive mindset, market-driven investment approach, relevant skills that match market needs, strategic collaboration and partnerships, access to affordable financial products and services, reliable information data, enabling policy and legal frameworks, and the virtues of objectivity, patience, determination, and perseverance.

Recommendations by Professor Ariho Alex

Professor Ariho put forth a series of recommendations to harness the potential of STI for sustainable development:

- i) Ugandans should actively engage with experts developing technologies to fully benefit from their innovations and expertise.
- ii) Africa needs to shift from a research and development mindset to an implementation mindset, focusing on market demands and skilling the nation accordingly.
- iii) Uganda should capitalize on locally-based ICT to foster both inter and intra trade relations for socio-economic development.
- iv) Adequate budget allocations to ICT at both the national and local government levels are essential to foster innovations.
- v) Government should prioritize youth participation and mentorship to nurture a thriving ecosystem of innovation.
- vi) Embracing sustainability in personal lives, making conscious choices that align with the SDGs, can contribute significantly to their achievement.

a) Accelerating SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) among the youth

Japheth Kawanguzi emphasized that information and communication technology (ICT) is a vital tool for progress. To accelerate SDG 9, the government needs to create a conducive environment for young innovators to thrive and excel. By supporting and nurturing the talent of the young population, especially in ICT and innovation, Uganda can foster economic growth and create employment opportunities.

b) How innovators can impact SDG implementation

Kimani Muturi urged the public to view the SDGs as a source of raw materials for innovation and development. By leveraging the goals as a framework for addressing societal challenges, innovators can contribute significantly to SDG implementation. Through their creativity and problem-solving skills, innovators can develop solutions that positively impact various sectors and contribute to sustainable development.

c) The SDG journey thus far

Heriberto Tapia highlighted the importance of data abundance in achieving the SDGs. Uganda should move from a state of data scarcity to data abundance to make informed decisions and interventions. He discussed the Human Climate Horizons platform, a data repository containing projections of climate change effects on people worldwide by the end of the century. By accessing and utilizing such data, countries can address challenges related to climate change and contribute to SDG implementation.

d) The purpose of the SDG conference to an ordinary person.

Dr. Amina Zawedde emphasized that technology and science are relevant to everyone. The government must invest in ICT and create incentives to attract investors. Uganda has made significant strides in digitization and internet penetration, which are crucial in supporting the achievement of SDGs. The Ministry of ICT has developed a digital transformation roadmap, focusing on digital infrastructure, services, cybersecurity, skilling, innovation, entrepreneurship, and research. Implementing this roadmap will facilitate SDG delivery. The ICT Ministry recommended that government incentives to investors should be formalized and clearly outlined to attract more investments in the sector.

e) Government efforts towards youth unemployment

Dr. Monica Musenero highlighted the STI Foundry program, a comprehensive initiative with multiple arms aimed at providing practical skills to fresh graduates, especially in engineering fields. The program will equip graduates with hands-on experience through manufacturing processes and address unemployment challenges.

Key Messages from Panelists

Panelist 1: Dr. Amina Zawedde, PS, Ministry of ICT & National Guidance

- Digitization plays a crucial role in the development process, enabling efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity.
- The status of digitization in Uganda is progressing, but there is still work to be done to fully leverage its potential for sustainable development.
- Government efforts in supporting digitization and innovation are underway, but more resources and collaboration are needed to accelerate progress and bridge the digital divide.

Panelist 2: Mr. Kimani Muturi, CEO, TEXPAD

- As an innovator, he has experienced the challenges and opportunities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- While the government has shown support for innovation, there is a need for more comprehensive policies, funding, and infrastructure to foster a thriving innovation ecosystem.
- Collaboration between the government, private sector, and innovators is crucial for providing the necessary support and resources to drive innovation and achieve the SDGs.

Panelist 5: Heriberto Tapia, Research and Strategic Partnership Advisor, Human Development Report Office, UNDP

- The Human Development Report 2021/22 emphasizes the importance of investing in innovations to address complex uncertainties.
- Innovations have the potential to accelerate progress on the SDGs by providing novel solutions and approaches to development challenges.
- To fully harness the power of innovations, there should be increased investment, knowledge sharing, and strategic partnerships between stakeholders to scale up impactful innovations and ensure their widespread adoption.

Overall:

- Digitization is a crucial enabler for sustainable development, but there is a need to enhance its implementation and bridge the digital divide.
- Government support for innovation is important, but comprehensive policies, funding, and infrastructure are required to create a conducive ecosystem.
- Investing in innovations is essential for addressing complex uncertainties and accelerating progress on the SDGs. Collaboration, knowledge sharing, and strategic partnerships are vital for scaling up impactful innovations and achieving sustainable development goals.

The panel discussion and audience interactions provided valuable insights and recommendations to accelerate SDG implementation in Uganda, emphasizing the critical role of innovation, technology, and data-driven decision-making in driving sustainable development.

Session Wrap-Up Statement by Hon. Dr. Monica Musenero, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation



Hon. Dr Monica Musenero delivering a wrap up statement for the panel on leveraging science, technology, and information for the accelerated delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063

In her session wrap-up statement, Hon. Dr. Monica Musenero, the Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, emphasized the pivotal role that technology plays in determining the value of Uganda's products. To address the challenge of coordination and aligning priorities, the ministry has developed a comprehensive national agenda with several focus areas. These include the pathogen economy, which involves processing local medicines; mobility, with a goal to produce vehicles and raw materials domestically; manufacturing; space science, exemplified by the refurbishment of the Mpoma satellite station; productivity acceleration, aimed at empowering farmers with knowledge; import substitution; and the export of value-added goods. Hon. Dr. Musenero highlighted the importance of driving mindset change, and to facilitate this, the ministry introduced 'The Science that Works Development' initiative to harness local innovations. Additionally, the minister acknowledged the need to bridge the gap between the informal sector (jua kali) and scientists.

As part of the commitments made, the government will create employment opportunities for scientists, including Industrial Chemists, through initiatives such as The Incubator Programme and the Presidential Skilling Hubs. Moreover, Hon. Dr. Monica Musenero pledged to share a detailed report on the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation's alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The minister's commitments underscored the government's dedication to harnessing the potential of science, technology, and innovation to drive Uganda's development, foster economic growth, and create a more sustainable and prosperous future for the nation.

DAY 2 OF THE 2ND UGANDA NATIONAL ANNUAL SDG CONFERENCE 2023

High-Level Panel Discussion on Financing Frameworks and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation and Accelerated Delivery of SDGs and Agenda 2063

The high-level panel discussion on Financing Frameworks and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation and Accelerated Delivery of SDGs and Agenda 2063 was expertly moderated by Ms. Elsie Attafuah, the Uganda Resident Representative of UNDP. The panel featured distinguished representatives from key government bodies and international institutions:

- a) Joseph Enyimu, Commissioner of Economic Development Policy and Research, Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development,
- b) Cleopas Ndorere, Marketing Commissioner, Ministry of Trade, Industry & Cooperatives,
- c) Alex Nwanji, Deputy Executive Director of Finance, Bank of Uganda,
- d) Fred Zaake, Senior Private Sector Specialist, Markets Advisory, World Bank Group.

Statement by the Keynote Speaker, Dr. Raymond Gilpin



Dr Raymond Gilpin delivering a keynote address on Financing Frameworks and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation and Accelerated Delivery of SDGs and Agenda 2063

Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist, and Head of the Strategy, Analysis, and Research Team at the Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, delivered a keynote address, emphasizing critical aspects of accelerated SDG delivery and financing opportunities.

The key messages highlighted during the discussion on Financing Frameworks and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation and Accelerated Delivery of SDGs and Agenda 2063 were crucial in understanding the challenges and opportunities in financing sustainable development.

- i. **Substantial and Affordable Financial Investments:** The first key message emphasized the need for significant and accessible financial investments to accelerate the delivery of the SDGs. While domestic resources can contribute to financing development initiatives, there has been a decline in the availability of

external resources. Furthermore, some bilateral partners are transitioning from providing grants to offering commercial loans, leading to increased borrowing costs for African countries.

- ii. **Challenges with Short-Term Financing Instruments:** The second key message addressed the issue of short-term financing instruments available to African countries, with a specific mention of Eurobonds, which are relatively new and costlier for borrowing. These short-term financial instruments present limitations and challenges for sustainable development efforts. The poor credit ratings of African countries compound the problem, resulting in significant annual losses, estimated to be around USD 74 billion.

These key messages underscore the urgency of finding sustainable and diverse financing solutions to accelerate SDG delivery in Africa. The discussion highlighted the importance of exploring alternative financing options and improving credit ratings to attract more favorable and long-term investment opportunities. By addressing these challenges, African countries can overcome financial barriers and work towards achieving their sustainable development objectives.

Recommendations by Dr. Raymond Gilpin

To address the challenges and foster sustainable financing for the SDGs, Dr. Raymond Gilpin proposed the following recommendations:

- i. **Cautious Borrowing:** Uganda should be cautious in borrowing, keeping a close eye on debt servicing requirements to avoid unsustainable debt levels.
- ii. **Diverse Technology and Finance Frameworks:** The government should create an enabling environment for diverse technology and finance frameworks to thrive, encouraging innovation and financial inclusivity.
- iii. **Thorough Tax Inspections:** Authorities should conduct thorough tax inspections at borders to prevent tax base erosion and enhance resource mobilization.
- iv. **Exploring Additional Financing Options:** Consideration of alternative financing options, such as SDG Bonds, Diaspora Bonds, Green and Blue Bonds, can help finance initiatives aligned with the SDGs.
- v. **Leveraging UNDP Financing Academy:** Uganda should utilize its relationship with the UNDP Financing Academy to equip its people with the necessary tools and skills to effectively implement the SDGs.
- vi. **Improving Credit Ratings:** Efforts to improve credit ratings are vital, as most African countries are perceived as high risk by the financial industry.
- vii. **Prioritizing Tax Receipts and Debt Servicing:** Broadening the tax base and addressing high debt servicing obligations should be prioritized for sustainable financial stability.

The panel discussion focused on financing Uganda's development agenda and explored various strategies to attract investment and promote sustainable economic growth.



a) Financing Uganda's development agenda

Mr. Joseph Enyimu highlighted several key approaches to finance the country's development agenda. These included raising household incomes to enable greater investment, improving life expectancy, and lowering the cost of doing business. He emphasized the need to increase access to "patient capital" and advocate for legal reforms to make it easier for people to engage in business activities. Leveraging government securities and ensuring price stability were also identified as essential elements for financing development.

b) Trade as an instrument for financing the development agenda

Mr. Cleopas Ndorere highlighted the significance of trade as a means of financing development. He stressed the importance of further liberalizing trade through negotiations with stakeholders in the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) to facilitate greater regional and international trade. Supporting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) through value addition and creating border export zones were identified as strategies to enhance trade facilitation and efficiency. Additionally, measures to address financial flaws such as mis-invoicing and regulations on beneficial ownership for multinational companies were recommended to maximize trade benefits.

c) Financing investments from the private sector?

Mr. Fred Zaake offered recommendations to promote private sector investment in Uganda. Enabling diaspora remittances and creating credible investment vehicles for Ugandans working abroad were identified as key enablers for private sector financing. Exploring innovative credit financing for the agriculture sector, such as reducing reliance on collateral, and leveraging agribusiness through warehouse receipting were also recommended. Digitization across all sectors was emphasized to widen the tax base and improve financial inclusion.

Recommendations from the Panel Discussion

The panelists proposed several recommendations to improve Uganda's financing frameworks and eligibility guidelines to attract funding from investors keen on SDGs. They urged the youth

to seek diverse funding sources beyond government initiatives and emphasized the importance of understanding debt dynamics. Leveraging relationships with Multilateral Development Banks within Africa, exploring carbon trading, and simplifying policy concepts for grassroots communities were also suggested.

Commitment from Bank of Uganda (BOU)

BOU committed to improving the popularity of the Agricultural Credit Facility (ACF) among the public and making affirmative action amendments to increase its uptake.

Commitments from Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance pledged to focus on fully monetizing the economy by bringing the informal sector under the tax bracket. They also emphasized the prioritization of the Uganda Agriculture Insurance Scheme and joining the Pan African Payment and Transaction system (AFTCTA) to de-risk currency exchange. Additionally, they committed to de-risking regional trade, addressing climate finance, and establishing a Climate Finance Unit.

Commitments from Ministry of Trade

The Ministry of Trade committed to developing an e-commerce policy and a National Coding system, implementing a packaging and branding strategy to address environmental concerns, and prioritizing commercial diplomacy among embassies. Empowering cooperatives at the grassroots level to participate in the Parish Development Model (PDM) for consolidation, storage, and processing was also emphasized, along with the implementation of mutual non-recognition agreements to address non-tariff barriers.

Overall, the panel discussion provided valuable insights and actionable commitments to foster sustainable financing mechanisms and drive economic growth and development in Uganda.

The keynote address and subsequent panel discussion shed light on critical issues surrounding financing for the SDGs and provided practical recommendations to address these challenges. With a focus on responsible borrowing, diverse financing mechanisms, and improved credit ratings, Uganda can lay a strong foundation for accelerated SDG delivery and regional cooperation in pursuit of its sustainable development goals.

High-Level Panel Discussion on SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17



Richard Ramsey, the Programme Quality Director of World Vision Uganda, moderating a high level panel on SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17.

This panel discussion was moderated by Richard Rumsey, the Programme Quality Director of World Vision Uganda. The panel comprised key representatives from government ministries and the diplomatic sphere, each addressing vital aspects of Uganda's progress towards achieving these specific SDGs.

Panelists: a) Callist Tindimugaya, Commissioner, Ministry of Water & Environment, representing Alfred Okidi the Permanent Secretary. b) Eng. Julius Wamala, representing the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Energy. c) Dorcas Okalany, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. d) Hon. Biyika Songa Lawrence, Member of Parliament for Ora County, Chairperson Natural Resources Committee. e) Ambassador Eli Kamuhangire, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The panel discussion began with thought-provoking questions directed at specific panelists to shed light on Uganda's progress and strategies related to the selected SDGs.

a) Progress on SDG 6 in terms of access to water resources and a cash economy.

Mr. Callist Tindimugaya highlighted efforts to increase access to safe drinking water by transitioning from point water sources to piped water sources, leveraging gravity streams, and implementing integrated water management frameworks. He emphasized holistic approaches, such as constructing dams, planting trees, and protecting riverbanks and wetlands, to ensure water security. The current status shows Uganda achieving 72% safe water consumption in urban areas and 67% in rural areas, while sanitation rates stand at 90% in urban areas and 77% in rural areas.

b) Accelerating SDG 7 with high charcoal use for cooking.

Eng. Julius Wamala outlined measures to accelerate SDG 7, focusing on increasing access to renewable energy by constructing transmission lines, distribution lines, and substations to enhance last-mile connections. The Electricity Connections policy introduced in 2018, offering

free connections for domestic customers, is being fast-tracked. Additionally, the National Electrification Strategy 2022 targets connecting about 10.4 million Ugandans by 2030. The Electricity Access Scaler Project, starting in July 2023, aims to increase last-mile connections in households, refugee host areas, and more. Initiatives promoting clean cooking stoves and electric cooking are also underway.

c) Delivery of SDG 9 in addressing youth poverty and substandard housing.

Dorcas Okalany highlighted urbanization as a key challenge, with 15 cities claiming peri-urban areas that were rural in the past. To address youth poverty and housing challenges, the National Urban Policy is being implemented under NDP III. Collaboration with the private sector to build affordable housing is in progress, but government involvement is crucial. Physical planning, garbage collection in urban areas, and waste recycling should be prioritized. The Ministry is rolling out Uganda Cities and Municipalities Infrastructure Development Project (UCMID) to drive appropriate service delivery aligned with revenue collection. Upskilling youth through education and involving the private sector in garbage collection were also recommended.

d) Leveraging parliamentary oversight for SDGs 6 and 7.

Hon. Biyika Songa Lawrence emphasized the need for appropriate budgetary allocations for the energy sector to promote industrialization and value addition. Resilient infrastructure and protection of watersheds through advisory roles were emphasized. Urging the government to explore carbon credit leverage for debt swap, climate change fund establishment, and prioritizing last-mile energy connections were also highlighted.

e) Strengthening multilateralism and diplomatic means for SDG 17.

Ambassador Eli Kamuhangire emphasized Uganda's participation in international trade, negotiations with the EU for viable alternative systems, and efforts in peace-building. The key takeaway was the need for reforming systems in Bretton Woods Institutions and fulfilling financial commitments to support SDG acceleration.

The panel discussion provided valuable insights into Uganda's progress and strategies towards achieving SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17. The commitment of government officials and the diplomatic community highlighted Uganda's determination to achieve sustainable development and promote partnerships for a better future.

Session Wrap-Up Statement by Hon. Amos Lugolobi, Minister of State for Planning, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, on Revamping Partnership for Accelerated Delivery of the NDP, SDGs, and Agenda 2063



Hon. Amos Lugolobi delivering a session wrap up statement on revamping partnership for Accelerated delivery of the NDP III, SDGs and Agenda 2063.

In his session wrap-up statement, Hon. Amos Lugolobi emphasized the critical role of partnerships in achieving accelerated delivery of the National Development Plan (NDP), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Agenda 2063 in Uganda. Key recommendations and messages emerged from the discussions:

- i. **Collaboration between Ministries and Institutions:** To achieve the SDGs effectively, there is a need for genuine collaboration between different ministries and institutions. For instance, ministries such as Water and Agriculture must work together on projects like irrigation to ensure efficient and comprehensive implementation.
- ii. **Enhanced Follow-up and Accountability:** For externally funded projects, adequate follow-up on implementation is crucial to ensure accountability and effective use of funds.
- iii. **Addressing Soil Productivity Decline:** The decline in soil productivity should be tackled by providing farmers with access to fertilizers to enhance agricultural productivity.
- iv. **Access to Global Climate Fund:** Challenges in accessing funds from the Global Climate Fund can be addressed through the newly established Climate Finance Unit within the Ministry of Finance. This unit will facilitate the flow of climate-related projects and proposals to the Global Climate Fund for approval.
- v. **Transport Infrastructure:** Efforts are being made to address traffic and transport issues through the commencement of the SGR construction in 2024 and the rehabilitation of the existing meter gauge line.
- vi. **Importance of Partnerships:** Partnerships are pivotal to the successful implementation of the SDGs both locally and internationally. Building

strong multistakeholder partnerships is crucial for effective development cooperation.

- vii. Guiding Principles for Partnerships: The principles defined at the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in 2011, including country ownership, measurable results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability, underscore the importance of robust multistakeholder collaborations.
- viii. Revitalization of National Partnership Forum: The government is working to revitalize the National Partnership Forum, guided by the National Partnership Policy developed in 2014. The aim is to strengthen partnership mechanisms for evidence-based decision-making processes, led by the Prime Minister, and aligned with the National Budgeting, Planning, and Reporting cycle.
- ix. Building a Robust Partnership Framework: Teams from relevant government agencies, including the Office of the Prime Minister, the National Planning Authority, and the Ministry of Finance, are developing a revitalization work program for the National Partnership Forum. This will involve evidence-based high-level dialogues, aligned with policy structures and processes.
- x. Joint Structures for Partnership Dialogue: The establishment of joint structures, including the National Partnership Forum (political and technical forums) and the Joint National Partnership Forum Task Force, will facilitate coordination and collaboration among stakeholders.
- xi. National Partnership Forum Secretariat: The Secretariat of the National Partnership Forum will be housed in the Department of Strategic Coordination and Implementation in the Office of the Prime Minister.
- xii. Focus of Joint Annual Partnership Workplan: The draft joint annual partnership workplan will focus on data gathering, joint policy dialogues, policy awareness, and advocacy.

Hon. Amos Lugolobi reaffirmed the government's commitment to building a strong evidence-based National Partnership Forum, ensuring effective and inclusive partnerships in line with the SDG agenda. Through collaborative efforts and meaningful partnerships, Uganda is poised to make significant progress in realizing its sustainable development goals and promoting a prosperous future for all citizens.

Statement by Mr. Laban Musinguzi, President Youth Coalition for SDGs

In his statement, Mr. Laban Musinguzi, the President of the Youth Coalition for SDGs, presented important recommendations to further enhance youth engagement in the pursuit of sustainable development in Uganda. His insights highlighted the crucial role of the youth in shaping the nation's future and emphasized the need for targeted support to harness their potential.



Mr. Musinguzi Laban delivering a statement on behalf of the youth in Uganda

Recommendations

- i. **Establishment of a One-Stop Center for Youth Programs:** Mr. Musinguzi stressed the importance of centralizing youth programs within a dedicated one-stop center. This center would serve as a hub for coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating various initiatives focused on youth development. The consolidation of resources and efforts would promote efficient implementation and facilitate comprehensive assessment, enabling better understanding of the impact of these programs.
- ii. **Prioritize Financing Youth-Led Initiatives:** To address the challenge of youth unemployment, Mr. Musinguzi urged the government to prioritize financing youth-led initiatives. By investing in these initiatives, the government can empower young entrepreneurs and creators to establish businesses and projects that generate more job opportunities for their peers. Financial support can serve as a catalyst for innovation and creativity among the youth, fostering economic growth and social development.
- iii. **Provide Mentorship and Capacity Building:** Recognizing the importance of mentorship, Mr. Musinguzi called for government-led capacity-building programs for the youth. Mentorship would focus on instilling values of patriotism, environmental conservation, and other areas aligning with the SDG agenda. Through mentorship, young individuals can be empowered with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become responsible and active contributors to society, playing a vital role in the realization of the SDGs.

Mr. Laban Musinguzi's recommendations showcased the importance of investing in the youth as key agents of change. By creating an enabling environment, offering financial support, and providing mentorship, Uganda can harness the immense potential of its youth population to drive sustainable development and pave the way for a more prosperous and inclusive future for all.

Policy Recommendations to Accelerate SDG Implementation

1. **Strengthening Government Programs and the Parish Development Model:** Academic perspectives, as highlighted by Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, emphasize the importance of implementing government programs that reduce vulnerability, with a specific focus on the parish development model. Policy interventions should involve enhancing the effectiveness and reach of these programs to ensure they effectively address vulnerabilities and promote inclusive development.
2. **Enhancing National Development Plans:** The mid-term review of NDPIII and prospects for NDPIV, as discussed by Dr. Joseph Muvawala, present an opportunity to reduce vulnerabilities and inequalities. Policy interventions should focus on aligning development plans with the SDGs, ensuring the integration of key targets and indicators, and implementing targeted measures to address vulnerabilities and inequalities identified during the review process.
3. **Consolidating Gains for SDG 5 and Gender Equality:** Dr. Paulina Chiwangu emphasizes the need to consolidate gains and opportunities for SDG 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Policy interventions should prioritize gender mainstreaming, eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, enhance women's participation in decision-making processes, and ensure access to quality education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.
4. **Strengthening Data and Statistical Systems:** Dr. Chris Mukiza highlights the crucial role of data and statistics in leaving no one behind. Policy interventions should focus on enhancing data collection, analysis, and dissemination processes, ensuring disaggregated data to identify marginalized groups, and strengthening the capacity of institutions like UBOS to produce high-quality and timely data. This will facilitate evidence-based decision-making, monitoring progress, and targeting interventions effectively.
5. **Effective Engagement of Development Partners:** Ambassador Signe Winding Albjerg underscores the role of development partners in SDG localization. Policy interventions should prioritize effective partnerships, coordination, and collaboration between the government and development partners. This includes aligning development assistance with national priorities, promoting knowledge exchange, technical support, and resource mobilization to accelerate SDG implementation.

During the High-Level Panel Discussion on leveraging science, technology, and innovation for accelerated delivery on SDGs and Agenda 2063, several policy recommendations were formulated to drive SDG implementation. These recommendations aim to address the challenges and complexities associated with achieving the SDGs. The following key areas were highlighted, emphasizing the importance of effective policy interventions and their implementation:

6. **Digitization and Development:** The status of digitization and its impact on development was discussed, emphasizing the need for policies that promote digital transformation across sectors. Recommendations focused on improving access to ICT infrastructure, promoting digital literacy and skills development, and creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship.

7. **Government Support for Innovations:** Panelist Mr. Kimani Muturi highlighted the experiences of innovators and raised the question of whether the government is doing enough to support innovations. Policy recommendations emphasized the importance of creating supportive frameworks, such as funding mechanisms, incubation programs, and intellectual property rights protection, to nurture and scale up innovative solutions.
8. **Investment in Innovations:** Panelist Heriberto Tapia referred to the Human Development Report's advocacy for investment in innovations to address complex uncertainties. The policy recommendations emphasized the need for increased investment in research and development, technology transfer, and strategic partnerships. This would help accelerate progress on the SDGs by fostering innovation, knowledge sharing, and capacity building.
9. **Financing mechanisms for the economy:** The panelist from the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development emphasizes the need to explore and implement effective financing mechanisms to support the economy and achieve SDG 1 (ending poverty). It is recommended that the government and relevant stakeholders prioritize the implementation of the Parish Development Model as a key strategy for poverty reduction. Adequate funding should be allocated to support the implementation of this model, including investments in infrastructure, social programs, and capacity building.
10. **Competitive trade, sustainable cooperatives, and product standardization:** The panelist from the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives highlights the importance of promoting competitive trade, sustainable cooperatives, and standardization of products. Policy interventions should focus on creating an enabling environment for businesses, fostering innovation, and enhancing the competitiveness of local industries. This can be achieved through targeted support programs, capacity building initiatives, and the development of quality standards and certifications.
11. **Access to agriculture credit facility and small business recovery fund:** The panelist from the Bank of Uganda stresses the need to accelerate access to the agriculture credit facility and small business recovery fund to facilitate trade and investment. Policy recommendations include streamlining and simplifying loan application processes, expanding the coverage and accessibility of these financial facilities, and providing tailored financial products and services to meet the specific needs of agricultural businesses and small enterprises.

Strengthened Partnerships

1. **Development and strengthening of partnerships:** The conference highlights the significance of developing and strengthening partnerships between government, civil society, private sector, and development partners. Collaboration among these stakeholders is essential for the effective implementation of the SDGs. Partnerships should be based on shared values, mutual trust, and a common understanding of goals and objectives.
2. **Formation of collaborative networks and platforms:** It is recommended to establish collaborative networks and platforms that facilitate ongoing dialogue, coordination, and knowledge sharing. These networks can serve as spaces for stakeholders to exchange best practices, innovative ideas, and lessons learned. They should foster inclusive participation, ensuring that diverse perspectives and voices are represented.

3. **Commitment to sustained partnerships:** The conference emphasizes the need for sustained partnerships that extend beyond short-term projects or initiatives. Long-term commitment is crucial for achieving lasting impact and progress towards the SDGs. Partners should prioritize continuity, maintain regular communication, and allocate adequate resources to support collaborative efforts.
4. **Enhanced coordination and alignment:** To maximize the effectiveness of partnerships, it is important to enhance coordination and alignment among stakeholders. This includes aligning strategies, goals, and activities to avoid duplication and promote synergy. Clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms should be established to ensure efficient implementation and monitoring of partnership initiatives.
5. **Capacity building and resource mobilization:** Partnerships should prioritize capacity building initiatives to strengthen the skills and capabilities of all stakeholders involved. Additionally, efforts should be made to mobilize financial and technical resources to support partnership activities. This may include exploring innovative financing mechanisms, leveraging private sector investments, and accessing international development assistance.
6. **Monitoring and evaluation:** A robust monitoring and evaluation framework should be developed to assess the effectiveness of partnerships and track progress towards the SDGs. Regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms will enable stakeholders to identify challenges, address gaps, and make evidence-based decisions for continuous improvement.

Increased Awareness and Engagement

1. **Success in raising awareness:** The conference has successfully raised awareness about the SDGs and Agenda 2063 among participants and the wider public. Through informative sessions, panel discussions, and knowledge sharing, participants have gained a deeper understanding of the importance and urgency of these global development agendas. The conference has served as a platform to educate, inform, and inspire individuals, organizations, and communities to actively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
2. **Engagement of diverse stakeholders:** The conference has witnessed active engagement from diverse stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organizations, private sector representatives, academia, and the general public. This inclusive participation has fostered a sense of ownership and collective responsibility in driving sustainable development. Moving forward, it is essential to sustain and enhance this engagement by creating opportunities for continuous collaboration, knowledge exchange, and joint initiatives across sectors and communities.
3. **Commitment to continuous action:** Beyond the conference, the commitment to continuous action is crucial. Participants have expressed their dedication to translating the discussions and outcomes of the conference into tangible actions. This commitment should be reinforced through the establishment of follow-up mechanisms, such as working groups, task forces, or partnerships, to implement specific projects and initiatives aligned with the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Collaboration between

stakeholders should be encouraged to leverage expertise, resources, and networks for maximum impact.

4. **Communication and outreach strategies:** Effective communication and outreach strategies play a pivotal role in disseminating key messages and mobilizing collective action. It is recommended to develop comprehensive communication plans that utilize various channels, including traditional media, social media platforms, community networks, and local outreach initiatives. These strategies should prioritize clear and accessible messaging, targeting diverse audiences and addressing specific needs and priorities at different levels. Continuous engagement and feedback loops should be established to ensure ongoing communication and active participation from stakeholders.
5. **Capacity building and education:** Strengthening capacity and education on the SDGs and Agenda 2063 should be a priority. This can be achieved through the integration of sustainable development principles and concepts into educational curricula at all levels, as well as the provision of targeted training programs and workshops for professionals and decision-makers. By enhancing knowledge and understanding, individuals and institutions can effectively contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Government and Stakeholder Action:

1. To translate these policy recommendations into concrete actions, the government needs to take a leading role in coordinating and implementing these interventions. It should establish clear mechanisms for multi-stakeholder engagement, ensuring active participation from academia, civil society, private sector, and development partners. The government should provide adequate resources, capacity building, and institutional support to implement the recommended policies effectively.
2. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be strengthened to track progress, identify gaps, and facilitate evidence-based decision-making. Regular reporting on SDG implementation should be prioritized to ensure accountability and transparency. The government should also prioritize policy coherence across sectors and develop strategies for mainstreaming the SDGs into national policies, plans, and budgets.
3. Effective implementation of these policy recommendations will require sustained political commitment, collaboration, and innovative approaches to address the specific vulnerabilities and inequalities faced by different groups. By translating recommendations into actions, Uganda can make significant progress in leaving no one behind and achieving the SDGs by 2030.
4. **Translating Recommendations into Action:** The role of government and other stakeholders in translating policy recommendations into concrete actions was emphasized. It was highlighted that effective implementation requires strong leadership, coordination, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Policy frameworks should be aligned with national development plans, and mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and accountability should be established.

5. It is crucial to establish coordination mechanisms and partnerships among relevant ministries, financial institutions, trade associations, and civil society organizations. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be put in place to track progress and ensure accountability. Regular consultations and dialogue platforms should be established to review the implementation of these policies, address challenges, and foster continuous improvement.

In summary, the policy recommendations from the conference underscored the importance of digitization, government support for innovations, investment in innovations, and effective implementation strategies. These recommendations highlight the crucial role of policies in accelerating SDG progress and call for collaborative efforts among governments, private sector, civil society, and international organizations to turn these recommendations into impactful actions.

Conference Outcomes

The presentation summarizes the key messages and outcomes derived from the two days of discussions among various stakeholders during the 2nd SDG National Conference. It serves as a reflection of the conference's insights and recommendations for advancing the implementation of the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 in Uganda.

1. **The Parish Development Model has emerged as a promising strategy** for reducing vulnerability and driving inclusiveness at the local level.
2. **Consolidating gains and opportunities** for SDG5 (Gender Equality) requires concerted efforts in areas such as promoting women's leadership, eliminating gender-based violence, and ensuring equal access to education and economic opportunities.
3. **Data and statistics play a crucial role** in identifying vulnerable groups, monitoring progress, and designing targeted interventions. The national statistical agency is committed to providing accurate and timely data to support evidence-based decision-making and ensure inclusivity in the implementation of SDGs and Agenda 2063.
4. **Development partners have a vital role** to play in supporting the localization of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in Uganda and effective partnerships between the government, civil society, and development partners are essential for mobilizing resources, sharing expertise, and aligning efforts towards the accelerated delivery on the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
5. **Multiple sources of financing for the SDGs like carbon trade, diaspora bonds should be established**, as the current funding is limited. The implementation of the Public Investment Financing Strategy is crucial to meeting the SDGs' financial requirements as well as taking bold steps in financing SDGs and the NDP.
6. **Multi-stakeholder engagement needs to be strengthened, particularly at the local government level**, to enhance understanding and collaboration in SDG implementation. The SDG Secretariat should establish a reporting mechanism that captures the contributions of various stakeholders especially through Voluntary Local Reviews.
7. **Civil society and religious organizations remain critical pillars** for ensuring citizen involvement, popularizing the SDGs and the Agenda 2063, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships. A conducive environment that guarantees associational and expressive freedoms for civil society organizations is essential.
8. **Accelerated efforts and stakeholder involvement:** Given the complex situation and uncertainties, there is a need for accelerated efforts by all stakeholders. The public sector needs to enhance its effectiveness by leveraging digital technologies and establishing an effective development partnership architecture.
9. **Decentralization reforms should be reviewed and revitalized to empower sub-national authorities** and local communities. With the increase in population and the expansion of cities, there is need to cater for the unique concerns of cities including waste disposal and other related urban issues. Is it possible to collect and spend resources from source especially by Local Governments.
10. **The private sector is recognized as a critical partner in driving innovation and economic growth**, and there was a call for structured engagement and an enabling policy environment that allows the sector to grow and thrive. The private sector continues to closely with different partners to focus on issues related to employment, growth in women's opportunities, and skills development for young people.
11. **Digitization is a crucial enabler for sustainable development**, but there is a need to enhance its implementation and bridge the digital divide. The status of digitization in Uganda is progressing, but there is still work to be done to fully leverage its potential for sustainable development.

12. **Innovation are critical to SDG attainment:** There is a need for more comprehensive policies, funding, and infrastructure to foster a thriving innovation ecosystem. Collaboration between the government, private sector, and innovators is crucial for providing the necessary support and resources to drive innovation and achieve the SDGs.
13. **Capacity building and education:** Strengthening capacity and education on the SDGs and Agenda 2063 should be a priority. This can be achieved through the integration of sustainable development principles and concepts into educational curricula at all levels, as well as the provision of targeted training programs and workshops for professionals and decision-makers.
14. **Policy interventions should focus on creating an enabling environment** for businesses, fostering innovation, and enhancing the competitiveness of local industries. This can be achieved through targeted support programs, capacity building initiatives, and the development of quality standards and certifications.
15. **Streamlining and simplifying loan application processes, expanding the coverage and accessibility of these financial facilities,** and providing tailored financial products and services to meet the specific needs of agricultural businesses and small enterprises is critical for increasing access to agriculture credit facility and small business recovery fund.
16. **Judiciary as an enabler:** The rule of law is considered to be an enabler for the realization of the other SDGs. Judicial intervention is anticipated in areas where government will apply policy and legislative interventions to address challenges and where Agenda 2030 has directly placed on government the obligation to meet targets premised in the law. As an enabler of sustainable development, rule of law is the hub and the other 15 goals are the spokes in the network.
17. **Strengthened Partnerships:** As part of the Government's commitment to continue engaging with the SDGs, government will continue to build a strong evidence-based National Partnership Forum process consistent with SDG 17 targets - which is about the means of implementation of SDGs. This will go a long way in ensuring that all stakeholders work together to build better systems across government hence contributing to the global SDG agenda and the national development plan agenda.
18. **Commitment to continuous action:** Beyond the conference, the commitment to continuous action is crucial. Participants have expressed their dedication to translating the discussions and outcomes of the conference into tangible actions. This commitment should be reinforced through the establishment of follow-up mechanisms, such as working groups, task forces, or partnerships, to implement specific projects and initiatives aligned with the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
19. The justice system in Uganda needs to integrate across all NDP programs and the PDM to ensure a complete administration of justice service chain in Uganda.
20. Expand remand homes coverage across the country for better handling of juvenile cases and diversion of juveniles from traditional retention centres.

Conclusion

The National Conference held in June 2023 stands as a resounding testament to Uganda's unwavering commitment to sustainable development. The conference showcased the country's strong resolve to address pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges by actively pursuing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

One of the conference's paramount objectives was to ensure that no one is left behind in Uganda's pursuit of the SDGs and the Agenda 2063. By prioritizing this principle, the country reaffirmed its dedication to inclusivity and the upliftment of marginalized and vulnerable communities. The discussions and dialogues during the conference showcased a sincere desire to address the unique needs and challenges faced by groups such as Persons living with HIV/AIDS, the Rural and Urban poor, Persons with disabilities, the elderly, Women, Youth, Refugees, IDPs, and other vulnerable populations.

The dedication and enthusiasm demonstrated by the government and various stakeholders in accelerating SDG and Agenda 2063 progress were commendable. Uganda's comprehensive SDG coordination framework and roadmap, coupled with the efforts to integrate Agenda 2063, demonstrated a forward-thinking and strategic approach to development. Additionally, the commitment to organizing the SDG conference annually reflects a recognition of the importance of continuous learning, evaluation, and collaboration in achieving sustainable development.

The conference was not just a one-time event; it laid the foundation for ongoing efforts to achieve the SDGs and the Agenda 2063. The commitments made further emphasized Uganda's determination to translate words into action. By forging strong partnerships both within the country and internationally, Uganda seeks to leverage resources, expertise, and knowledge to address complex challenges effectively.