

UGANDA'S PERFORMANCE ON LAND RELATED SDGs

Civil Society Report On Uganda's Performance On Land - Related SDGs



2021

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Related SDGs



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This report is the second Ugandan SDG land-related review, following one published in 2016¹.

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ACRONYMS

AAAA	Addis Ababa African Agenda
AAIU	Action Aid Uganda
ASSP	Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan
AU	African Union
Cap	Chapter
CCO	Certificate of Customary Ownership
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CLA	Communal Land Association
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COOs	Certificates of Occupancy
CORS	Continuously Operating Reference Stations
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DDPs	District Development Plans
EAC	East African Community
FRA	Food Rights Alliance
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	German Development Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit-GmbH)
GoU	Government of Uganda
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LSSP	Land Sector Strategic Plan
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
MPS	Ministerial Policy Statements

MZO	Ministry Zonal Office
NAPAS	National Adaption Plan for the Agricultural Sector
NCCP	National Climate Change Policy
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	National Environment Act
NEMA	National Environment Authority
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NLP	National Land Policy
NLPIAP	National Land Policy Implementation Action Plan
NNGOF	National NGO Forum
NPDP	National Physical Development Plan
NSDS	National Strategy for Statistical Development
OWC	Operation Wealth Creation
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PBB	Programme Based Budgeting
PDM	Parish Development Model
PELUM	Participatory, Ecological Land Use Management
PIAP	Programme Implementation Action Plan
PNSD	Plan for National Statistical Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UCOBAC	Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children's Welfare
UDHS	Uganda Demographic Health Survey
UGGDS	Uganda Green Growth Development Strategy
ULA	Uganda Land Alliance
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNDIFF	United Nations Decade on Family Farming
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
U-SIFSLM	Uganda Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management
UWEP	Uganda Women Empowerment Program
VNR	Voluntary National Review
YLP	Youth Livelihood Project

INTRODUCTION

WHAT WAS ANALYSED?

1 INTRODUCTION

This report reviews Uganda's progress on land-related aspects of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during 2016–21.

The 2030 Agenda comprises 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 169 targets and is measured according to 231 indicators. They were adopted in September 2015, close to the end of Uganda's first National Development Plan (NDP I), covering 2010/11–2015/16.

The Government of Uganda (GoU) was one of the first 22 countries to subject itself to a review at the July 2016 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). This demonstrated its readiness to localise and implement the SDG agenda under the theme 'Ensuring that no one is left behind'². As a result, the SDGs were integrated into Uganda's second National Development Plan (NDP II), covering 2015/16–2019/20. Reports suggest that 70% of the SDGs were integrated into NDP II³.

In 2020, the GoU undertook its second voluntary national review (VNR) on implementing the SDGs.⁴ It provides details of progress made in SDG implementation, describes policy, institutional and programmatic enablers, and lays out successes and challenges encountered. It also affirms the importance of SDG implementation to realise Uganda's 'Vision 2040', an aspiration to transform 'Ugandan society from a peasant to modern and prosperous society.'⁵

This review focuses on land-related SDG developments in NDP II, with some overlap with the beginning of NDP III (2020/21–2024/25)⁶. It is the second such review, following on from a 2018 report⁷ published by Oxfam in Uganda. This review focuses on four indicators from four of the SDGs.

Goal 1

End poverty in all forms everywhere.

TARGET 1.4

Ownership and control of Land

1 NO
POVERTY



Goal 2

End hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

TARGET 2.3

Food security, including enhancing the productivity of small holders

2 ZERO
HUNGER



Goal 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

TARGET 5.a

Gender equality in relation to land rights

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



Goal 15

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

TARGET 15

Environmental protection, including combating desertification and land degradation

15 LIFE
ON LAND



1.1 WHAT WAS ANALYSED?

This review analyses three critical elements of the GoU's progress towards land-related SDGs:

- The integration of SDGs in national strategies and plans;
- Legal reforms and programmatic actions are undertaken to achieve the SDGs; and
- Data on performance measured against relevant SDG indicators.

Table 1: Highlight on Indicators as reported by the GoU in the VNR report

SDG	Target/indicator	Status
1	Indicator 1.4.2: Proportion of titled land, per cent coverage of land information system, the proportion of land titles issued by type (region, gender, and rural/urban, and percentage change in the number of land titles registered (sex, region and rural/urban)	Reported
2	Target 2.3: By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.	Not reported
5	Indicator 5.a.1.a: Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land	Reported
	Indicator 5.a.2: Legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and control	Not reported
15	Target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.	Not reported

Source: UNDP Uganda. (2020). Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) report. <https://www.ug.undp.org/content/uganda/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/second-voluntary-national-review--vnr--report-.html>

1.2 THE SDGs IN THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS

In 2013, African Union (AU) member states adopted the Africa Union Agenda 2063 (known as the 'Addis Ababa African Agenda', AAAA) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia⁸. In addition, east African Community (EAC) member states also adopted 'Vision 2050' in August 2015⁹.

Established before the SDGs were adopted, these strategic frameworks laid out regional, sub-regional and national dedication towards achieving socio-economic transformation.

The SDGs resonated with the national, sub-regional and regional frameworks for economic transformation. Aspiration 1 of the AAAA underscores the determination of the AU to eradicate poverty in one generation and build shared prosperity through the social and economic change of the continent. It also discusses:

- **Creating a better standard of living for the African people**
- **Developing modern agriculture for increased productivity and value addition, contributing to both prosperity and food security; and**
- **Protecting Africa's unique natural endowments, including its wildlife and lands, with climate-resilient economies and communities.**

These are linked to SDGs 1, 2 and 15. In addition, aspiration 2 targets a universal culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, linked to SDG 5 on gender equality and equity.

The EAC's Vision 2050¹⁰ articulates the aspirations of the East African people. For example, 'economic empowerment of the citizens. The EAC's Vision 2050 focuses on initiating these aspirations through creating gainful employment by; boosting the agricultural sector, energy and information technology, industrialisation and infrastructure and transport network. These initiatives are intended to spur growth and fast track poverty reduction and 'improved life for the East African people'. These aspirations directly resonate with SDGs 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 11.

1.3 UGANDA'S PERFORMANCE IN THE LAND-RELATED SDGs

The GoU's 2020 VNR identifies the integration of the land sector into national economic planning and development decisions as critical for realising Uganda's Vision 2040.

The aspirations of increasing land productivity and land tenure security, diversifying livelihoods and spurring formal and informal land markets driven by market forces

resonate with SDG 1.4 on reduced poverty and securing land ownership and control, and SDG 2.3 on increased productivity and food security. In addition, the NDP II set some targets, including formally demarcating and registering land (which covered only 20% of land in 2012/2013).

NDP II also focused on measures to mitigate the effects of climate change, including combating desertification and land degradation.

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network ranked Uganda 19th out of 52 African countries based on 97 SDG indicators. Uganda received an overall score of 55.71 (compared to the regional average of 52.7). The score showed Uganda is more than 50% of the way towards achieving the SDGs by 2030 (as is the rest of the continent)¹¹.

1.4 LIMITATIONS IN THE RESEARCH

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the most significant limitation for the production of this report. Most interviews (see Annex 1 for a complete list) were conducted remotely by telephone, video call or email. However, even this communication was made difficult by sickness. In addition, the interviewees and their families generally have rural telecommunication access problems.

Access to information from some government ministries and agencies has been a challenge. For example, the electronically stored data in the systems of those government ministries and agencies.

Gender-disaggregated data on land ownership is out of date and incomplete. In addition, at the national level, statistics tracking progress made on gender equality targets are not available.

The lack of a traditional land registry. Customary land/tenure is defined under s. 1 (i) and s.3¹² to mean land owned communally and governed according to the rules and regulations of a particular society/community.

The Land Act¹³ under s.4 further provides the issuance of a certificate of customary ownership to any person, family or community holding land under customary tenure upon application for land registration to the Area Land Committee in which the land is located.

The application for registration of the customary land has to be first approved by the District Land Board in which the land is located. However, efforts to issue certificates of customary ownership (CCO) have been hindered by the Land Registry's failure to up-to-date and establish a customary land registry. In addition, these registries are responsible for compiling all the CCOs Processed in various districts, making data collection on the registered CCOs difficult.

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

2.1 DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected using qualitative methods, supported by quantitative data. In addition, 19 interviews were conducted by telephone and online video calls, with emails used for further exchange of information.

Quantitative data was collected through the analysis of secondary sources, including:

- SDG performance reviews;
- NDP II and III and other national policies, laws and sector plans;
- Ministerial policy statements from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD); the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD); and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF);
- National budget framework papers and budgets;
- The VNR reports for 2016 and 2020; and
- Some district development plans.

2.2 INTERVIEWEE IDENTIFICATION

A total of 19 key informants were interviewed (see Annex 1 for a list). They represented nine organisations and four government institutions. Of the total:

- 13 were women;
- 11 were from civil society; and
- Six were from the Government.

DESCRIPTION

**DESCRIPTION OF LAND-RELATED
POLICIES, REFORMS AND GOVERNMENT
INTERVENTIONS SINCE 2016**

3 DESCRIPTION OF LAND-RELATED POLICIES, REFORMS AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS SINCE 2016

This section describes how the land-related policies, reforms and government interventions align with the SDGs 1.4, 2.3, 5. a and 15.3.

3.1 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN II

The goal of NDP II (2015–21) was to strengthen Uganda’s sustainable wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth. Of its five targets, the two that relate to SDG 1.4 are:

- **Accelerating annual economic growth from 5.2% (in 2012/13) to an average of 6.3% by 2019/20, and 7.8% by 2040; and**
- **Increasing per capita income from \$743 in 2012/13 to \$1,039 by 2020 and \$9,500 by 2040. However, due to increased population growth and inadequate finances, realising the NDP II goals relating to SDG 1.4 has been frustrating.**

Land plays a central role in boosting household incomes because 77% of Uganda’s population is agriculture. The MLHUD – in partnership with a range of local, national and international organisations – strengthened the land rights of poor and vulnerable groups. They supported the registration of customary land through communal land associations (CLAs), certificates of customary ownership (CCOs) and certificates of occupancy (COOs), as well as purchasing land to resettle tenants of absentee landlords. In addition, they have secured women’s land and property rights, including inheritance rights, through individual or collectively held titles or CCOs.

Registering land has other positive consequences. For example, it has allowed some beneficiaries to access financial services through savings and credit cooperatives, micro-finance institutions and banks. In addition, under NDP II, the Uganda Women Empowerment Project (UWEP) and Youth Livelihood Project (YLP) have boosted incomes for women and youth.

The GoU established sub-regional Ministry Zonal Offices (MZOs) to provide essential land services and reduce the amount of travel required to conduct land transactions. The MLHUD and partners have been piloting new digital land administration methods for gathering and storing data on people-to-land-relations (e.g. parcel coordinates, personal data of different rights holders, and various types of rights) using GPS and tablets. As a result, more people can access technology services other than more expensive surveying, yet their adaption and application are easier

for women and the poor. Unfortunately, the law does not support these pilots, but the methods are being considered in the Land Act amendment.

3.2 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN III

The NDP III, 2020¹⁴ builds upon National Development Plans I and II. But for fast realisation of results, NDP III adopted a programmatic approach that lays out 18 programmes to implement the SDGs. The SDGs integrated into the NDP III, 2020 include SDGs 1.4 and 15.3, provided under agro-industrialisation and natural resources, environment, climate change, and land and water management programmes. The 18 programmes laid out in the NDP III, 2020 include;

1. The Agro-industrialization programme aimed at addressing the dominant subsistence sector by increasing commercialisation and competitiveness of agricultural production and agro-processing.
2. The manufacturing programme aimed at increasing the product range and scale for export and import substitution.
3. The private sector development programme aims to increase the competitiveness and strength of the private sector to drive sustainable and inclusive growth.
4. The innovation, technology development, and transfer programme aimed to create a knowledge-based economy.
5. The integrated infrastructure programme aimed at developing a seamless, safe, inclusive and sustainable multi-modal system to link production to the market.
6. The sustainable energy programme aims to increase access and consumption of clean energy to enhance production.
7. The sustainable urbanisation and housing programme aimed to attain inclusive, productive and liveable urban areas for shelter and socio-economic development.
8. The human capital development programme aimed to improve Ugandans' productivity by ensuring a healthy and educated resilient Ugandan population.

9. The governance and security programme aimed to improve adherence to the rule of law and the capacity to contain prevailing and emerging security threats.
10. The digital transformation program aims to increase ICT penetration and use of ICT services for social and economic development.
11. The mindset programme aimed at improving spirituality, empowering families, communities and citizens to embrace national values and actively participate in sustainable development.
12. Public Sector Transformation Programme aimed at improving the public sector to the needs of the citizens and the private sector.
13. Regional Development Programme aimed at accelerating equitable regional economic growth and development.
14. Development Plan Implementation Programme aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness in implementing the plan.
15. Mineral Development Programme aimed at increasing mineral exploitation and value addition in selected resources for quality and gainful jobs.
16. Sustainable Development of Petroleum Resources Programme aimed at attaining equitable value-form petroleum resources and spur economic development in a timely and sustainable manner.
17. Tourism Development Programme aimed at increasing Uganda's attractiveness as a preferred tourist destination.
18. Natural Resources, Environment, Climate Change, Land and Water Management Programme aimed to stop, reduce and reverse environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change and improve utilisation of natural resources for sustainable economic growth and livelihood security.

Implementation is being run under a 'parish development model', which involves community participation through representatives for farmers, women and youth.

It is intended to more effectively include vulnerable and poor men and women, in line with the spirit of the SDGs.

3.3 LAND SECTOR STRATEGIC PLAN, 2013–23

The land sector strategic plan¹⁵ aims to enhance land sector effectiveness and ensure public confidence in a system of land tenure and land administration institutions that respect the citizens' land rights. The LSSP focuses on six objectives to realise its vision and mission according to Agenda 2023. These objectives align with SDGs 1.4, 5. a and 15.3. The six objectives include;

1. To create inclusive policy frameworks for land administration and land management.
2. To ensure efficient management, utilisation, and protection of land and land-based resources to transform Uganda's economy.
3. To improve equity in access to land, livelihood opportunities and tenure security of vulnerable groups.
4. To increase availability, accessibility and affordability of land information for planning and development.
5. To ensure transparent land rights administration, accountable and easily accessible institutions and strengthen systems and capacity for the land services delivery.
6. To promote a "business approach" to delivering land services through Multi-sectoral participation.

3.4 NATIONAL LAND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN, 2015–19

The NLP¹⁶ is a framework policy instrument designed to address current and future challenges. Land governance may provide a solid foundation for socio-economic development and transformation in Uganda. The National Land Policy Implementation Action Plan (NLPIAP) describes putting the National Land Policy (NLP) into action. It prioritised actions across the NLP's seven frameworks:

- **National Land Policy;**
- **Constitutional and Legal;**
- **Land Tenure;**
- **Land Rights Administration;**
- **Land Use and Land Management;**
- **Regional and International Framework; and**
- **The NLP Implementation Framework.**

The NLPIAP embraced the SDGs and recognised the value of certain rights and access to land for women. The NLP integrates SDGs 1.4, 5. a and 15.3, as evidenced in the NLP frameworks land rights administration and land use and management.

3.5 GENDER STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL LAND POLICY, 2019

This strategy was developed to provide a framework and guidance for realising gender equity in land tenure, access, use and control through the NLP. It provides overall strategic objectives to:

- **Create a level playing field upon which men and women can make, hold and enjoy legitimate land rights claims;**
- **Build the capacity of men and women to participate effectively and on equal terms in decision-making processes concerning land management and administration;**
- **Build the capacity of people in customary and statutory institutions to enforce legal and policy provisions on gender equality;**
- **Strengthen and streamline the collection, analysis and use of gender-disaggregated data in the land sector; and promote partnerships with other stakeholders and institutions for effective implementation of the strategy.**

3.6 JUSTICE, LAW AND ORDER SECTOR'S STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN (2017–20)

The JLOS-SIPs are four in number¹⁷, designed to ensure that people in Uganda live in a safe and just society, in line with the aspirations of Uganda's Vision 2040 and the NDP II. Each JLOS-SIP has its strategic plans. However, only JLOS-SIP III¹⁸ and JLOS-SIP IV integrate some SDGs into their plans.

JLOS-SIP III focuses on addressing justice while paying particular attention to matters concerning land justice. JLOS-SIP IV, on the other hand, aims at promoting the rule of law through prioritising the SDGs. The SDG focused mainly on this report by JLOS-SIP IV is SDG 5a.

The third and fourth strategic investment plans of the GoU's Justice, Law and Order Sector were aligned to the SDGs. In addition to its core goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies, the sector targeted Goal 5.

Under the Land Justice component, the Land Justice Working Group was established. Land and family disputes constitute the most significant proportion of Uganda disputes, putting land justice at the centre of the sector's development agenda. One of its major development priorities was mainstreaming national priorities and SDGs in the sector. In addition, it recognised that land disputes are further aggravated by land degradation from climate change and human activities.

3.7 NATIONAL BUDGET FRAMEWORK PAPER, 2020/21

The NBFP¹⁹ has two parts that focus on; 1) Government's Growth Strategy, Medium Term macroeconomic forecast, Medium Term Fiscal Framework and Forecast, compliance with the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility, the Resource Envelope for FY 2020/21, Policy measures, Medium Term Expenditure Framework FY 2020/21 and Fiscal Risks and 2) details of proposed sector plans and expenditures. The NBFP integrates SDGs 1.4, 2.3, 5a and 15.3. The paper is evident for;

Promotion of research and development tailored to the farmers' increase in knowledge of technology that helps enhance the production of food and revive cooperatives for viable commodities to control agro-manufacturing value chains for the benefit of the members.

Increment in the sustainable use of the environment and natural resources through restoration and maintaining the hitherto degraded ecosystems and undertaking massive nationwide tree planting.

Provision and increase awareness of land laws that promote gender equality in land ownership. The national budget strategy for 2020/21 prioritised an e-citizen programme, primarily to increase revenue collection. Although the main driver regarding land was to improve the transparency of valuation and stamp duty remittance, it has also improved access to information to all the citizens of Uganda through massive awareness of these laws.

3.8 AGRICULTURE SECTOR STRATEGIC PLAN II, 2015–20

The second Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP II)²⁰, covering 2015–20, was themed transform subsistence farmers (growing for consumption) into enterprise farmers (growing for consumption and responding to market needs) and transforming smallholder farmers into commercial farmers. Its target was promoting the commercialisation of agriculture, particularly among smallholders. MAAIF was to establish a commercialisation fund through which support would be extended to smallholder farmers to help them overcome constraints identified on a case-by-case basis.

ASSP II's strategic intervention was a 'single spine' agricultural extension system. Alongside this, it set out to promote gendered innovation in agricultural research centres and extension services. In addition, it provided training to small scale farmers in joint decision making and planning of household agro-enterprises. Finally, it promoted gender equity in ownership, access and control over productive resources.

The overall development and growth in the agriculture sector during ASSP II were anchored on four strategic priorities:

1. To increase production and productivity of agricultural commodities and enterprises;
2. To increase access to critical farm inputs;
3. To improve access to markets and value addition and strengthen the quality of agricultural commodities; and
4. To strengthen the agricultural services institutions and create an enabling environment for the sector to grow.

The sector focused on supporting critical strategic commodities to ensure a more significant impact on household incomes and national export earnings through:

1. Distribution of improved seeds and breeding materials under Operation Wealth Creation (OWC);
2. Ensuring that good quality seedlings are supplied to farmers and ensure prompt payment for the same;
3. Providing planting materials to farmers in time to take advantage of rains; and
4. Supporting livestock breeders to meet domestic demand for dairy cows, poultry and pigs through workshop training.

3.9 UGANDA GREEN GROWTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, 2017–31

The SDGs, the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the AAAA envisage economic growth that protects the environment and natural resources. In line with this, the GoU introduced the Uganda Green Growth Development Strategy (UGGDS),²¹ which aims to ensure that Vision 2040 and the NDPs are attained sustainably, and:

1. Accelerate economic growth and raise per capita income through targeted investments in five priority sectors with the highest green growth multiplier effects.
2. Achieve inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction, improved human welfare and employment creation.
3. Ensure that the social and economic transition is achieved through a low carbon development pathway that safeguards the environment's integrity and natural resources.

The UGGDS identifies agriculture as one of its five priority sectors, specifically referencing 'sustainable agriculture production through upgrading the value chain of strategic commodities and enterprises with a focus on irrigation and integrated soil fertility management.'²²

3.10 NATIONAL ACTION PLAN OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON FAMILY FARMING, 2019–28 (UNOFF 2019–2028)

In 2019, the Food and Agriculture Organization introduced the UN Decade on Family Farming, which was based around seven pillars:

1. Develop an enabling policy environment;

2. Support youth;
3. Promote gender equity;
4. Strengthen family farmers' organisations;
5. Improve socio-economic inclusion;
6. Promote sustainability; and
7. Safeguard biodiversity, the environment and culture²³.
8. Family farmers include pastoralists, fishers, foresters and indigenous peoples.

3.11 THE NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN FOR THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, 2018

Agriculture is a crucial sector for Uganda²⁴, accounting for approximately 21.9 per cent of Uganda's GDP, 85 per cent of its export earnings, 68 per cent of total employment, and food requirements. More than 80% of Uganda's rural population, most of them smallholder farmers, rely on subsistence agricultural production. The contribution to the agricultural GDP by different sub-sectors include crops (67%), livestock (16%), fisheries (12%) and forestry (4%). In addition, agriculture also contributes 100% of all material resources for agro-based industries and food crop production. Given the pivotal role of rural women in Uganda's food production systems, agriculture also empowers women and guarantees that they feed their families, including children. Therefore, stable agricultural systems foster a cohesive rural society and contribute to a balanced urban-rural dynamic, stemming migration and ensuring political and national stability. To that end, investing in agriculture and rural development can yield significant dividends for sustainable development.

The NAPFS²⁵ is intended to be a means for reducing vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and for building adaptive capacity and resilience. The NAPFS provides an opportunity for addressing constraints to agricultural transformation, which can in turn address food security, livelihood, and development pressures related to adapting to climate change.

The GoU's National Adaptation Plan for the Agricultural Sector aims at increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change. It seeks to enhance sustainable agriculture, food security, livelihoods and sustainable development. It includes specific plans for improving livestock feeds, the sustainable management of rangelands and pastures, and the promotion of climate-resilient fisheries.

3.12 UGANDA STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT, 2007

The Uganda Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management (U-SIF SLM) covers:

- Land sustainability/soil fertility mapping;
- Watershed management; and
- restoration of degraded landscapes, including through afforestation.

Although the framework was developed in 2007, it remains relevant to SDG 2.3 given that land is a critical strategic asset for Uganda, constitutes over half of the value of assets for poor Ugandans, and is threatened by the unsustainability of current farming practices.

3.13 NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN II, 2015-2025

The National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan²⁶ is the overall framework for biodiversity conservation. Among its seven strategic focus areas are:

1. Harnessing modern biodiversity technology for socio-economic development with adequate safety measures for human health and the environment.
2. Putting in place measures to reduce and manage adverse impacts on biodiversity.

3.2.1 LEGAL REFORMS

Some legal reforms have been initiated or advanced in 2016–20 to increase land tenure security. With protection comes confidence and increased productivity and hence a driver for achieving the SDG indicator.

In 2019, the MLHUD reiterated its commitment to review or develop 16 land-related laws. See Table 1.

Table 1: Land-related laws for review

Law	Status	Description
Draft National Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy	Drafting complete, consultations ongoing	Addresses critical issues relating to land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation of project-affected people.
Draft Rangelands Management and Pastoralism Policy	Draft	Aims to contribute to national economic competitiveness through sustainable rangeland resources and investment for improved livelihoods.
The Land Act Cap 227	Under review, discussions have commenced	The amendment is intended to address proposals brought up in the NLP in 2013, such as establishing a Customary Land Registry and adopting different technology in land registration. It also seeks to protect children under 18 who own land.
The Succession Act Amendment Bill, 2019	The Bill was pending assent by the President, who returned it to Parliament for adjustment	This amendment seeks to address the rights of widows and orphans. In addition, it seeks to provide for women and children's right to succession and inheritance. The Bill also proposes to increase a surviving spouse's share of an intestate estate from 15% to 50%.
Valuation Bill, 2019	Under review by Parliamentary Counsel	A proposed law to govern property valuation. It provides a framework for regulating, managing and supervising valuation services. It also empowers the office of the Chief Government Valuer to handle compensation. This is relevant for people – including many women – who have been cheated out of land during resettlement when land is taken over by Government or private investors.

Landlord & Tenant Act, 2019	Enacted into law	Regulates the relationship between landlords and tenants regarding the letting of premises and related matters.
Survey Act, 1939	Under review awaiting amendment.	This aims to cater to the new dynamic governing land tenure in Uganda, especially around the registration of customary tenure.
Surveyors Registration Act, 1974		
Registration of Titles Act, 1924		
Draft Land Acquisition Bill, 2019	Drafting complete, consultations ongoing	Intended for streamlining compulsory land acquisition by the Government in Uganda and providing a framework for addressing issues related to vulnerable communities during land acquisitions.
Land Regulations, 2004	Drafting complete	To provide for the various procedures and the necessary documents required in any dealings inland, such as sale and registration of land, among others.
Physical Planning (Amendment) Act, 2020	Drafting complete	Provides for the making and approving of physical development plans and applications for permission. Before a registered landowner embarks on the development of a particular place, permission has to be first sought from the physical planning authority.
National Land Eviction Guidelines	Passed into law by the Parliament and disseminated to judicial officers	Provides for various procedures to be followed by the registered landowners while evicting people with equitable interests in the land.
Land Information System (LIS) Bill	Drafting complete	Guides the operations of the MLHUD's LIS.

Uganda land commission Bill	Drafting complete	To provide an operating framework for the land fund.
Physical Planners Registration Bill, 2019	Bill is before the cabinet	To provide straightforward procedures to be followed while applying for permission from the physical planning authority to own land in a specific area.

Uganda's Land Fund was established to provide government money to purchase land for the resettlement of squatters and provide loans to enable tenants to purchase land from absentee landlords. However, the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters (known as the 'Bamugemereire commission') has claimed that the Fund has not been put to proper use and calls for transparency in its management.

For example, the Uganda Land Commission, which manages the Fund, allegedly redistributed land acquired through the Land Fund to beneficiaries without compensating landlords. In another instance, the land was allegedly purchased from the Queen Mother Best Kemigisa for resettling squatters in Kabarole district; however, the squatters are said to have continued to pay Busuulu (ground rent) to their landlords and suffer threats of eviction.

Land disputes continue to threaten tenure security, especially in the face of forceful evictions and land grabs, the illegal acquisition of land, and the alteration and forging of titles. Such threats to tenure security impact productivity. In particular, the oil-rich Albertine Rift region, Hoima in Western Uganda, the mining areas in Karamoja and large tracts of land in Amuru and Nwoya in Northern Uganda have been targeted by land grabbers and speculators owing to their wealth and economic potential.

Massive waves of land grabbing and forcible displacement for large, corporate-run agricultural plantations, infrastructure projects and unfettered exploitation of natural resources are displacing small-scale farmers.

Instigated by a growing number of agrarian entrepreneurs, elites and state agents, there has been a growth of 'marketisation' and commercialisation of rural lands. Some of these have led to 'illegal' occupations built on unequal gender relations, selective exclusion and class-differentiated access, especially on land held under the country's predominant customary tenure system.

The land rights deadlock on mailo land has resulted in mass evictions by registered owners and people buying land behind the backs of sitting statutory tenants, lawful occupants under the Land Act, 1998. In disregarding this legal protection (strengthened by a 2010 amendment), evictions and violent conflicts plague land held under mailo tenure. This has led to incidents of mailo tenants teaming up and taking the law into their hands to harm or kill mailo owners, buyers, brokers and lawyers involved in transactions seeking to evict them. This has adversely affected the land and credit markets, as landowners refuse to rent out land, and financial institutions are not keen on accepting tenanted land as collateral.

'For rural mailo land, over 80% of it is tenanted. Hence it is of no actual value to the mailo owner — they cannot sell the land (it falls out of the open land market); cannot easily mortgage the land (it falls out of the credit system); can hardly evict the many bibanja holders (cannot compensate all of them), and cannot utilise the land.'

N. Owaraga, J. Kigula, R. Kirunda, Z. Nampewo, L. Bategeka and R. Ggoobi. (2016). Land, Food Security and Agriculture in Uganda. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/uganda/13549.pdf>

Women are most affected by such disputes; more men than women own land, and women's land holdings tend to be smaller and of poorer quality than men's. This kind of activity creates inequality between men and women regarding land rights that need to be addressed.

In water-stressed and water-scarce districts, especially the cattle corridor in South-Western Uganda and Karamoja Uganda, traditional common-access pastoral land is being drastically reduced in size, and common-access water points such as natural valley dams, swamps, streams, rivers, and small lakes are being fenced off by wealthy landowners. Uganda's 2018 Draft Rangelands Management and Pastoralism Policy is yet to be passed but is hoped to strengthen institutional and stakeholder capacity to manage rangelands and pastoralism and enable balanced co-existence of 'progressive ranchers' with traditional pastoralists. Progressive ranchers are pastoralists in nature, raising livestock on a large scale. In Uganda, some of the places designated as ranches are Kiryando, among other areas.

The National Environment Act, 2019

The National Environment Act, 2019 (NEA) reforms the law relating to environmental management in Uganda, providing for sustainable development and emerging environmental issues that impact production and productivity. It establishes an environmental protection force, enhances penalties for offences, manages hazardous chemicals and defines biodiversity offsets. It also sets a framework for strategic environmental assessments.

The NEA responds to the concerns raised in the NLP around the degradation and depletion of natural resources – including forests, wetlands, water and land – due to unregulated harvesting, poor use and farming practices. The Act sets a framework for protecting and sustainable management of the environment and natural resources. However, some regulations, such as the Wetlands, River Banks and Lakeshores Management Act of 2000, which is essential to agricultural production, are yet to be revised according to the new law.

Agricultural Finance Policy, 2019

Plans by the Ministry of Agriculture are underway to finalise the development of the Agriculture Finance Policy to improve access to agriculture financing. Currently, the sector is supported by small schemes run under different programmes, including the Microfinance Support Centre, OWC, the Youth Livelihood Program, UWEP, Agricultural Credit Facility and the Agricultural Insurance Scheme.

National Climate Change Policy, 2018

The National Climate Change Policy directs all sectors affected by climate change to facilitate adaptation and mitigation. It also aims to strengthen coordination across sectors to build an overarching national development process that is more resilient. This impacts land use and physical planning, which are within the mandates of the MLHUD and, by association to agriculture, the MAAIF.

The Public Finance Management Act, 2015

The Public Finance Management Act requires accounting officers to prepare budget framework papers aligned with NDP II's development priorities, ensuring that balanced development, gender and equity responsiveness are considered. They must submit these papers to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for assessment.

The Succession Act Amendment Bill, 2020

Article 21 of the Constitution provides for equality of all persons before the law and underscores equal application of the law for all persons. In addition, Article 32 (2) outlaws and prohibits laws, cultures, customs and traditions that undermine the dignity of women and other marginalised groups. Based on these stipulations, judicial activism has catalysed legal reforms. Where there is no substantive law or laws inconsistent with the 1995 Constitution, the Courts of Judicature have made pronouncements that have rendered some legal provisions and customary practices null and void. Some laws governing land and property rights and impacting gender relations have been expunged or set aside by the courts.

One example relates to the Succession Act Amendment Bill. In Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda and the Attorney General of Uganda (Constitutional Petition No 1 of 2007), the Constitutional Court was petitioned over the provisions of Sections 2, 9, 27, 44 of the Succession Act (Cap 162) that provide for restrictions on properties to be owned by a widow upon the death of her husband, which provisions do not restrict the men. It was argued that the provisions undermined the principles of equality enshrined in the Constitution.

The Court's decision led to the stay of applying those provisions of the law, including one on the distribution of the intestate estate (disposing of properties of a person who died without leaving a will) until the amendment of the Succession Act.

The NLP specifically cites redress of gender inequity and inequality to inheritance and ownership of land in statutory law and guides the Government on the need to amend Succession Act Cap 162 to provide for the right to succession and inheritance of family land by women and children. The Succession (Amendment) Act 2018 was passed by Parliament, and it is currently awaiting adjustments in the House before being sent back for assent.

National Climate Change Act, 2021

One of the stated purposes of the National Climate Change Act is to give effect to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. Section 4 gives these agreements the force of law in Uganda. In addition, it mandates the creation of a Framework Strategy on Climate Change and a National Climate Action Plan and District Climate Action Plans. It also contains a series of provisions establishing a transparency framework and system.

PROGRESS TO THE SDGs

(1.4, 2.3, 5. A, 15.3)

4. PROGRESS TO THE SDGs (1.4, 2.3, 5. A, 15.3)

Uganda made progress in adopting the SDGs, most notably in the NDP II that gave NPD III. Specifically, commitments to SDGs on agricultural productivity (SDG 2), gender equality (SDG 5), and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15) have a strong presence across the policy documents analysed and are in line with NDP II and Vision 2040's focus on wealth creation in Uganda. In addition, Uganda has sufficient policy frameworks to support SDG implementation, such as Vision 2040, a set of national development plans issued every five years, an SDG coordination framework and an NSI framework.²⁷

4.1 PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 1.4

There have been improvements made in land registration, resulting in a 14.3 percentage point increase in the population with titled land from 21.7 per cent in 2016 to 36 per cent in 2017. In addition, the progress in female land ownership rose from 16 per cent in 2010 to 39 per cent in 2012.²⁸

In 2016–20, the MLHUD worked with development partners and CSOs to undertake the following work related to the land component of SDG 1.4.

Carried out days in partnership with CSOs at the MZOs for landowners, land users and the general public to verify land title information free of charge and to disseminate other land-related information.

- **The Uganda Registration Services Bureau established a one-stop centre in Kampala, where land search letters are issued less than 2 hours.**
- **Established Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) in Moroto, Masindi, Kibaale, Lira, Soroti, Gulu, Masaka, Mbale, Jinja, Arua, Entebbe and Fort Portal. The CORS help surveyors with surveying and mapping land acquired by the GoU, particularly for implementing infrastructure projects such as roads, wayleaves and telecommunications.**
- **Acquired 33,036 acres of land from absentee landlords for redistribution to lawful and bonafide occupants. This adds to the stock of 236,036 acres of land that had been previously acquired.**
- **Issued over 300 land titles to lawful and bonafide occupants in Kibaale District and Nakaseke District.**

- Regularised the land rights of lawful and bonafide tenants in the Bunyoro (Kibaale) and Buganda region (Nakasongola and Nakaseke).
- Working with GIZ's project 'Responsible Land Policy in Uganda', carried out sensitisation and mapping of tenants on mailo land in Mityana, Mubende and Kassanda in the sub-counties of Bulera (8,963), Kikandwa (1,545), Bukuya (6,034), Kiyuni (3,579), Kakindu (1,010), Maanyi (5,750), Kiganda (4,311), Myanzi (4,734), Kigando (5,936), Nabingoola (5,686), Malangala (906) and Kasambya (1,900).
- Prepared the first-ever batch of CCOs for bibanja owners on mailo land for 200 households in Kassanda (Myanzi sub-county).
- Working with district leadership in Kayunga, assisted tenants to acquire registrable interests for bibanja holders in the villages of Namusaala, Nakyesa, Kawolokota West, Kyatto 1-3, Kawolokota East, Namavundu A, Namavundu B, Namizo A, Namizo B, Bulawula A, Nkokonjeru A, Tweyagalire A, Kyato and Kyetume1-3 in the sub counties of Kayonza and Kitimbwa.
- Disseminated the National Housing Policy, 2016, which provides a framework for necessary development.
- Working with local investors on housing developments, providing incentives like free land and technical advice.
- Worked with district-level land management institutions to develop compensation rates.
- Supervised land acquisition processes for infrastructure projects to ensure fair and just compensation.
- Organised joint reviews to assess the performance of actors across the sector.

Out of five NDP II and the Uganda Vision 2040 targets, the two that relate to the commitment 2.3 are:-²⁹

Accelerating annual economic growth from 5.2 per cent (2012/13) to average 6.3 per cent per annum by 2019/20 and 7.8 per cent by 2040; increasing per capita income from US\$ 743 in 2012/13 to US\$1,039 by 2020 and US\$9,500 by 2040; increase income distribution (GINI Coefficient) from 0.43 in 2010 to 0.32 by 2040.

In addition, the sector's target was to increase agricultural exports to USD 4 billion by 2020 from the current USD 1.3 billion and reduce the number of the labour force in subsistence production from 6 million in 2012/13, majority of women to 3 million in 2019/20.

There are eight outcomes of the UGGDS, and following interventions targeting improving the status, outcomes are conspicuous.

4.3 PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 5. A

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) assesses gender equality.³⁰

In the period 2016–20, various actions have been taken to address the land component of SDG 5. a, including:

- The CCO issuance drive
- Promotion of gender justice and increasing access to justice for women including on land rights
- The Women's Land Rights Agenda
- The number of people expected to benefit directly from the action
- Multi-stakeholder dialogues
- Land Awareness week
- Sensitizations
- Training and capacity building of land actors

Ownership of property

In 2013/14, 62.3% of men and 14.3% of women-owned agricultural land alone, while 23.3% owned it jointly. By 2016/17, 33.5% of men and 26.7% of women-owned agricultural land alone, while 39.8% owned it jointly.

The following patterns emerged in the Uganda Demographic Health Survey in 2021:

- 38% of women and 54% of men aged 15–49 own a house alone or jointly with someone else. 31% of women and 48% of men own land alone or jointly with someone else. However, most have no documentation (title or deed) of ownership.
- Bank account and mobile phones. Only 13% of women and 22% of men have a bank account that they use. 46% of women and 66% of men own a mobile phone. 73% of women and 72% of men who own a mobile phone use it for financial transactions.
- Decision making. 51% of currently married women aged 15–49 participate in three specific household decisions, either alone or jointly with their husbands.

4.4 PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 15.3

In Uganda, the total forest reserve area is estimated at 1,277,684 hectares, of which 99.6 per cent is located in 506 Central Forest Reserves while the rest is on Local Forest Reserves. However, the country faces a significant threat to its forest cover, which has declined from 24 per cent in 1990 to 9 per cent in 2018, thereby accounting for a loss of 3 million ha in only 25 years. Thus, the Government of Uganda has resorted to averting degradation by putting in place several legal and institutional bodies to promote the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources. Some of these policies and laws include the National Forestry Policy 2001, National Forestry and Tree Planting Act 2003, the Forestry Sector Support Department, the National Forestry Authority, District Forestry Services and enforcement measures through the Environmental Protection Police Unit.³¹

In 2016–20, the ENR sector set out to:

- Increase wetland ecosystem coverage from 10.9% in 2013/14 to 12% in 2019/20;
- Increase forest cover from 14% in 2012/13 to 18% in 2019/2020;
- increase automation of the climate monitoring network from 10% in 2014/15 to 40% in 2019/20;
- increase national coordination and monitoring of the implementation of international standards and commitments by 20%,
- as well as of the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) and its implementation strategy in FY2019/2020; enhance environmental compliance from 70 % in FY2013/14 to 90 % in FY2019/2020

Current farming practices have been identified as a threat to soil fertility, resulting in soil nutrient loss (Government of Uganda, 2017). In addition, land ownership has been identified as a barrier to sustainable farming practices (National Environment Authority - NEMA, 2016, p. 87-88).

Other factors identified include limited awareness of farming as a business and weak linkages of small farmers with value chain actors and rural financial institutions (Government of Uganda, 2017). The World Bank has supported land administration reform through its Competitiveness and Enterprise Development Project^{13.32}

Out of five NDP II and Uganda Vision 2040 targets, the two that relate to the commitment 15.1 are:

- Increase forestry coverage from 15 per cent in 2010 to 24 per cent by 2040; and

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. CONCLUSION

In Uganda, the long term Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework (CNDPF) is well known for providing the overall framework essential for localising the 2030 Agenda.³³ This framework (CNDPF) mandates the development of a 30-year Vision, three to 10- year perspective plans, six to five-year development plans, five sector development plans, local government development plans, annual plans, and budgets.³⁴ Although Uganda has aligned its policies to adopt the implementation of these SDGs, these SDGs have fallen short as regards their implementation as explained herein under;

1 NO POVERTY



SDG 1

This SDG provides for the end of poverty everywhere and has been adopted in various Ugandan policies for implementation. Some of these policy frameworks, such as the NDP II, recognise poverty reduction as a central concern for Ugandan Government and commit to 'reducing the poverty rate from 19.7 per cent to 14.2 per cent. Although the Government indicated in NDP II to reduce the proportion of men and women living in multidimensional poverty, the NDP II does not specify how such a reduction will be achieved.³⁵

5 GENDER EQUALITY



SDG 5

On gender equality, most policies explicitly commit to increasing access to land and land titles for women and other vulnerable groups. However, they do not specify any programs/policies by which the Government has or will seek to undertake such measures, nor do the policies specify what success will look like at the end of the plan period (for example, by specifying how many women will be ensured by the Government to have land titles by 2020).³⁶

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Budget funding for SDGs. The policies that have aligned the SDGs in the discussion do not provide the specific funds needed to implement these SDGs; implementing the SDGs is very difficult; thus, the Government is encouraged to provide for the funds needed to implement the aligned SDGs in the Ugandan policies.

The legal authority of institutions. Uganda does not have separate legislation to guide the implementation of these SDGs. This is mainly because the Government integrates these SDGs through existing institutions and budgeting cycles. Thus, the Government is encouraged to establish an independent legislation body specifically designated to handle the implementation of the SDGs.

Domestication and integration of SDGs. There is a need for the actualisation of integration of the SDGs across different MDAs is of critical importance not only for achieving the SDGs themselves. There are strong relationships between several sector priorities and SDGs. Domestication and integration of the SDGs can be achieved upon the training of sectors and local governments on SDGs and provide technical backstopping to local governments for quality assurance of development plans to increase messaging and understanding regarding SDGs.

Addressing policy gaps. While national priorities have been identified in Vision 2040, SDG target level priorities still need to be systematically agreed upon at the national and sectoral levels to improve alignment across and between policies and plans. This can be achieved through standardising integration across national policies, standardising monitoring of SDG targets and Investing in linking multi-sectoral SDG targets.

Addressing institutional gaps. This can be done through creating awareness amongst MDAs, focal persons within MDAs, utilising the established SDG coordination structure to improve implementation of the SDGs by preventing duplication of effort and costs.

Strengthening Technology and Information Systems in SDG Implementation. With the always unending technology growth, the Government of Uganda is encouraged to lean towards and adopt the technological method of collecting and storing data instead of keeping data in the books. This makes it easy to access information regarding the SDGs from anywhere around the world.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

	Name	Organisation	Role
1.	Mrs. Naome Kabanda	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD)	Director, Land Administration
2	Mr. Dennis Obbo	MLHUD	Principal Information Scientist/ Spokesperson
3	Ms. Peace	MLHUD	Gender Focal Point
4.	Ms Angella Nakafeero	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development	Commissioner for Gender
5	Ms Amelia Atukunda	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
6	Mr Pascal Byarugaba	Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Secretariat Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
7	Mr. Aggrey Kibet	Action Aid in Uganda (AAIU)	Programme Coordinator
8	Ms. Esther Kitembo	AAIU	Project Coordinator FGGIII
9	Ms. Aguti Betty	Caritas Uganda	Policy and Advocacy Specialist
10	Ms. Freda Orochi	Food Rights Alliance (FRA)	Project Officer, Natural Resources
11	Mr. Simon Peter Longoli	Karamoja Development Forum (KDF)	Executive Director
12	Mr. Jonathan Ochom Iduwat	Landnet Uganda	Acting Executive Director
13	Ms. Apio Rebecca	Land Justice	Executive Director
14	Ms. Rachael Damba	National NGO Forum	Programme Officer, Advocacy and Engagement

15	Mr.Moses Onen	Participatory, Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM)	Land Rights Coordinator
16	Mr. Joshua Ajuka	PELUM	Programme Manager Sustainable Farming Systems
17	Mr. Marilyn Kabarebe	PELUM	Advocacy Officer
18.	Ms. Frances Birungi Odong	Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children's Welfare (UCOBAC)	Executive Director
19	Ms. Pamela Lakidi	Uganda Land Alliance (ULA)	Project Officer

ANNEX 2: NOTES

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ANNEX 3: REFERENCES

Strategies and plans

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ANNEX 4: LAWS AND POLICIES

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The Public Finance Management Act, 2015

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Agricultural Finance Policy, 2019

National Climate Change Policy 2018

Budget Framework Papers

National Climate Change Policy (NCCP



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