

Labour Market Profile Uganda – 2022/2023

*Danish Trade Union
Development Agency*



This profile provides a comprehensive overview of the labour market's structure, development, and challenges.



ULANDSSEKRETARIATET – DTDA
DANISH TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PREFACE

Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA) is the development organisation of the Danish trade union movement. This agency was established in 1987 by the two largest Danish confederations – the Danish Federation of Trade Unions (Danish acronym: LO) and the Danish Confederation of Professionals (Danish acronym: FTF). These confederations merged to become the Danish Trade Union Confederation (Danish acronym: FH) in January 2019. DTDA replaced the former LO/FTF Council.

The work of DTDA is in line with the global Decent Work Agenda (DWA) based on its pillars: creating decent jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and promoting social dialogue. The overall development objective is to eradicate poverty and support the development of just and democratic societies by promoting the DWA.

DTDA collaborates with trade union organisations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. The programmes' immediate objective is to assist the partner organisations in becoming change agents in their own national and regional labour market context, capable of achieving tangible improvements in the national DWA conditions and the labour-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Labour Market Profile (LMP) format provides a comprehensive overview of the labour market's structure, development, and challenges. In the framework of DWA and SDGs, LMPs follow several central indicators addressing labour market development aspects, especially the unionism evolution, social dialogue and bi-/tri-partite mechanisms, policy development, and legal reforms status vis-à-vis ILO conventions and labour standards, among others.

Primary sources of data and information for LMPs are:

- As part of programme implementation and monitoring, national partner organisations provide annual narrative progress reports, including information on labour market developments. Furthermore, specific data and information relating to central indicators are collected using a unique data collection tool.
- National statistical institutions and international databanks are used as a source for the collection of general (statistical) data and information such as ILOSTAT and NATLEX, World Bank Open Data, ITUC Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights, the U.S. Department of State, as well as other internationally recognised labour-related global indexes.
- Academia and media sources (e.g., Labour Start, national news, among others) are furthermore used in the available research on labour market issues.

The profile is regularly updated. The current version covers the period from 2021 to 2022. Labour Market Profiles for more than 30 countries are available on DTDA's website:

<https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/>.

DTDA prepared the Labour Market Profile in collaboration with the National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) in Uganda. If any comments arise to the profile, please contact Mr Kasper Andersen (kan@dttda.dk) from DTDA.

The front page's photo is of markets in Uganda and the picture was photographed by Ms Eva Tabor.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Uganda's economic growth plummeted in 2020 due to the global Covid-19 pandemic that hit the industry and service sectors. It further affected negatively household incomes when firms closed, or economic activities were lost, forcing poverty on the rise. Generally, poverty reduction flattened during the 2010s because workers did not benefit from real minimum wage hikes and mounting high out-of-pocket expenses on healthcare.

Due to the widespread informal economy, Ugandan workers face challenges in practising their labour rights, leading many employers and workers to loopholes in business and labour regulations, often due to a lack of awareness or incentives. A wide range of draft bills was promoted to improve the status of the labour market in recent years, especially job creation and decent work, but several were not yet signed. Regional trade agreements' labour clauses have no pro-labour-condition effects.

Numerous consultation bodies are set to promote social dialogue in Uganda. Bipartite social dialogue between the National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) and Federation of Ugandan Employers (FUE) has notably improved during the last decade in joint research. Collective bargaining agreements cover around 15% of employees. The relatively new dispute settlement system is subject to lengthy delays and appeals. The country has a low ranking on the Global Rights Index, and forced labour is detected, especially for migrated jobseekers to Gulf countries. The trade union membership rate also fell drastically since 2020, and the trade union density reached approximately 6.1%.

The high population growth and a significant upsurge in life expectancy accelerate the demand for access to decent jobs, as well as mounting pressure on the education sector and social protection. Structural changes have been slow to move out of subsistence agriculture or self-employment to waged jobs. The official unemployment rate at 1.7% in 2020 is blinded by

the "disguised unemployment" (workers are employed but left without work or only partially utilised for their available time) from subsistence farming, and at least one out of three is excluded from the employment statistics as economically inactive. Employment dropped significantly while subsistence agriculture increased in 2020.

Uganda's net migration flow changed dramatically during the 2010s, caused by tight EU migration policies, disruptions in the Middle East's construction sector, and a high influx of refugees. Personal remittances are considerably higher than the regional average and even higher than the foreign direct investments. The country is hailed for its open-door refugee policy, considered one of the most progressive in the world, creating tremendous pressure on public services.

The visible gender inequality is echoed in females' poor education attainment and the gender gap at 38% in earnings. Uganda's schools experienced one of the most extended closed periods globally due to the Covid-19 pandemic, creating educational setbacks for large segments of children with poor access to alternative teaching methods. Child labour increased by 15 percentage points during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. About a third of Ugandan firms offer formal training programmes for their permanent, full-time employees, but they represent a small group of the employment structure. The country also struggles to sync with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Uganda's complex social protection framework sidelined the dominating informal economy, reflected in just around 3% of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit in 2020. In January 2022, the new National Social Security Fund Act created a breakthrough in giving individual informal workers access to the pension scheme, supported by intense social dialogue. Parliament also passed the novel national health insurance scheme in March 2021, but its final approval stood in limbo at the beginning of 2022.

The table below provides an overview of key labour market indicators' status in the Decent Work Agenda framework.

On Page iv the second table presents an overview of the current value and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals' indicators concerning labour market issues.

Status of key labour market indicators in the framework of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) in Uganda

Creating decent jobs	
Policy reforms addressing creation of decent employment.	The poverty eradication strategy has been adopted. Several policies are in progress regarding skills development, minimum wages, and novel social protection schemes.
ILO standard setting on improvement of status of workers from the informal economy.	Tri-partite National Informal Economy Forum and other forums addressing status of informal economy workers are currently not present. Generally, Uganda's labour-related legal framework is weak concerning to formalise the employment structure.
Guaranteeing rights at work	
Growth in trade union members.	NOTU's membership rate increased by 461% from 2010 to 2019 but it plummeted by at least minus 14% from 2019 to 2020 related to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. For 2021, primarily estimates suggests that the membership could be as low as 700,000.
Violations of trade union rights.	Uganda ranks on the Global Rights Index at 4 out of 5+ (5+ is worst) in 2021. *
New labour laws/decrees in 2019 and 2020.	Few approved new labour-related laws were recorded, mainly the Human Rights (Enforcement) Act and the Data Protection and Privacy Act, both from 2019, several rules/orders dealing with the control of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020/21, and the Labour Dispute (Arbitration and settlement) (Amendment) Act 2021 aims to improve the Industrial Court's functionality. The Parliament passed the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2021, but primo 2022, it has not been signed into law by the president, similar to the NSSF amendment bill passed and ascended in 2022.
Partner organisations with minimum 30% women representation in decision-making bodies.	NOTU's women representation in leadership positions and decision-making bodies was 45% in 2021.
Extending social protection	
Percentage of total population covered by Health Social Protection.	Uganda's current health insurance options were employer or community-based schemes and were estimated to cover less than 2% of the population. It was until the national health insurance bill was passed in the parliament in March 2021 but not yet signed. This scheme sets the general structure for the broad national social health insurance scheme (NHIS).
Workers from the informal economy have access to national social security schemes.	The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a slight reduction in NSSF members' contributions, registering 2.1 million members in 2020. Out of these registered members, around 15,000 informal workers contributed to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which equals 0.7% of NSSFs total membership rate. Signing of new NSSF Bill in January 2022 has given legal access to individual informal economy workers to voluntary contributions to the fund and access to their benefits. This new scheme is expected to boost more members from the informal economy workers in the coming years.
Promoting social dialogue	
Trade union density of employers and employees in 2020.	6.1% among total employment; 13% among employees (excluding organised workers from the informal economy).
Cooperation in labour-employer relations.	70 out of 141 countries (1 is best). **
Number of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs).	275 in 2020.
Workers' coverage of Collective Bargaining Agreements to employees.	According to NOTU's register, the number of CBAs dropped by 2.5% from 2019 to 2020; 275 CBAs cover around 583,000 workers in 2020, equalling 15% of employees.
Bi-/tri- partite agreements concluded in recent years.	Bipartite social dialogue between NOTU and FUE has improved notably in joint research to improve the labour market information system, position papers, and others. For example, NOTU and FUE submitted joint position papers to the government on the impact of Covid-19 and minimum wages for the private sector.
* Workers in countries with the rating 4 have reported systematic violations. The government and/or companies are engaged in serious efforts to crush the collective voice of workers, putting fundamental rights under threat. Source: ITUC's Global Global Rights Index, 2021.	
** Based on survey data for employers' view. Source: The Global Competitiveness Report, 2019, 8 th pillar: Labour market efficiency.	
Sources: DTDA, Uganda: Data-collection tool 2019/2020; own calculations on trade union membership growth, trade union density, and ratio of informal workers affiliated to NSSF total membership.	

Status of key Sustainable Development Goals in labour market related issues in Uganda

Indicators	Value	Year	SDG Targets
1.1.1: Working poverty rate (percentage of employed living below US\$1.9 PPP).	35%	2019	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than US\$1.9 a day.
1.3.1: The population effectively covered by a social protection system, including social protection floors.	2.8% *	2020	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
5.5.2: Proportion of women in senior and middle management positions	25%	2017	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.
5.5.2: Proportion of women in managerial positions	33%	2017	
8.2.1: Annual growth rate of output per worker (GDP constant 2011 international \$ in PPP).	2.3%	2019	Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.
8.3.1: Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment.	85%	2017	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, through access to financial services.
8.3.1: Women	87%	2017	
8.3.1: Men	84%	2017	
8.5.1: Average hourly earnings of women and men employees.	US\$0.6	2017	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
8.5.2: Proportion of women in senior and middle management positions (%)	25%	2017	
8.5.2: Unemployment rate (Total, 15+)	10%	2017	
8.5.2: Women, 15+	12%	2017	
8.5.2: Women, 15-24 years	18%	2017	
8.5.2: Men, 15+	8.7%	2017	
8.5.2: Men, 15-24 years	14%	2017	
8.6.1: Proportion of youth (15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training).	30%	2017	By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.
8.7.1: Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in economic activity (Total).	-	-	Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms.
8.7.1: Girls	-	-	
8.7.1: Boys	-	-	
8.1.1: Non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers	-	-	Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
8.8.1: Fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers.	-	-	
8.8.2: Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining)	1.46 **	2017	The exact measurement method and scoring for this indicator needs to be developed.
9.2.2: Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment.	3.9%	2019	Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.
10.4.1: Labour income share as a percent of GDP.	39%	2017	Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

* Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (see more in Table 16). ** Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation (see more in the Ratified ILO Conventions section).

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM); UBS, National Labour Force Survey 2016/17.

COUNTRY MAP



Source: The Nations Online Project.

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ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Uganda Vision 2040 aims to transform the economy dominated by small-holder farmers into a competitive, upper-middle-income country. The current National Development Plan aspired to achieve lower-middle-income status by 2020, but the economic progress did not reach the goal. Government spending has shifted from social sectors such as education and health towards infrastructure.

Economic growth was relatively high during the last two decades but plummeted in 2016 and 2020, respectively. The 2016 economic downturn was due to adverse weather, private sector credit constraints, and poor execution of public projects. Furthermore, regional instability affected some countries that import Uganda's trade, e.g., South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (see more in the Migration sub-section).

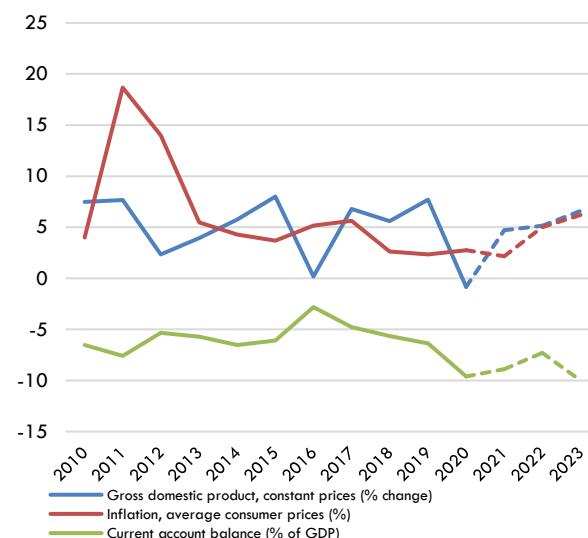
In 2020, the Covid-19 shock caused a sharp contraction of the economy to its slowest pace in three decades linked to a domestic lockdown that lasted more than four months, border closures for all but essential cargo, and the spill-over effects of disruptions to global demand and supply chains. It stuck to deceleration in private consumption, which hit the industrial and service sectors hard, particularly the informal economy. It further fuelled a hike in general government gross debt. The inflation in consumer prices has been controlled below 3% since 2017, which protected workers' income purchasing power. The country's economy is expected to rebound in 2021 (see more details in Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1: Uganda's key economic data, projections, 2019-2023

Values	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
GDP (current, billion, US\$)	38.0bn	38.1bn	43.2bn	47.0bn	49.4bn
GDP per capita (current, US\$)	954	925	1,018	1,075	1,098
Total investment (% of GDP)	26%	28%	27%	29%	33%
Gross national savings (% of GDP)	20%	18%	19%	21%	23%
General government total expenditure (% of GDP)	18%	21%	20%	19%	18%
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	37%	44%	49%	50%	49%

Sources: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, October 2021.

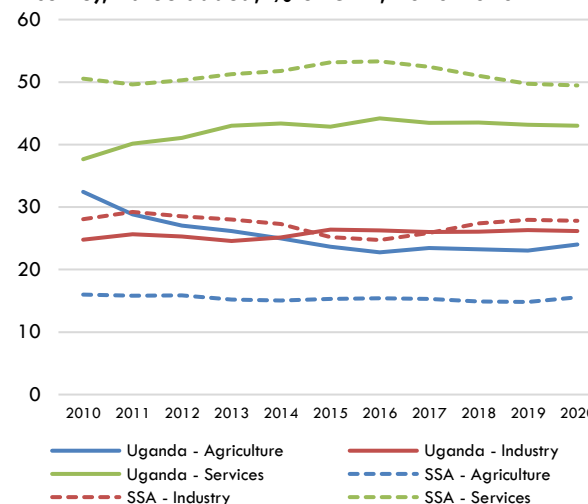
Figure 1: Gross domestic product, inflation, and current account balance trends in Uganda, %, 2010-2023



Sources: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, October 2021.

Figure 2 shows shifts in the economic sectoral value-added during the last decade: There is an upsurge in the service sector, and the agricultural sector is declining. The industry sector stands at flat growth and is in line with the regional average. The agricultural sector's rate continues significantly higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average and vice-versa with the service sector. These changes are linked to developments in the employment structure (see more in the Workforce section).

Figure 2: Aggregate sectoral economic changes in Uganda and sub-Saharan Africa (excluding high income), value added, % of GDP, 2010-2020



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

The country has substantial natural resources, including reserves of oil, deposits of copper, gold, and other minerals. The potential oil bonanza moves slowly. The economic expansion is challenged by one of the lowest electrification rates in Africa - only 22% of Ugandans have access to electricity, dropping to 10% in rural areas.

The informal economy is widespread, haunted by corruption with a significant obstacle to good governance. Business regulations continue somewhat cumbersome: The Doing Business Index ranked Uganda as 116 out of 190 countries (1st is best) in 2020. Out of ten qualities, the country's best ranking was enforcing contracts (77) and getting credit (80). Several of the scales were very poor, e.g., starting a business (169), getting electricity (168), and registering property (135). See more details in Appendix Table 22.

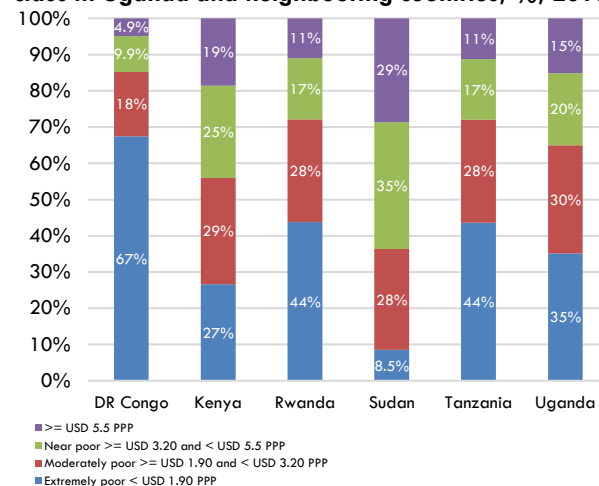
The inflow of foreign direct investments (FDIs) fell by one percentage point from the 2000s to 3.1% of GDP on average during the 2010s. It continues significantly higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 2.3% on average from 2010 to 2020. During the last decade, gross fixed capital formation in Uganda grew by four percentage points, reaching 25% of GDP, signalling a rising investment in more productive aspects than consumption. It further suggests being higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 21% of GDP during the 2010s.

The country's economy made meagre progress in pro-poor growth hindered by uncontrolled population growth. For example, inequality in the distribution of family income dropped just from 45 in 2002 to 43 in 2016 (i.e., 0 represents perfect equality, while a Gini-index of 100 represents high inequality).¹ The Human Development Index (HDI) ranks the country as low human development, at 159 out of 189 countries (1 is best) in 2019, taking two steps up from 161 in 2014.²

Among Uganda's employed population, estimations of the aggregated working poor (<US\$3.1 per day) fell from just 72% in 2008 to 65% in 2019. The near-poor workers grew from 16% to 20% and

the middle-class group from 12% to 15% in the same period. The share of the working poor was lower than DR Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania but higher than Kenya (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Projections of employment by economic class in Uganda and neighbouring countries, %, 2019



Note: Data exclude the economically inactive population, covering 31% of the population (aged 15+) (see more in the Unemployment sub-section). The value is measured at Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).
Sources: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Uganda's broader poverty headcount ratio at the national poverty line fell significantly from 39% in 2002 to 20% in 2012 but flattened during the 2010s reaching 20% in 2019. The economic downturn in the 2016/17 drought pushed a temporary rise in poverty. Generally, workers did not benefit from real minimum wage hikes and were challenged by mounting high out-of-pocket expenses on healthcare. Poverty has been primarily a rural phenomenon in Uganda, but the mounting urbanisation with insufficient formal job creation also backed poverty in urban zones. The economic shock in 2020 pressed household incomes to fall when firms closed, and economic activities were lost, particularly in the urban informal economy; employment dropped significantly while subsistence agriculture increased. According to the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020, Covid-19 forced at least 300,000 Ugandans into poverty: Just before Covid-19 outbreak, the poverty rate was down to 19%, but after Covid-19, it rose to 22%, reaching around 8.3 million poor people.³

Free Zones

In Uganda, there were long-standing interests in establishing special economic zones (SEZs). The progress was delayed by lack of clarity, despite the drafted Special Economic Zones Bill in 2002. As a latecomer, the Free Zone Act was finally approved in 2014. This law includes the establishment of the Uganda Free Zones Authority (UFZA).

UFZA's five-year Strategic Plan II focuses on employment creation, export markets' diversification and expansion to foster increased export earnings, promotion, and retention of private sector investments in free zones to catalyse industrialisation strategy and strengthen the legal, governance and institutional framework of the Authority.

In Financial Year 2019/20, UFZA registered an increase in the total number of private Free Zones, reaching 22 compared to the 16 Free Zones recorded in the FY2018/19. There are three licensed operators in the Free Zones scheme. It brings the total number of licensed Free Zones Developers and Operators to 25. In addition, the exports from Free Zones in FY2019/20 grew by 141% to US\$154 million from US\$64 million recorded in FY2018/19. The growth was driven by increased demand for processed agricultural and high-value mineral products in the international market. Total employment in Free Zones stands at an estimated 8,611 jobs, equalled 0.2% of employees; an increase from 8,438 jobs in FY2018/19 and 7,456 jobs generated in FY2017/18.⁴ Uganda, like other global economies, is battling a severe crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some of the key benefits from the FZs/SEZs are i) exemption from taxes and duties on all Export Processing Zone imported inputs that are for the exclusive use in the development and production output of the business enterprise (raw materials, plant and machinery, spare parts and intermediate goods); ii) exemption from all taxes, levies and rates on exports from the Free Zones; iii) 10-year tax holiday for a Developer of Free Zone whose

investment capital is at least US\$50 million; iv) 10-year tax holiday for an Operator in a Free Zone whose investment capital is at least US\$ 10 million (foreigners) or US\$2 million (EAC); v) exemption from tax on plant and machinery used in the Free Zones for five years and one day upon disposal; vi) nil excise duty on construction materials for the development of free zones by a developer US\$50 million (Foreigners) and US\$10 million (EAC).⁵

One of the challenges of the FZs in Uganda has been its landlocked situation. The government has planned to develop a railway linking East Africa up to Ethiopia through South Sudan. It plans to expand the Entebbe Airport to become a regional and continental hub. A shortage of serviced industrial land created constraints for expanding the manufacturing and export sectors. For example, establishing locations within Kampala are fully occupied and have little space for development.

East African Community (EAC) partner states negotiated to reach a consensus on the access threshold in Export Processing Zones (EPZs)/SEZ products to the regional market. It failed in June 2018. Kenya pushed to remove restrictions on investors, allowing them to sell more products to the regional market. However, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi stayed firm on their long-standing positions on the EPZ market access threshold. EPZ/SEZ producers can sell 20% of their total annual production within the EAC. Uganda is also seeking further consultations and analysis to craft a national position.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

A series of major labour-related law reforms were hectic in the 2000s and the beginning of the 2010s. The purpose was to fill in gaps in legislation and improve the implementation and compliance. The government adopted a set of regulations in labour and employment supported by the National Employment Policy in 2011. In 2017, a new wave of reforms was initiated, leading to amendment draft bills geared to improve further the status of the labour market, especially job creation and decent work. Some of the ongoing bills were the

Social Impact Assessment and Accountability Bill, the National Council for Disability Amendment Bill, the Community Mobilisation and Empowerment Bill, the Investment Code Amendment Bill, and the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Amendment Bill. The bills were set in limbo and have not yet been signed. An overview of central laws and policies to the labour market conditions and a list of approved labour-related legislation in Uganda from 2014 to 2022 (January) is available in Appendix Table 18 and Table 19.

Several rules/orders are dealing with the control of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The few approved new labour-related laws were recorded in recent years, mainly the Human Rights (Enforcement) Act and the Data Protection and Privacy Act, both from 2019. In addition, the National Social Security Fund – NSSF (Amendment) Act was signed in January 2022.

The status of central labour-related laws is summarised below.

Constitution

Uganda's constitution of 1995 listed the freedom of association, the right to work under safe and healthy conditions, form and join unions, collective bargaining and representation, equal payment for equal work. An act to amend the constitution by articles 259 and 262 in 2015 ignored many groups' views for constitutional reforms. In July 2016, the government initiated new plans for a complete overhaul of the constitution. Mounting pressure for the constitutional reform linked to various proposals in 2018 led to establishing a Constitutional Review Commission. This commission has so far not reached conclusions.

Employment Act

The Employment Act from 2006 establishes fundamental rights at work along with the Labour Advisory Board and the Labour Inspectorate. The act regulates key labour market issues, such as employment relationships, wages, leave, working hours, and termination of employment. The law is considered progressive and improved Uganda's compliance with international standards: it allows

workers to form and join independent unions, except for a category of government employees, including police, army, and management-level officials. However, the law does not provide the right to collective bargaining in the public service sector. In addition, domestic and agricultural workers, and generally those in the informal economy, are excluded from the act.⁶

Trade Union Act

The Trade Union Act was enacted in 2006. The law allows unions to conduct activities without interference, prohibits antiunion discrimination by an employer, and provides for reinstatement of workers dismissed for union activity. The act also empowers the minister of labour to refer disputes to the Industrial Court when one or both parties to a dispute refuse to comply with the report's recommendations issued by a board of inquiry. Compulsory arbitration is acceptable only for workers in "essential services" and public employees engaged in the administration of the state. Albeit the Act outlines workers' right to strike, the freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, several observations are registered (see below).

Labour Disputes Act

The Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Act of 2006 establishes the referral of non-resolved disputes to compulsory arbitration by or at the request of any party. Compulsory arbitration may only be imposed in the case of disputes in the public service involving public servants engaged in the state's administration and "essential services" or in the case of an acute national crisis. Consultations with the social partners have been ongoing concerning amendments to several provisions.

National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Act

The National Social Security Fund Act of 1985 was criticised for years. Social dialogue and lobbying put pressure on a new bill at the beginning of the 2020s, creating intensifying anxiety among stakeholders for a resolution – the bill passed by the parliament in November 2021 after tense negotiation from social partners. The president did not initially sign the bill, but consultations with the

trade union movement finally led it to be signed into law on January 4, 2022. Since just around 3% of the population has pension savings, the new law is considered a breakthrough granting NSSF access to all formal and informal workers (see more in the Social Protection section).

Observations on labour legislation

Ugandan workers face several challenges in exercising their rights. According to employers' view, several business regulations are rigid as well as the labour market's flexibility, meritocracy and incentivisation are especially weak concerning active labour market policies, the ratio of wage and salaried female workers to male workers, not to mention pay and productivity (see Table 4 ahead). On the workers' side, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) registers a wide range of observations regarding the labour legislation bond with international standards of the rights to organise, the rights to collective bargaining, and the rights to strike. Some of the main observations are summarised below:⁷

- Barriers to establishing organisations: formalities or requirements have excessively delayed or substantially impaired the free establishment of organisations.
- Restrictions on the right to elect representatives and self-administer in complete freedom.
- Administrative authorities' power to unilaterally dissolve, suspend or de-register trade union organisations.
- A foreigner shall not be a member of the executive committee of a trade union.
- Compulsory conciliation and/or binding arbitration procedure in the event of disputes during collective bargaining, other than in essential services.
- Compulsory recourse to arbitration, or too long and complex conciliation and mediation procedures prior to strike actions.
- An absence of an independent body responsible for declaring a strike is legal or not.

- Excessive civil or penal sanctions for workers and unions involved in non-authorised strike actions.

Reports noted that Uganda's government did not effectively enforce the law linked to insufficient funds to hire, train, and equip labour inspectors to enforce labour laws effectively. Employers who violated a worker's right to form and join a trade union or bargain collectively faced penalties that were not commensurate with similar violations.⁸

Apart from these legal restrictions, the coverage of labour-related laws is haunted by the widespread informal economy. Both employers and workers often use loopholes in business and labour regulations due to lack of awareness or incentives. Equally important, the dominance of informal micro and small enterprises complicates the application of collective bargaining and unionism (see more in the Trade Union sub-section).

Ratified ILO Conventions

International principles and rights at work are enumerated in the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) conventions. Uganda ratified 31 conventions: 26 are in force, one has been denounced, and four instruments abrogated.⁹ The latest ratified conventions are the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (C111), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (C87), and the Equal Remuneration Convention (C100), all from June 2005.

Appendix Table 20 outlines that Uganda ratified all eight fundamental conventions and three out of four Governance Conventions, missing the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention (C129). The country also ratified 20 Technical Conventions, and seven are Up-To-Date and actively promoted.

In 2019/20, the independent ILO body, known as the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), listed a wide range of observations and direct requests for 23 conventions. Regarding the Freedom of

Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (C087), CEACR requested Uganda's government to amend or repeal several provisions of the Labour Unions Act of 2006. It includes overly lengthy registration procedures, which constitute severe obstacles to establishing organisations; in addition, the Registrar may only remove or suspend trade union officers after the conclusion of the judicial proceedings and only for reasons in line with the principle cited above.

Concerning the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (C098), CEACR further observed that trade union federations do not have the right to engage in collective bargaining. The committee recalled that the rights to collective bargaining should also be granted to federations and confederations of trade unions. The committee noted that Uganda's government had initiated the process to review the Labour Unions Act.

The Sustainable Development Goal indicator 8.8.2 seeks to measure the level of national compliance with fundamental labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining (FACB)). Based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, Uganda ranks at 1.46 in 2017 (0 out of 10; 0 is best). Compared to neighbouring countries where data are available, Uganda's ranking is significantly better than DR Congo (3.34) and just slightly better than Tanzania (1.77) (see more details in Table 2).

Table 2: Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) among Uganda and neighbouring countries, 2017

Country	Value
DR Congo	3.34
Tanzania	1.77
Uganda	1.46

Note: The value has a range from 0 to 10, with 0 being the best possible score (indicating higher levels of compliance with FACB rights) and 10 the worst (indicating lower levels of compliance with FACB rights based on ILO textual sources and national legislation).

Sources: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Trade Agreements

Uganda is a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and signed the Trade

Facilitation Agreement (TFA) contains provisions for expediting the movement, release, and clearance of goods, including goods in transit.

Two Regional Trade Agreements (RTA) are registered that influence Uganda's labour market. First, the East African Community (EAC) free trade agreement from 1999 contains a labour provision for employment and working conditions. Second, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) agreement ratified by Uganda in 2012 extends to the collaboration on employment conditions and labour law.¹⁰ Uganda also signed the African Union Abuja Treaty, establishing the African Economic Community. Besides, African economies initiated an ambitious regional integration programme in the form of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Uganda ratified this latter agreement in November 2018. The AfCFTA is the world's second-largest trade area (after the WTO) in member countries.

Back in 2010, the members of the EAC agreed to establish a full, common market with free movement for workers, goods, services, and capital. Freedom of association and collective bargaining is enshrined in the EAC common market in the sense that an EAC migrant worker has the same rights as a national citizen.¹¹ The free movement of labour within the EAC opens questions of how to achieve equal opportunities and equal social labour rights for migrant workers, for example, if workers can bring pensions with them across borders. The free labour movement is also a source of concern in some EAC countries, as the states' workforces have differences in productivity and educational level. However, the actual implementation of the economic integration has slowed down the last few years, especially regarding lifting barriers to trade and the free labour movement. Although standard tariffs are increasingly abolished, trade is still challenged by non-tariff barriers and corruption.

The Eastern Africa trade union movement aims to safeguard workers' interests in the EAC, including ensuring that ILO standards are upheld, member states' labour policies are harmonised, the tripartite model is institutionalised, and the free movement of

labour is promoted. The group reached observer status in the EAC in 2009, and along with employers' organisations, they participate in ministerial summits, sectoral summits, and other summits involving labour market issues. The Social Agenda is moving slowly in the EAC.

Studies argue that the measures of labour conditions (i.e., mean real monthly earnings, mean weekly work hours per employee, fatal occupational injury rate, and the number of the ILO's Fundamental Conventions ratified) find no evidence for possible pro-labour-condition effects of Regional Trade Agreements (RTA) labour clauses overall.¹²

Uganda has been eligible for the United States' African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), duty-free and quota-free access for various products, including selected agricultural and textile products, and Generalised System of Preferences trade benefits but has not yet reached an agreement. Uganda has been challenged by AGOA provisions for the apparel sector with high transportation and logistical costs, the absence of a practical policy framework, weak government commitment, lack of industry-specific government support, and the limited availability of quality raw materials.¹³ In 2018, the U.S. Government argued that the AGOA was unfairly blocking U.S. exports. To continue participation in this favourable trade system, Uganda needed to eliminate barriers to imports of U.S. apparel. Uganda accepted this encounter and initiated a new plan to increase its exports through the AGOA in the next five years.

The negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union and EAC were concluded in October 2014 but has not yet been signed and ratified by Uganda.¹⁴ Under the Everything but Arms initiative of the European Union, Uganda is eligible for preferences.

SOCIAL PARTNERS

Social partners are central to promote the realisation of core labour rights and social justice for workers by protecting freedom of association

and collective bargaining in bi- and tripartite functions. These partners usually represent government institutions, trade unions, and employers' organisations.

Government

Uganda's government functions with 19 ministries.¹⁵ The most labour-related ministries are summaries below.

Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) promotes skills development and labour productivity while promoting gender equality, labour administration, social protection, and transformation of communities. The ministry is the lead agency for the Social Development Sector (SDS). It is charged with developing and implementing the Social Development Investment Plan (SDIP) with the mandate to empower communities to harness their potential through cultural growth, skills development, and Labour productivity for sustainable and gender-responsive development.

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) promotes trade and industry and cooperatives for the country's development. MTIC focuses on expanding and diversifying business, cooperatives, environmentally sustainable industrialisation, appropriate technology, conservation, and preserving other tradable national products.

Ministry of Health (MH) promotes a healthy and productive life for the population. The ministry aims to have the highest possible health services to all people approached by overseeing health services delivery, promotion, and prevention, curative, palliative, and rehabilitative services at all levels. Ministry of Health is engaged in the monitoring and providing clinical support functions, regulatory functions and research activities related to health.

Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) promotes quality education and sports services in the country. MES is charged with Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET), and Sports for enhancing citizens'

wellness and productivity. The ministry has affiliated with several institutions like Education Service Commission (ESC), Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB), Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board (UBTEB), Uganda Allied Health Examination Board, Uganda Nurses and Midwives Examination Board, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), and National Council of Sports.

Ministry of Public Service (MPS) provides strategic and managerial leadership on all human resources matters in Uganda's Public Service. The ministry focuses on enabling policies, systems, and structures, and it further affiliates institutions to achieve its mission, e.g., Public Service Commission (PSC) and Civil Service College. The Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation (MoSTI) was created in June 2016 to promote science, technology, and innovation (STI) as a key driver for economic development.

Trade unions

The development of trade unions in Uganda is traced back to the early 1930s. Since then, trade unions have evolved from the old style of unionism of 'craft unions' to more industrial and general workers unions. Table 3 below illustrates the status of trade unions in Uganda. The National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) and the Central Organization of Free Trade Unions (COFTU) represented about 1.0 million members in 2020 with a share of 90% from NOTU. Estimations suggested the trade union density at 6.1% of total employment in 2020; while deducting organised workers from the informal economy, it reached 13% of employees (i.e., those who get a basic remuneration not directly dependent on the employer's revenue).

Table 3: Status of trade unions in Uganda, 2020

Indicator	Value
Number of trade unions	42
Dues' scope	1-3% of wage
Total trade unions members	1,027,799
Members paying dues	614,000
Trade union density (employment)	6.1%
Trade union density (employees)	13% *
Members of organised workers from the informal economy (ATGWU/UMAEU)	490,000

* This share excludes organised workers from the informal economy from ATGWU and UMAEU (see more in Appendix Table 21).

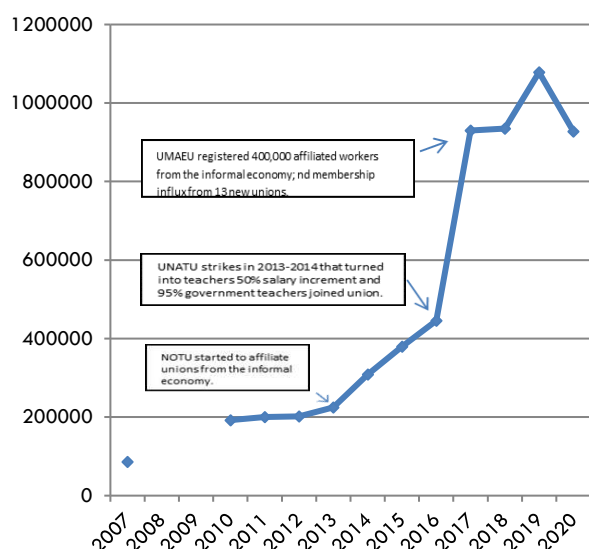
Source: NOTU and own calculation on trade union growth and density correlated with ILO's KILM imputed observations.

Concerning dues-paying members, the Manpower Survey 2016/17 noted a higher proportion of trade union density in the public sector (14%) than in the private sector (3%). Some of the main reasons for the relatively low trade union density links to a lack of awareness of unionism (almost seven out of ten) and a large majority of workers in the private sector operating in informal micro-and small enterprises.¹⁶

In 2020, NOTU represented 32 trade unions, 13 of them de-affiliated from COFTU. In June 2021, COFTU had 12 affiliated unions (see Appendix Table 21). Since most trade unions represent public workers affiliated with NOTU has improved this organisation's collective bargaining power among public employers. NOTU also received members from several independent unions.

Figure 4 reveals that NOTU's membership rate increased by 461% from 2010 to 2019, mainly due to the influx of organised workers from the informal economy, resulting from strikes in 2013/14, and affiliated unions from COFTU in 2018. In contrast, the membership rate plummeted by at least minus 14% from 2019 to 2020 related to the economic and labour market impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. NOTU projects it could further reduce in 2021 in the aftermath of the situation.

Figure 4: NOTU's membership growth, 2007-2020



Source: NOTU register and projection.

Regarding the high entry of informal organised workers in the trade union movement, around 98,000 were registered by the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (ATGWU) in 2020. A new high inflow of organised informal workers to NOTU was recorded in 2017, peaking with 400,000 members in the *Uganda Markets and Allied Employees Union* (UMAEU). Around 65% of UMAEU members are women.

NOTU and COFTU work together when lobbying for matters of common interest. Both federations jointly have secured a 50% representation in the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Board after the recent High Court ruling (see more in the Social Protection section). NOTU is affiliated with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

NOTU's constitution in 2018 agreed with four public unions and one from a private-sector union to have an immediate check-off from the source. The collection of dues from informal affiliated members is a challenge. This group prefers to pay their contributions to their unions/associations daily since their income flow is uncertain and is challenging to collect monthly. Most of these informal workers often move from one place to another, and this situation complicates dues collectors from unions and NOTU. On the positive side, the Kampala Metropolitan Boda Boda Entrepreneurs (KAMBE), which covered 48,000 cyclists in 2018, used an

application like other digital platforms: Like target income generation, the association further applied service delivery provisions. In 2020, Kampala City Council Authority planned to phase out informal transport (Boda Boda and commuter taxis). It led to the transport union initiating discussions with the government, and so far, an information-sharing meeting was held with the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Women at NOTU's leadership positions and decision-making bodies represented 45% in 2021.¹⁷ NOTU elected disability representatives and representatives for informal workers to the Executive Board. In addition, around 15% of leadership positions and decision-making bodies are occupied by youth below 30 years. Nevertheless, most affiliated trade unions are still dominated by men. NOTU collaborates with the Trade Union Confederation for the East African Community (EATUC) to promote gender equality.¹⁸

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic impact in 2020, no social activities were allowed, such as social gatherings. Instead, communication was through radio and TV talk shows and social media. Some unions like the Uganda Hotels, Food, Tourism and Allied Workers Union (UHFTAWU) negotiated Covid-19 agreements to grant workers leave without pay or give some workers half pay.

Employers' Organisations

Estimations suggested that employers represented 4.3% of the total employment in Uganda in 2020, significantly higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 1.6% (see more in Figure 6 ahead).

The Global Competitiveness Index provides Uganda employers' views on various aspects, including labour market efficiency. This last pillar is elaborated upon surveys among employers and other statistical data. Uganda ranks 69th out of 141 countries (1st is the best) in the mentioned pillar. Out of twelve indicators, the best rankings are flexibility of wage determination (8), ease of hiring foreign labour (18), and Labour tax rate (36). The worst rankings are active labour market

policies (105), the ratio of wage and salaried female workers (104), and the pay and productivity (100) (see more details in Table 4.

Table 4: Labour market efficiency in Uganda, 2019

Indicator	Rank
Total	69
Redundancy costs (weeks of salary) **	21
Hiring and firing practices *	29
Cooperation in labour-employer relations *	70
Flexibility of wage determination *	8
Active labour market policies *	105
Workers' rights *	77
Ease of hiring foreign labour *	18
Internal labour mobility *	69
Reliance on professional management *	77
Pay and productivity *	100
Ratio of wage and salaried female workers to male workers **	104
Labour tax rate **	36

* Survey data. ** Ranked by per cent Imputed observations. Note: Rank from 1 to 141 (1 is highest).

Source: The Global Competitiveness Report, 2019, 8th pillar: Labour market efficiency.

The status of the leading employers' organisations is summarised below.

Uganda's leading employers' organisation is the Federation of Ugandan Employers (FUE), founded in 1958 and registered in 1960.¹⁹ The organisation is represented in bi/tripartite organs. FUE is affiliated with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the Business Africa and East African Employers Organization (EAEO). It is further an officially recognised body representing Ugandan Employers at the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Annual Labour Conference.

FUE's mission is to enhance members' competitiveness through policy advocacy, promoting best human resource practices, and providing business development services. The organisation aims to be a leading organisation that serves employers' interests and needs. It has 354 enterprise members and 18 sectorial employers' organisation members. FUE is also present in handling industrial relations and providing (mainly legal) services to its members. FUE found Covid-19

was influencing change in organisations and promoted a master class series with insights to aid employment practices amidst the pandemic.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Social dialogue encompasses all types of negotiation, consultation, or exchange of information between representatives of social partners on common interest issues relating to economic and social policy. It can be informal or institutionalised, and often it is a combination of the two. It can take place at the national, regional or enterprise level.²⁰

Uganda has ratified ILO's Tripartite Consultation Convention (C144) but not the Collective Bargaining Convention (C154). The social dialogue's institutional framework is entangled in the National Employment Policy for Uganda and the National Tripartite Charter.

The National Tripartite Charter on Labour Relations was signed between the government, FUE and trade union representatives from NOTU and COFTU in May 2013. The charter spells out the working relations between the involved parties. It holds clauses on "one workplace, one union", addressing demarcation lines between trade unions, thereby regulating relations between NOTU and COFTU. There was also a bi-partite charter on industrial relations with the trade union movement and FUE, addressing the private sector. According to the government, the charter is operational but without detailed information.

The government does not protect the constitutionally guaranteed rights to collective bargaining in practice. This is partly due to a lack of financial and human resources and restrictions on the principle of free and voluntary bargaining, i.e., compulsory conciliation and binding arbitration procedure in the event of disputes during collective bargaining, other than in essential services. Some employers even ignore the legal requirements to enter into collective bargaining agreements with registered unions.²¹ A large majority of the workforce

operates in the informal economy that is known as not being covered by labour market regulations. Overall, bipartite social dialogue between NOTU and FUE has improved notably during the last decade in joint research areas to improve the labour market information system and position papers, among others. For example, NOTU and FUE submitted a joint position paper to the government on the impact of Covid-19 and minimum wages for the private sector. It is also illustrated in Table 4 above on labour market efficiency concerning cooperation in labour-employer relations at the medium level. Although bi-partite dispute resolution systems are in their initial stages, the improved social dialogue punctured a mounting pressure of launching a major strike planned by trade unions in the public sector.²² A massive campaign in 2018 to mobilise the trade union affiliates to join a strike if the government refused to enhance salaries in the public sector. However, social dialogue helped the parties to reach a significant new collective bargaining agreement (CBA), covering public employees that led to a wage hike of 225% during the following five years. Bringing CBA's to the national level is considered a breakthrough in Uganda's social dialogue.

Generally, Ugandan trade unions operate with CBAs at the enterprise level (see Appendix Table 21). NOTU registered a massive increase of CBAs from 76 in 2016, peaked at 282 in 2017, but fell to 275 since 2018. Only one CBA is at the national level. Besides, NOTU's registered CBAs upsurge was mainly due to 13 affiliated unions in 2017, linked to 206 registered CBAs. NOTU listed CBAs' number dropped by 2.5% from 2019 to 2020; 275 CBAs cover around 583,000 employees in 2020, equalling 15% of employees. CBAs operate with an annual increase in wages per CBAs between 0-15%.²³

Table 5: Status of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in Uganda, 2020

Type	Value
Number of CBAs	275
CBAs coverage	582,987
Ratio of CBAs coverage to employees	15 %

Source: NOTU and own calculation on CBAs' ratio based on employment estimations from ILO's ILOSTAT.

Research of CBAs from eleven developing countries, including eight from Africa, counting Uganda, showed that the country's surveyed CBAs mostly enclosed wage clauses, and three out of four with sickness and disability clauses, like health/medical assistance clause. Only a few with pay scale or wages tied to skills, not to mention employer contributions to disability fund is limited, and none with unemployment fund. Concerning clauses on working hours coverage are significantly below Kenya's and Tanzania's scopes. In Uganda, CBAs' paid leave clauses were introduced to four out of ten CBAs; down to one out of three regarding paid maternity leave clause, and none had childcare clause.²⁴

Most of the non-wage benefits that the unions have secured in CBAs have primarily been a replica of what is already provided for in the labour laws.²⁵ The absence of recognition of CBA has been distinguished and brought to the Industrial Court. As an example, in a case from the Uganda Scientific Researchers and Allied Workers Union as a claimant against the National Bureau of Standards (an autonomous body of the government), the Court did not accept that the government recognises a labour union that is later denied by a branch/body of the same government.²⁶

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic challenged workers welfare. Many met violations of workers' rights associated with laid-off without notice, reduction of salaries without consent and unpaid leave. Again, some employers were not remitting workers contributions to NSSF, sexual harassment has been reported at some workplaces, and some employers were not providing PPEs to their workers. This situation has prompted NOTU/Affiliates and FUE's intervention to settle some of the issues at the bipartite level.

Central tripartite institutions

Numerous consultation bodies are set to promote social dialogue in Uganda and are summarised below.

Labour Advisory Board (LAB)

After almost a decade without a tripartite advisory body, LAB was inaugurated in 2011. The board advises the Minister of Labour on a wide range of matters: relating to employment and industrial relations, ILO matters, vocational guidance and training, implementation of Child Labour Policy, HIV and AIDS at Work Policy and the National Employment Policy, regulation of employment agencies and bureaus, and overseeing of the dispute resolution process. The institution consists of 13 members, of whom the employers' and trade union organisations have two representatives each, and six ministries are represented.

This institution operates with some weaknesses. Employers and trade unions are both concerned with inefficient and under-staffed labour inspection services, but this board does not regularly address labour inspection issues.²⁷

Minimum Wage Advisory Board

The existence of a minimum wage in Uganda dates to the 1930s, when the first Minimum Wages Board was established. The minimum wage continued to be routinely adjusted until 1984, when it reached 6,000 Ugandan shillings per month. A revision of the minimum wage stalled until the beginning of the 2010s, debates surged to fix the minimum wage system. The government formed a body in 2016 that studied the economic relationship between minimum wages, wage distribution, and hours worked. It is worth mentioning that NOTU and FUE jointly provide data collections, inputs to the government to fix minimum wages in the private sector, and a joint position papers on minimum wage. Parliament has passed a bill to fix the minimum wage system in 2017 and established a minimum wages board to regulate wages in the private sector in 2019 (see more in the Working Conditions section). The board met four times in 2020. However, a new minimum wage continues not signed.

Public Service Negotiation and Consultation Council (PSNCC)

This institution represents public service negotiating, consultative and disputes settlement machinery

between the government as the employer and public service labour unions. It consists of a chairperson and at least two members drawn from each public service union. The Council is required to meet at least twice a year with the option to convene an emergency meeting. PSNCC recorded four joint sessions in 2020.²⁸

This institution aims to create consultative committees in each department or other unit or subdivision of government and each local government. These councils offer conciliation services in labour disputes, establish a Public Service Tribunal to arbitrate labour disputes, secure harmonious labour relations in the public service, and provide for other related matters.

National Social Security Fund

The National Social Security Fund (NSSF Uganda) is a quasi-government agency responsible for collecting, safekeeping, responsible investment, and distributing retirement funds from employees of the private sector in Uganda who the Government Retirement Scheme does not cover. Participation for both employers and employees is compulsory. NSSF organised five joint sessions in 2020.

Other bi-/tripartite institutions:

- National Tripartite Council.
- Wages Councils.
- Medical Arbitration Board.
- Occupational Safety and Health Board.

Dispute settlement

Dispute settlement is initially attempted to be resolved by conciliation, and whether agreed procedures for settling disputes between the parties have been used. Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is a lawsuit process with a neutral third party as a mediator to settle the case; for example, a labour officer shall seek to resolve the matter in the first instance by mediation and conciliation. NOTU and FUE have established joint bipartite national and regional ADR committees, and 1,865 dispute resolution meetings were conducted in 2020.

If mediation and conciliation fail, cases can reach the industrial Court of Uganda. This particularly court was established under the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Act of 2006. The court's jurisdiction is a referral. Its functions are to arbitrate labour disputes referred to it under the Act, adjudicate questions of law arising from references to it by any other law, and dispose of the labour disputes without undue delay. However, it was not until 2014 that this court became operational and appointed six judges to handle labour disputes.

The Industrial Court is mandated to adjudicate and arbitrate labour matters in the court. This institution operates with 11 panellists with representation by trade unions, employers' and appointed from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD).

Labour dispute claims are usually filed before the high court and later transferred to the industrial court. Non-functionality of the court during the beginning of the 2010s created a large pile-up of disputes: the court inherited 500 labour disputes at its revival in 2014, and by 2017 the cases had risen to 2,135, of which the court has resolved only 515.²⁹ The Industrial Court registered 134 case judgements from 2015 to 2019.³⁰ Besides, NOTU reported that at least 1,800 dispute resolution meetings were conducted: 65 at the national level, >300 at the regional level, and 1,500 at the workplace level.³¹

Administrative and judicial procedures continue subject to lengthy delays and appeals.³² The court still faces the burden of lawyers who are not sufficiently knowledgeable about representing clients in industrial court matters. In 2018, the Industrial Court instituted stringent guidelines for lawyers that represent clients involved in labour disputes.

Judges and magistrates decided to lay down their function on July 22, 2017, if the government failed to increase their salaries within 30 days on top of giving them security, medical and housing allowances. According to the Industrial Court

website, the ongoing judges' and magistrate's strike started on August 27, 2017, affecting litigants across the entire country.

It is worthwhile to mention that ILO's CEACR raised comments to the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Act dealing where there are any arrangements by conciliation or arbitration in a trade or industry between the parties, the Labour Officer shall not refer the matter to the Industrial Court but shall ensure that the parties follow the procedures for settling the dispute laid out in the conciliation or arbitration agreement, which apply to the dispute. The imposition of arbitration with compulsory effects, either directly under the law, or by administrative decision or at the initiative of one of the parties, in cases where the parties have not reached an agreement or following a certain number of days of a strike, is one of the most radical forms of intervention by the authorities in collective bargaining.

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Uganda ranks at 4 out of 5+ (5+ is worst) on the Global Rights Index in 2021. Workers in countries with a rating of 4 have reported "systematic violations:" The government and/or companies are engaged in serious efforts to crush the collective voice of workers, putting fundamental rights under threat.³³

The government generally does not protect the constitutionally guaranteed rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Anti-union discrimination occurred, and labour activists accused several private companies of deterring employees from joining unions. NOTU reported an increase in anti-union activities during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown period in 2020.³⁴

Uganda has no active Freedom of Association cases with ILO. In recent years, ITUC listed just one case in Uganda dealing with Makerere lecturers irregularly fired for trade union activities in 2019. The National Workers representatives argued that the representatives were suspended not because of their poor performance in terms of service delivery

but for standing for workers' rights in terms of salary enhancement and issues of irregularities at the University. The joint Makerere University Staff Association called for a university-wide staff strike demanding the reinstatement of their leaders. Members of parliament representing workers have said they will petition the speaker over the suspension of the Makerere workers, as well as to lay strategies on how to challenge the irregularities at Makerere University.³⁵

Uganda has ratified ILO's Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (C105) but not the Domestic Workers Convention (C189). By law, forced or compulsory labour is prohibited, including children, but does not prohibit prison labour. The government did not effectively enforce the law in practice. It has been observed that many citizens working overseas, particularly in the Gulf States, became victims of forced labour. Civil society organisations reported that traffickers and legitimate recruitment companies continued to send mainly women jobseekers to Gulf countries where many employers treated workers as indentured servants, withheld pay, and subjected them to other harsh conditions. The closure of airports as part of the government's Covid-19 countermeasures resulted in a reduction in reporting on transnational trafficking cases, although local NGOs said that trafficking victims remained stranded abroad.³⁶

The Global Slavery Index ranks Uganda as 33 out of 167 countries (1 is worst) with an estimated prevalence at 7.6 victims per 1,000 population in 2018.³⁷

WORKING CONDITIONS

The minimum wage was last updated in 1984 and set at Ugandan shillings (UGX) 6,000 (US\$1.6), and it has not been revised afterwards and outdated. Back in 2015, the Minimum Wage Advisory Board recommended to assess the feasibility of a minimum wage, and the government finally proposed a new monthly minimum wage for employees of Ugandan shillings (UGX) 130,000 (US\$36) in July 2017. Social dialogue between NOTU and FUE produced a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2018 on

a minimum wage of four agreed sectors (agriculture, hotels, construction, and manufacturing) that was submitted to the government to address the gaps in the current Minimum Wage Advisory Board Act. It has been considered a significant breakthrough because it is the first time in Uganda, these stakeholders jointly have provided evidence-based input to the government. In February 2019, the parliament approved the proposed minimum wage determination mechanism for reviewing the minimum wage per sector. At the beginning of 2022, the president had still not signed the bill.

The standard family living wages per month (two parents + 5.7 children, 1.7 workings), ranges from UGX 1,236,300 (US\$334) to UGX 1,778,200 (US\$480).³⁸ On the positive side, survey data illustrate that the average hourly earnings of employees have increased significantly by 61% from 2012 to 2017, suggesting that the country takes steps towards reaching this specific SDG indicator (see also SDG table, Indicator 8.5.1, Page iv). However, the employees' segment is a small workforce group. Most workers operate in the informal economy haunted by not applying the labour and business regulations (see more in Table 6 and the Informal Economy sub-section).

Table 6: Status of wages and minimum wages in Uganda, Monthly

	Current Ugandan Shilling	Current US\$
Earned a median cash wage (2018/19)	200,000	54
Men	240,000	65
Women	150,000	40
Minimum wage (1984-current)	6,000	1.6
Minimum wage (proposed)	130,000	36

Sources: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, National Labour Force Survey 2018/19.

The National Labour Force Survey 2018/19 revealed persons employed in the public sector earned more than twice those in the private sector. Monthly earnings gaps were likewise stark among informal workers compared to formal employment, the latter receiving more than twice than the former. The abundance of unskilled labour and low levels

of human capital can partly explain the lower wages/salaries in the private sector and for paid employees in informal employment.

According to the Equal Opportunities Commission, a constitutional body mandated to eliminate discrimination and inequalities, the wage disparities in Uganda are viewed as a cause of concern for the country's efforts to keep its best professionals at home. First, brain drain has affected the economy. For example, neighbouring countries are benefitting from many of Uganda's professionals, especially in the medical and education fields (see more in the Migration sub-section).³⁹ Second, the national labour force surveys show that the average earned medium cash wage gender gap fell from 50% in 2016/16 to 38% in 2018/19, see also Table 6 and the Gender sub-section.

The labour law includes provisions for district labour inspectors. Authorities are only carrying out a few labour inspections in practice due to inadequate training, funding, logistical support, and lack of labour inspectors. It harms the labour arbitration and settlement system. In 2020, 81 labour inspectors covered more than 130 districts, equalled one inspector close to 49,000 employees (or one labour inspector to 210,000 total employed). In contrast, the ILO recommends one inspector per 40,000 workers in less developed countries suggesting the number of inspectors was insufficient to enforce the law.⁴⁰ Moreover, NOTU argued that most workers were unaware of their employers' responsibility to ensure a safe working environment, and many did not challenge unsafe working conditions due to fear of losing their jobs.⁴¹

Some employers resort to subcontracting and outsourcing services or hire workers temporarily to avoid such agreements.⁴² Other employers do not give employees written employment contracts, resulting in a lack of job security and union representation.

It is a legal requirement in Uganda for the employer to provide an employment contract for each employee. In practice, just 30% of employees are engaged with a written contract (see also

Figure 6 ahead). Such contracts are more present in urban areas than rural; these contracts' gender gap is minor at two percentage points: the proportion of women is almost in line with men, 29% and 31%, respectively.⁴³

Uganda does not operate with gender-non-discrimination in recruitment policies. Like Malawi and Kenya, Uganda has a maximum length of 12 months probation period, which is high compared to many other Eastern and Southern African countries. The maximum legal workweek is 48 hours, and the maximum workday is 10 hours. The law provides that the workweek may be extended to 56 hours per week, including overtime, with the employee's consent. An employee may work more than 10 hours in a single day if the average number of hours over three weeks does not exceed 10 hours per day or 56 hours per week. For employees who work beyond 48 hours in a single week, the law requires employers to pay a minimum of 1.5 times the employee's normal hourly rate for the overtime hours and twice the employee's normal hourly rate for work on public holidays. For every four months of continuous employment, an employee is entitled to seven days of paid annual leave.⁴⁴ More details of the working conditions in Uganda are available in Table 7.

Table 7: Status of Working Conditions in Uganda

Fixed-term contracts prohibited for permanent tasks	No
Maximum length of a single fixed-term contract (months)	No limit
Standard workday	8 hours
Premium for night work (% of hourly pay)	0 %
Premium for work overtime work (% of hourly pay)	50 %
Paid annual leave (average for working days with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure, in working days)	21
Minimum length of maternity leave	60
Receive 100% of wages on maternity leave	Yes
Five fully paid days of sick leave a year	Yes
Unemployment protection after one year of employment	No

Source: World Bank, *Doing Business, Labor Market Regulation*.

Although legislation establishes occupational safety and health (OSH) standards and regulations for all workers, violations of these, such as standard wages and overtime pay, are typical in several sectors in Uganda. Reports list that violations of standard

wages, overtime pay, or safety and health standards were common in the manufacturing industry. Workers in the mining, construction and textile sectors faced hazardous and exploitive working conditions.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, companies were given the option to house their staff onsite to reduce the movement of persons. For example, according to a Chinese-owned textile factory staff, employers forced more than 400 men and women to sleep in a crowded hall, asking them to work double shifts without increasing wages and immediately firing those who complained. The NGO Platform for Labour Action (PLA) further found an increase in employers laying off workers during the Covid-19 lockdown period. Between March and June 2020, they were handling 50 cases of low-wage workers who were not paid wages when dismissed.⁴⁵ In addition, even though most firms reopened, and a considerable share of workers were re-hired, substantial income losses have accompanied this: firms earned 30% lower revenues and workers were earning 30% fewer incomes than before the lockdown.⁴⁶

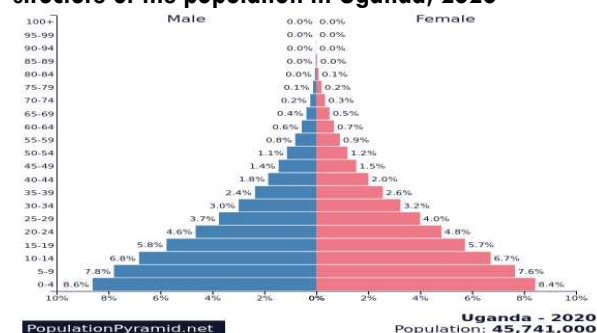
WORKFORCE

Uganda has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the world, with more than 24 ethnic groups that speak more than 40 languages. The population growth of 3.3% has been steady for decades, which is among the highest hikes in the world. Uganda's population of around 46 million in 2021 is expected to reach 100 million by 2050, while the annual urban growth rate of 5.2% is among the fastest in the world (see more in the Migration sub-section). Over the next two or three generations, this high dependency ratio will likely be replaced by a large labour force.

The fertility rate (births per woman) fell from 7.1% in the 1980s to 4.8 in 2019. The life expectancy rate increased from 49 years in the 1980s to 63 in 2019. Around 69% of the population are below 25 years old, illustrating a mounting youth bulge; 47% are of working age (15-64) and 2.4% are 65 years and over (see more in Figure 5). This youth

bulge is creating mounting pressure on formal job creation in Uganda. In practice, most find income generation in the informal economy under vulnerable working conditions (see ahead).

Figure 5: Population pyramid based on the age-sex structure of the population in Uganda, 2020



Source: PopulationPyramid.net, Uganda.

Projections suggest that Uganda's employment-to-population ratio stood at around 69% in 2019, falling to 65% as an impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The country's women employment-to-population ratio has a significant lower proportion than men. Uganda's proportions are lower than the Eastern Africa averages. Uganda's relatively low youth employment-to-population fell just by two percentage points during the 2010s linked to the meagre increase in school enrolment rates (Table 8 and see more in the Education section).

Table 8: Estimations of employment-to-population ratio in Uganda and Eastern Africa, Age and sex distribution, 2019

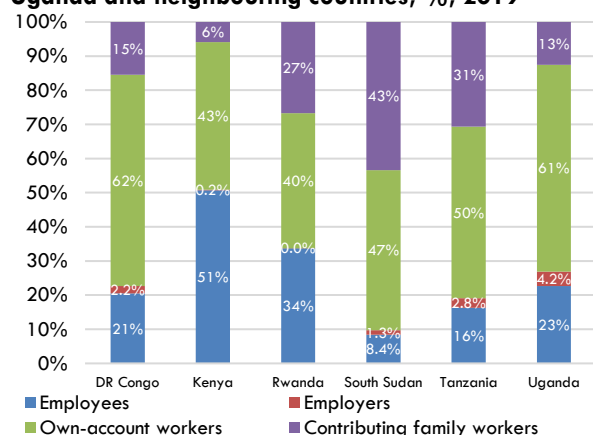
Sex	Age	Uganda	Eastern Africa
Total	Total 15+	69%	75%
	Youth 15-24	50%	58%
Men	Total 15+	73%	79%
	Youth 15-24	52%	60%
Women	Total 15+	66%	70%
	Youth 15-24	48%	55%

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Imputed observations in Uganda's employment status suggested some changes. The employees' group increased from 19% in 2010 to 23% in 2019, at a high level compared to the neighbouring countries, except superseded by Kenya. Ugandan employers' segment also grew from 2.3% to 4.2%

in the same period, signalling the youth is renowned for being highly enterprising. Own-account workers stood at a flat rate at 60%, while contributing family workers dropped by six percentage points, reaching 13% in 2019. These two latter segments are set in “vulnerable employment”; they are less likely to have formal work arrangements and are more likely to lack decent working conditions adequate. This aggregated latter group represented 73% of Uganda’s total employment (see Figure 6). Other data from the National Household Survey 2019/20 (UNHS 2019/20) illustrate that forms of work changed considerably from before Covid-19 to during Covid-19: employment dropped by ten percentage points, reaching 47%, and subsistence agriculture rose from 41% to 52%.

Figure 6: Projections of status in employment in Uganda and neighbouring countries, %, 2019

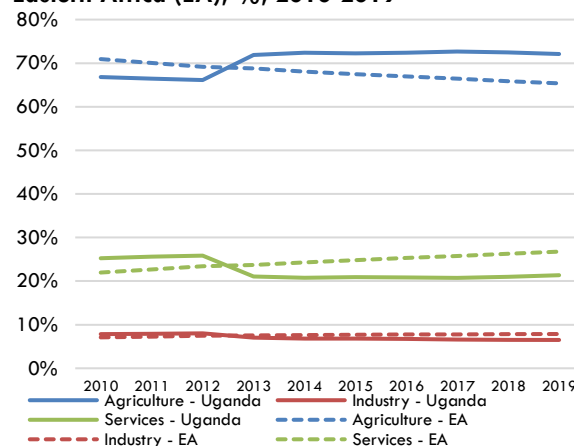


Note: The presented data are based on imputed observations and subject to uncertainty; it should only be used as proxy indicator.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Figure 7 shows that aggregated sectoral employment shifts were meagre during the 2010s in Uganda, stuck at a slower pace than Eastern Africa’s but with similar structures. The agricultural sector continues dominating the job opportunities in Uganda, absorbing three out of four workers. Evolving employment in the service and industry sectors has been stalled at 21% and 7%, respectively. The sectoral aggregate GDP value-added trends support this meagre development in the employment structure (revisit Figure 2). The notable shift in the agriculture sector and the service sector’s aggregate employment in 2013 is linked to statistical methodically labour survey modifications.

Figure 7: Employment aggregate sector in Uganda and Eastern Africa (EA), %, 2010-2019



Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

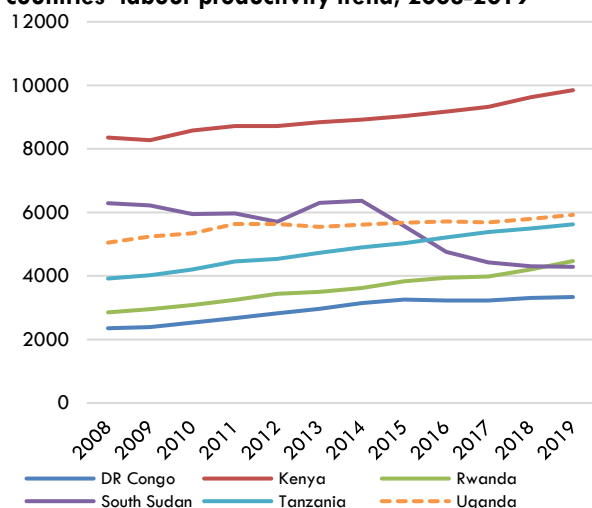
Heavy reliance on low productivity agriculture (about 24% of the economy, 50% of exports and 72% of employment) also contributes to income volatility and stagnation. The fast-growing young workforce requires at least 700,000 jobs per year in the economy, but it just reaches around 75,000 formal jobs currently created each year. According to the World Bank, raising incomes further will require improving productivity in agriculture and opportunities for absorbing excess labour into more productive employment in industry and services.⁴⁷

As a proportion of total employment, Uganda’s manufacturing sector increased just from 3.8% in UNHS 2016/17 to 4.3% in UNHS 2019/20.⁴⁸ The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has not yet been fully introduced in public statistical systems. However, studies assessed that the strict three-month lockdown in 2020 resulted in a significant increase in firm closures but was largely temporary. Besides, they demonstrated substantial resilience of informal labour relationships to the shock. Although most workers were let go during the lockdown and 15% of workers migrated to other locations, 76% of the furloughed employees were recalled back to work by the same employer after lifting the lockdown restrictions.⁴⁹

Before the economic rupture in 2020, the meagre shifts in Uganda’s employment and GDP value-added structures are reflected in the weak upsurge in labour productivity. The country continues hovering significantly above most neighbouring

countries, except Kenya. Tanzania is getting near to curbing the gap to Uganda, though (Figure 8). No official data are available, but the labour productivity is most likely to dwindle in 2020 as a negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This situation stalled the country's meagre progress in the SDG target by 2030, depending on a significantly raised industry's share of employment and GDP (see more in the SDG table, Indicator 9.2.2, page iv). Notably, there is no doubt that job creation and labour productivity are linked to the future educated workforce and acquiring the necessary employment skills (see more in the Education section).

Figure 8: Projections of Uganda and neighbouring countries' labour productivity trend, 2008-2019



Note: This measure of labour productivity is calculated using data on GDP (in constant 2017 international dollars in PPP). The presented data are based on imputed observations and subject to uncertainty; it should only be used as proxy indicator.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

The labour's share of national income has been stalled during the 2010s at 39%, which was in line with DR Congo (39%), slightly higher than Rwanda (36%) but lower than Kenya (44%), South Sudan (49%), and Tanzania (49%). This issue raised concerns about slowing income growth in Uganda, inequality, and loss of the consumer purchasing power needed to fuel demand in the economy.

There are changes concerns the rising power of new technology and globalisation. The newly emerging Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is changing the nature of work and the demand for skills. Uganda's

business process outsourcing (BPO) sector is vulnerable given some developments. National Information Technology Authority - Uganda (NITA-U) facilitates the creation of the Uganda BPO Association, which currently has 48 registered companies, employing at least 4,000 Ugandans, which equals just approximately 0.1% of employees.⁵⁰

The gig economy also alters how people access jobs, shifting the source of work away from informal labour and towards digital platforms. As with most disruptive technologies, platform work has the potential to grow even faster. Media listed through survey data that three out of five youth are now involved in the gig economy amid massive job losses due to Covid-19 disruptions.⁵¹ Besides, the mounting refugee stock in Uganda, which often struggles to enter the labour market, the gig economy digital platforms raised livelihood opportunities. The gig economy encompasses freelancers involving less commitment for both workers and companies with work executed at agreeable terms, challenging the profession to hollow out the employment regulations in practice..

The global Covid-19 pandemic triggered job disruption in Uganda through decreased earnings and working hours or complete job loss. It hit hardest the manufacture, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities, arts, entertainment, and recreation sectors. The negative labour market impact of the pandemic is more pronounced among vulnerable and part-time workers, young people, women, and healthcare and medical workers. Workers faced the threat of acquiring the Covid-19 pandemic at work in 2020. The measures put in place to contain the pandemic's spread; the strict three-month lockdown resulted in a significant increase in firm closures. Still, these closures were by and large temporary: Many loss of employment, reduction of work hours, loss of wages, and economic inactivity. For example, at one time, nearly 320,000 workers employed in the tourism and hospitality sector were temporarily laid off. In the education sector, about 600,000 workers were also out of work for some months.⁵²

On the latest National Small Business Survey of Uganda, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) collectively constitute about 90% of private-sector production and employ over 2.5 million people. Nearly nine out of ten owners started using their funds, and almost three quarters operate as sole proprietorships. Some of the main challenges for the MSMEs are lack access of to finance and cumbersome business regulations, not to mention a majority of MSMEs (63%) do not have access to the internet.⁵³ Labour relationships in Ugandan MSMEs are primarily informal, that is, there are no written contracts, employment benefits, or social protection for workers.⁵⁴

Unemployment

Uganda's National Household Survey data measured the unemployment rate fell on the margin from 10% in 2016/17 to 9% in 2019/20.⁵⁵ ILO's modelled estimations based on diverging methodology measurements suggested the unemployment rate stood low during the 2010s, even compared to the regional averages (see more details in Table 9 and Figure 9). Unemployment is mainly an urban phenomenon for youth and according to national statistics it is concentrated among workers with intermediate and advanced levels of education.

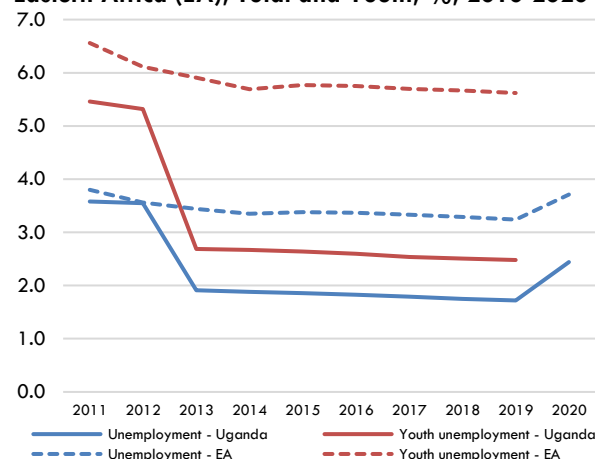
Table 9: The unemployment rate in Uganda and Eastern Africa (EA), by sex and age, %, 2020

Type	Gender	Uganda	EA
Unemployment	Total	1.7%	3.2%
	Men	1.2%	2.9%
	Women	2.2%	3.6%
Youth Unemployment	Total	2.5% *	5.6% *
	Men	2.0% *	5.3% *
	Women	3.0% *	6.0% *
Composite labour underutilisation **	Total	37% *	-
	Men	28% *	-
	Women	47% *	-

* Year: 2019. ** Underutilisation is composed of the sum of the population in time-related underemployment, unemployment and the potential workforce expressed as a proportion of the extended labour force.

Source: UBOS, Annual Labour Force Survey 2018/19 Report; ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Figure 9: Unemployment trends in Uganda and Eastern Africa (EA), Total and Youth, %, 2010-2020



Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Subsistence farming is occupied during planting and harvesting but not engaged full-time during the entire year, creating some “disguised unemployment.” A large segment of workers outside agriculture operates in the informal economy with weak linkage to unemployment insurance schemes. Since the formal sector does not provide sufficient new jobs, most workers enter casual informal activities, often by lower hours, to survive to generate some income. Uganda's latest Annual Labour Force Survey 2018/19 even measured the combined rate of unemployment, and time-related underemployment reached 24% and composite labour underutilisation at 37% in 2018/19.⁵⁶

Besides, unemployment is statistically a part of the employed group, excluding persons outside the workforce. At the same time, around 31% of Uganda's working-age population was estimated as economically inactive in 2019.

Migration

Migration in Uganda acts as an origin, transit, and destination country. It is immersed in South-South migration dynamics with cultural and tribal linkages along with a flow of workers. Full implementation of migration-related East African Community Protocols could increase the number of Ugandans living in Eastern Africa countries. This agreement could

further lead to a rise in the foreign-born population in Uganda.

Uganda's legal framework of migration has progressive policies to support the integration of refugees and asylum seekers and a commitment to family rights and reunification. The country has further signed several international conventions and frameworks guarding the rights of migrants, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Supplementary Provisions of the ILO Migrant Workers Convention, and the Conventions on Statelessness. On the other hand, reports found that Ugandan laws and policies relating to migrant groups other than refugees or asylum seekers are somewhat fragmented. There is no comprehensive framework, law or migration policy that establishes or defines the rights of such migrants to access public social services, including health care and education.⁵⁷

Uganda's high population growth has been a driver of migration both internally and motivated to seek jobs outside the borders. The growing youth population often lacks ownership of natural resources that remain owned by older generations. Many instead move towards more urban areas to find job opportunities and to generate some income. Generally, Uganda's urban population has increased significantly from less than 1 million in 1980 to 11 million persons in 2020, not to mention about 60% of the urban population living in slums. Estimations suggest that Uganda's urban population will increase to over 20 million in 2040.⁵⁸ This urbanisation is driven by a want to improve their job opportunities, higher earnings, social aspirations, marriage, education, or shock responses such as conflicts and climate. Especially, young people are attracted to move from rural areas to urban zones: The rural-urban divide indicates that the proportion of the working population slightly increased from 35% during 2016/17 to 39% in 2018/19. Other estimations suggest that Uganda's urbanisation rate increased from 19% in 2010 to 25% in 2020, which is higher

than Rwanda (17%) and South Sudan (20%) but lower than DR Congo (45%), Kenya (28%), and Tanzania (35%).⁵⁹ There is also considerable rural-to-rural movement, especially for seasonal agricultural work.

On the Annual Labour Force Survey 2018/19, about 68% of the migrant population resided in rural areas during the last five years. Nearly 31% were previously urban residents, and 2% were living in some other country. The increase in the population living in the urban can be partly explained by the gazettement of more urban areas and the rural-urban migration.⁶⁰

Out-migration (emigration) has a long history, and it has become a part of Uganda's culture. The diaspora was estimated to be 1.5 million people back at the end of the 2000s. The out-migration entangles permanent migrants living abroad and irregular migrants, i.e., Ugandan who are without valid residence or work permits or people who are overstaying as workers or tourists. These out-migrants are better educated than internal migrants. Losing labour to emigration can cause shortages in some sectors, for instance, the health sector.

Uganda's net migration flow substantially changed during the 2010s from a high outflow to an increased inflow (see more in Table 10 and Figure 10). Some of the issues triggering this development deals with tightened EU migration policies and the Middle-East's economic downturn affected by low oil prices leading to budget cuts in the infrastructure sector, reduced job opportunities in the construction sector. In recent years, a high continuous influx of refugees to Uganda, mainly from South Sudan and DR Congo, further challenged Uganda's migration management capacities (see ahead). Many Ugandans abroad were additionally stranded or forced to return home due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

Personal remittances to Uganda from around the world have been a significant part of the economy. Personal remittances in Uganda steadily represented about 4% of GDP from 2016 to 2019,

significantly higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 2.7%. The global Covid-19 pandemic's economic impact affected the country's personal remittances inflow that fell to 2.8% of GDP in 2020.

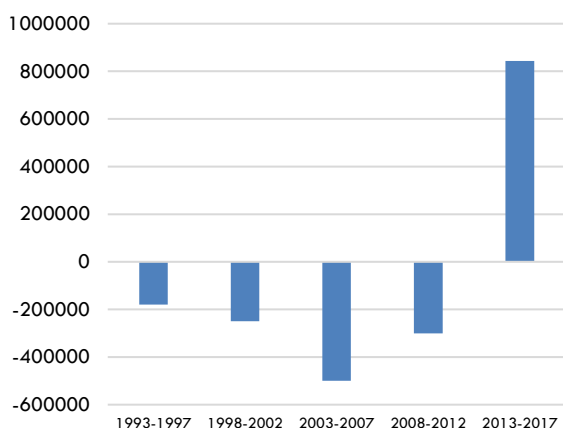
Table 10: Status of net migration flow and personal remittances in Uganda

Theme	Value
Net migration rate per 1,000 population *	4.02 (2020) -1.70 (2015)
Personal remittance (received), % of GDP (2016-20 average)	3.7%

* Net migration is the net total of migrants during a period of five years, i.e. the total number of immigrants less the annual number of emigrants, including both citizens and non-citizens.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators; KNOEMA, Uganda - Net migration rate.

Figure 10: Net migration trend to average population in Uganda, 1993-2017



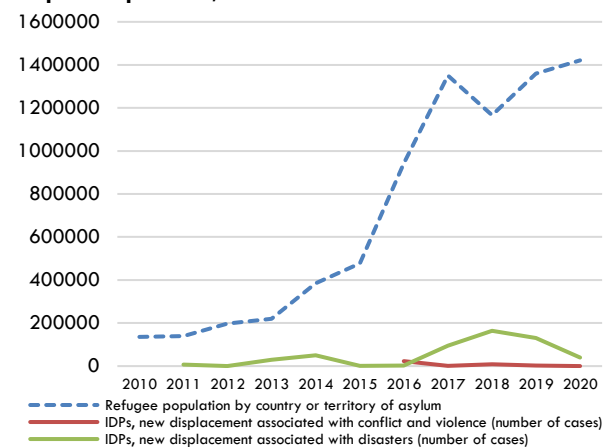
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Limited livelihoods are one of the push factors for a significant number of unskilled Ugandan young people, who often emigrate to Middle Eastern countries through irregular channels. According to the Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies, a total of 165,000 Ugandans will be working in the Middle East in 2020.⁶¹ Uganda's expatriates have placed the 12th highest emigrant country for highly skilled in OECD countries, superseded by Tanzania and Mozambique. Still, in line with Kenya and Burundi.⁶² There have been some improvements in recruitment and support services in labour migration issues in Uganda. However, based on a recent Labour Migration Management Assessment, several problems are present: i) high costs for migrant workers, ii) incomplete supervision of recruitment agencies, iii)

inadequate pre-departure orientation, and iv) an absence of return and reintegration measures.⁶³

Uganda also has a segment of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from disasters, conflict, and violence. Concerning disasters, 40,000 persons were displaced in 2020, out of which 33,000 were IDPs. About 1,000 people were IDPs in 2020 associated with conflict and violence.⁶⁴ Another aspect is that the refugee population skyrocketed during the 2010s and even peaked in 2020 with at least 1.4 million persons (see also Figure 11). It makes one of the largest refugee hosts in the world. Uganda is hailed for its open-door refugee policy, considered one of the most progressive in the world. Refugees enjoy access to social services, land, and jobs. However, the mounting influx coupled with limited resources puts tremendous pressure on existing amenities and straining the delivery of services in host communities. The refugees are mainly from South Sudan's civil war, the ethnic conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo's and Burundi, and political turmoil in Somalia.⁶⁵ In 2020, refugees most returned to South Sudan (66,000), primarily from Uganda.

Figure 11: Uganda's refugee population and internally displaced persons, 2010-2020



World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Informal Economy

The informal economy is widespread in Uganda like other developing countries. Uganda's legal framework demonstrated flaws to curb the informality. For example, social protection laws and policies have heavily focused on the formal sector,

and efforts to extend them to the informal economy have weak points. For example, wage and self-employment in informal enterprises and households do not deliver pension or contribution to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). It is worthwhile to mention that the reformed NSSF Act in January 2022 introduced a breakthrough in giving individual informal workers access to pension schemes. The National Health Insurance Bill stands neutral in programming the informal economy, and the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) 2015 was directed to the expansion of contributory social security schemes to the informal economy but lacked their implementation (see more in the Social Protection section).⁶⁶ By the same token, the Employment Act of 2006 prioritise domestic and casual workers, leaving out other informal sector occupations outside these two categories.

Informality sticks with low scope of labour inspections due to lack of resources and logistics interlinked with entrepreneurs often face an absence of trust in the system, not to mention a general lack of awareness and or incentives for labour and business regulations associated with the education system's underdeveloped outcomes.

Not registered enterprises most often do not apply contractual employment conditions, avoid paying taxes, and continue being challenged by cumbersome bureaucratic measures to formalise the business (revisit Appendix Table 22). This adverse environment reduces the formal industrial relations such as organising workers and collective bargaining through social dialogue.

The National Labour Force Survey 2018/19 showed that the scope of informal employment outside agriculture fell from 94% in 2011/12 to 85% in 2016/17 but rebounded at 87% (5.5 million workers) in 2018/19. The economy's negative impact from the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to further increase the informal employment outside agriculture scope, complicating the aim of reaching the Sustainable Development Goal's target on reducing this particularly employment group (see also the SDG Table, Indicator 8.3.1, in Page iv). Reports found that as firms have no

contractual obligation to keep paying informal workers during the lockdown in 2020 and rehire them afterwards, that has been particularly severe among informal workers, leading to income losses and human capital depreciation over periods of inactivity/alternate unskilled employment.⁶⁷ Proxy measurement related to the informal economy includes the 'vulnerable employment' rate, defined as the share of own-account workers and contributing family workers: the latest NLFS 2018/19 registered that 73% of total employment operates within this group.

The informal economy declined from 40% in 2004 to 32% of GDP in 2015, indicated by the small sectoral shifts in employment and the economy (revisit Figure 2 and Figure 6). Its scope stood at 39% on average from 1991 to 2015, more prominent than Rwanda (36%) and Kenya (33%), but smaller than DR Congo (45%) and Tanzania (52%).⁶⁸ Besides, Uganda's informal payments to public officials are relatively low at 28%, lower than DR Congo (50%) and South Sudan (36%) but higher than Kenya (26%), Rwanda (0.5%), and Tanzania (20%) (Table 11).

Table 11: Status of Uganda's informal economy

Indicators	Per cent
The informal economy's share of GDP (2015)	32%
Informal employment outside agriculture (2018/19)	87%
Vulnerable employment (2018/19)	73%
Informal payments to public officials (% of firms) * (2013)	28%

* Informal payments to public officials are the percentage of firms expected to make informal payments to public officials to "get things done" regarding customs, taxes, licenses, regulations, services, and the like.

Sources: The Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Annual Labour Force Survey 2018/19 Report, August 2019; IMF, Shadow Economies Around the World: What Did We Learn Over the Last 20 Years?, IMF Working Paper, January 2018; World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Informal employment outside agriculture has only a minimal gender gap at one percentage point favouring men. Persons in the rural areas engaged in non-agriculture employment were more likely to be informally employed than those in urban areas.

A central issue haunting Uganda's labour market is that formal job creation in non-agricultural employment is not creating sufficient opportunities to curb the fast-rising workforce. In addition, Ugandan workers are not covered by unemployment protection schemes. A vast majority of workers need to generate some income to survive through informal activities. Informal jobs are often unprotected, hazardous and precarious with – until recently – almost no access to social protection such as health and pension schemes. Formal employees' income is more than twice than those in informal employment; 87% of the employed population outside agriculture were in informal employment.⁶⁹

Only a third (29%) of the informal enterprises' proprietors have previous working experience; of those only, 38% have their last job matching their qualifications. These data show that workers' skills mismatch is a critical challenge in the country. This situation is most often related to the fact that persons who are looking for employment fail to find their preferred job, and they tend to settle for the less preferred option to make ends meet.⁷⁰

Especially the youth is caught in the informal economy. As an example, more than 80% of young workers are associated with enterprises with less than five workers, and most of these firms are unregistered.

A Tripartite National Informal Economy Forum is not operating in Uganda. Other national forums addressing the status of informal economy workers are ongoing and struggling for an attention. The government has adopted broader policy decisions, like tax holidays, to create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, but more explicit policies addressing the status of informal economy workers are not present in the country.⁷¹

The two trade unions, ATGWU and UMAEU, represent around 490,000 organised workers from the informal economy (revisit Table 3). Transport workers have yielded results such as reducing police harassment, substantial gains through collective bargaining, and improving visibility and the status of women transport workers, among others.

Child Labour

Uganda's largest proportion of the population was children aged 0-17 years, accounting for 55%. The country ratified ILO's two conventions on effective abolition of child labour (see Appendix Table 20). In 2016, the government approved the Children (Amendment) Act that establishes age 16 as the minimum age for work and criminalises the use of a child for commercial sexual exploitation. The first National Child Participation Strategy (NCPS) 2017/18-2021/22 was launched in 2017. An evaluation of this strategy's impact is still not available.

Although the legal framework prohibits the worst forms of child labour, it allows children as young as 12 years of age to do some types of hazardous work under adult supervision. Since children are obliged to attend school until age 13, it opens children ages 13 to 15 vulnerable to child labour, which is not legally permitted to do most types of work. The legislation bans the employment of children between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. and provides for occupational safety and health restrictions for children. A tripartite committee has drawn up a national list of hazardous child labour for children under 18. The law's minimum age protections do not apply to children working without a formal employment relationship. Since most of the employment operates in the informal economy, these legal provisions are not used in practice. For example, most employers do not keep required registries of child workers or comply with the requirement for regular medical exams of child workers.⁷² Data suggest that only 5.2% of the country's total employment of children is in paid work.⁷³

Like many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, several factors keep the widespread child labour in Uganda linked to pervasive poverty, working conditions especially in rural areas, inadequate education and transportation systems, and low social protection coverage. About 28% of Ugandan children are involved in employment. The more critical child labour was on a minor declining trend from 16% in 2012/13 to 15% in 2016/17, significantly lower than the African average (Table

12). On the other hand, the country has a remarkable high children hazardous work at 19%: The hazardous work's nature or the circumstances under which it is performed jeopardises childrens' health, safety, and morals.

Table 12: Status of working children proportion of all children in age group 5-17

Region	Type	Proportion
Uganda	Children in employment	28%
	Child labour	15%
	Hazardous work	19% *
Africa	Children in employment	27%
	Child labourers	20%
	Hazardous work	8.6%

* Since children aged 5-11 are not supposed to work at all, they are excluded from the statistics, and the percentage covers only age 12-17 years.

Source: UBS, National Labour Force Survey 2016/17; ILO, Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012-2016

Despite children aged 5-11 years are not supposed to work, a large number continue doing it. On the positive side, this group dropped from 21% in 2012/13 to 13% in 2016/17, supported by the increasing school enrolment trends (see more in the Education section). Those in hazardous work contributed 22% of child labour for children aged 12-17 years.

A vast majority of working children (92%) are in the agricultural sector, such as cattle herding and commercial farming, and slightly more than four out of five (83%) are contributing family workers.⁷⁴ Many children voluntarily leave school for agricultural or domestic work, to help their family to meet expenses. Other children, particularly among the large orphan population, are forced to work due to the absence of parents or because their parents were too sick to work.

Data from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics' baseline report from April 2021 indicated that child labour in the two districts of Hoima and Kikuube stands at 26% (74,000 children).⁷⁵ This rate is higher than the mentioned national average of 15%. When household chores were included, the rate of Child Labour rose to 31%. In addition, Uganda's National Household Survey 2019/20 further showed that

child labour increased by 15 percentage points during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. It suggests that the meagre gains of reducing child labour were even put in limbo, signalling the country is side-lined to achieve the SDG's target to eradicate all forms of child labour before 2025 (see SDG Table, Indicator 8.7.1, Page iv).

Gender

Uganda has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The constitution prohibits gender discrimination generally; sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 and provides equal rights between men and women during marriage and divorce; it pertains specifically to women's rights. Two central gender-responsive legislation were passed in 2020/2021 but continue awaiting presidential approval, i.e., the Succession Amendment Bill and the Employment (Amendment) Bill. The first bill seeks to address the inequality and marginalisation of women and girls after the death of a spouse. The second bill includes a provision addressing sexual violence and harassment in the workplace (see ahead).

Despite these general legal statements, equal rights are not effectively guaranteed in practice in Uganda. A part of this concerns a disconnection between the legal framework and its lack of effective implementation or enforcement, reflected in the widespread informal economy.⁷⁶ Moreover, attitudes, beliefs, and traditional practices often exclude women from the labour market, entrenching throughout the country, especially in the rural areas.

The patriarchal structures create unbalanced power relations between men and women that continue to negatively affect women's human capital development and hinder activity in the labour market. For example, Ugandan women face often violations "silently" accepted out of fear of losing employment. Labour-related gender dysfunctions are also illustrated by measurements of discouraged job seekers in Uganda, which is much higher for women at 72% while down to 28% for men.⁷⁷ To tackle this issue, the Parliament has

passed the Employment Amendment Bill to address sexual violence at workplaces – especially domestic households. At the beginning of the 2022, the president has not yet signed the bill. Ugandan women's role on the labour market is further challenged by the disproportionate activities they bear of unpaid work in the household, including children and elder care, provision of food, fuel, and water. These cores bring more labour constraints for women, facing time trade-offs on income-related activities.

Ugandan girls are still often getting married at an early age. Government guidance requires females to withdraw from education when they are three months pregnant until six months after giving birth, and many end up dropping out of school, often due to barriers like social stigma, lack of childcare or financial support (see also the Education section).⁷⁸

The gender inequalities in the country are echoed in the wage gender gap: median monthly cash earnings for women in paid employment on the main job is 62% of men's, which is present in the residence, age groups, sectors, and type of institutions. It is worthwhile to mention that this gender wage gap is minor at 1.8% within formal employment.⁷⁹

The global Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects the scope of gender disparities, ranked Uganda 131 out of 162 countries (1 is best) in 2019. This low human development ranking was mainly due to the relatively high in maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rate (see more in the Social Protection section), as well as significant gaps in population with at least some secondary education and the labour force participation rate. On the other hand, Ugandan women score better in their share in parliament.⁸⁰ The other Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2021 ranked Uganda 66 out of 156 countries (1 is best). The country scores poorly in education attainment (131) and economic participation and opportunity (74); it counts better in health and survival (1) and political empowerment (46).⁸¹

Table 13 displays the scope of Uganda's gender gaps in central employment indicators. There are significantly fewer women in employment than men. Both sexes are challenged by 'vulnerable employment', visualised in unskilled labourers, traders, artisans, or subsistence farming, but with a significant gender gap of 13 percentage points. Women's "double burden" further keep many in informal part-time activities linked to time constraints from domestic chores.

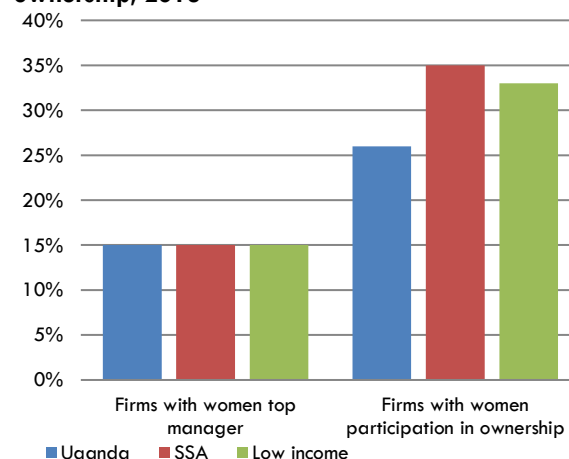
Table 13: Estimation of workforce key indicators gender gaps in Uganda, 2019

	Men	Women	Men/women ratio gap, percentage point (p.p.)
Employment	73%	66%	+7 p.p.
Unemployment	1.2%	2.2%	-1.0 p.p.
Employees	28%	17%	+11 p.p.
Employers	5.0%	3.4%	+1.6 p.p.
Vulnerable employment *	67%	80%	-13 p.p.

* Aggregated of own-account workers and contributing family workers.
Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

According to Uganda's latest Enterprise Survey from 2013, firms with women in top management was in line with the regional average but stood low concerning women's participation in ownership (Figure 12). Women entrepreneurs often face constraints that men do not, including limited access to capital and credit, due to lack of collateral, lack of information and time constraints imposed by domestic obligations.

Figure 12: Women in firms' top management and ownership, 2013



Source: World Bank, Enterprise Survey, Uganda 2013 Country Profile.

Although Ugandan women's relatively low participation in ownership, their economic empowerment is widely regarded as an essential component of the country's development policies. It is interesting to observe that women's relatively high employers' rate at 3.4% compared to 1.1% in the sub-Saharan Africa average (see Table 13 above).

Youth

Uganda's median age of just 16 places it as one of the world's youngest populations. About 700,000 young people reach working age every year. This number will rise to a million in the 2030s, putting mounting pressure on job creation. Some estimations suggested that youth has competed for just approximately 9,000 available formal jobs per year.⁸² The national Household Survey 2016/17 data found that almost three-quarters of young Ugandans enter the workforce on their family farm, i.e., the youth is primarily involved in relatively low-skilled labour activities.⁸³

The Ugandan government has adopted several policies and initiatives to address the youth employment challenge. The most central is the National Youth Policy (NYP), adopted in 2001 and geared to enhance the economic contributions of youth. Based on the NYP's plan, the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) and the Youth Livelihood Fund (YLF) are programmes designed to support young people to find employment by extending grants and other support to small groups of young entrepreneurs to help them to start small businesses and create employment for other young jobseekers. Several problems in the design and implementation of the YLP/YLF programmes hindered the successful launch and expansion of viable small- and micro-enterprises that could generate employment for youth.⁸⁴

The most significant proportion (47%) of the employed youth worked as service workers, followed by agriculture, forestry, and fishing (34%), and 19% production. Though a minority of the youth are in formal employment (10%), about 82% were satisfied with their jobs. Education mismatch reached almost half of the youths (46%)

under-educated for the jobs, and 41% had matching education and job requirements.⁸⁵ The type of available jobs is often low-skilled, with limited access to resources like land and capital, and dominated by the widespread informal economy. Considering the insufficient job creation in the formal sector and cultural aspects make much Ugandan youth discouraged and withdraw from employment, many become economically inactive on the labour market.

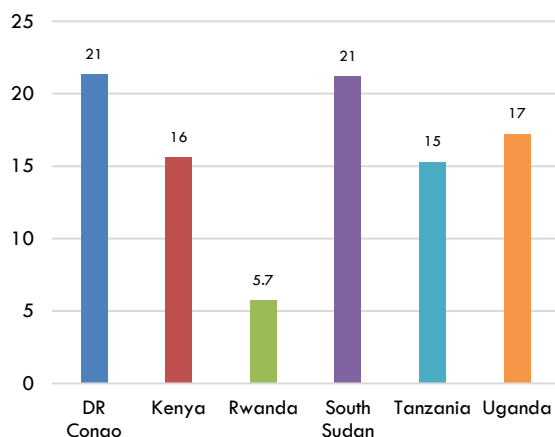
Based on the national more 'relaxed' unemployment definition, Uganda's youth unemployment rate was high at 17% in 2018/19; young women were at least twice as likely to be unemployed compared to young men.⁸⁶ The international 'strict' statistical interpretation of youth unemployment suggested it experienced a declining trend during the 2010s and stood significantly lower than the Eastern Africa average (revisit Figure 9 above). This low 'strict' youth unemployment rate is associated with poverty and the generally weak social protection coverage, including no access to unemployment insurance schemes. On the positive side, Ugandan youth is known for its entrepreneurial spirit. Active youth workers are most often in the informal economy or short-term labour contracts. These two groups are challenged by inadequate training and career opportunities, and among those that often earn less than the minimum wages compared to the non-youth groups.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the youth at various levels such as health and well-being, education, employment, and civic activities due to social distancing policies. For example, youth are the most vulnerable to lay-offs and complicated transitions from school to work.

In Uganda's national LFS 2018/19, the NEET rate (i.e., those not in employment, education, or training) listed 39% of the youth referring to the population aged 18-30 years, with more women (52%) than men (24%). According to ILO's imputed observations for the population ageing 15-24 years, the NEET rate increased from 14% in 2010 to 17% in 2019, like Kenya and Tanzania but lower

than DR Congo and South Sudan (see Figure 13). The specific SDG goal target to reduce the NEET rate in 2030 appears to be in the wrong direction in Uganda (see more in SDG Table, Indicator 8.6.1, Page iv). Additionally, the economic downturn in 2020 caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is most likely to inflate the NEET rate further.

Figure 13: The NEET rate in Uganda and neighbouring countries, %, 2017-2020



Note: The NEET rate is the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

EDUCATION

Uganda's educational system went through a series of ambitious reforms. Uganda's Ministry of Education listed 25 different laws, regulations, policies, strategies, and programmes. For example, it includes the Education (pre-primary, primary and post-primary) Act from 2008, the Business, Technical Vocational Education and Training Act from 2008, and Gender in Education Policy.⁸⁷ Although the reforms substantially expanded access to certain levels of education, critics argued that in a rush to boost the enrollment rates, educational quality has suffered.⁸⁸

The education sector has accounted for about two-thirds of social expenditure. However, pupil/teacher ratios remain high while schools have been built, and the average class size is 55. Besides, Uganda's spending on education at 12% of total government expenditure on average in the 2010s is low compared to the neighbouring countries, e.g.,

DR Congo (14%), Kenya (19%), Rwanda (14%), and Tanzania (21%).

Uganda's literacy rate for the population 15+ increased from 68% in 2002 to 77% in 2018, reaching higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 65%. The recent LFS 2018/19 found that the proportion of females and rural residents that have never attended school is consistently almost double that of their male and urban counterparts (see more in Table 14).

Table 14: Employment by education, age 15+, % of employment distribution in Uganda, 2012

	Less than basic	Basic	Inter-mediate	Advanced
Total	57%	35%	2.0%	5.0%
Men	50%	40%	3.0%	6.0%
Women	65%	29%	0.9%	3.8%

Source: UBS, National Labour Force Survey 2012/13.

The first significant result of educational reform efforts was the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. The UPE initiative initially promised tuition-free elementary education to four children per Ugandan family, and the government eventually extended tuition-free education to every Ugandan of elementary school age. The programme's success in expanding access to elementary education was undeniable. In the first year following its introduction, elementary enrolment grew by nearly 75%; by 2003, well over double its size in 1996. Currently, Uganda's net primary school enrolment rate is hovering far above the sub-Saharan Africa average (Figure 14).

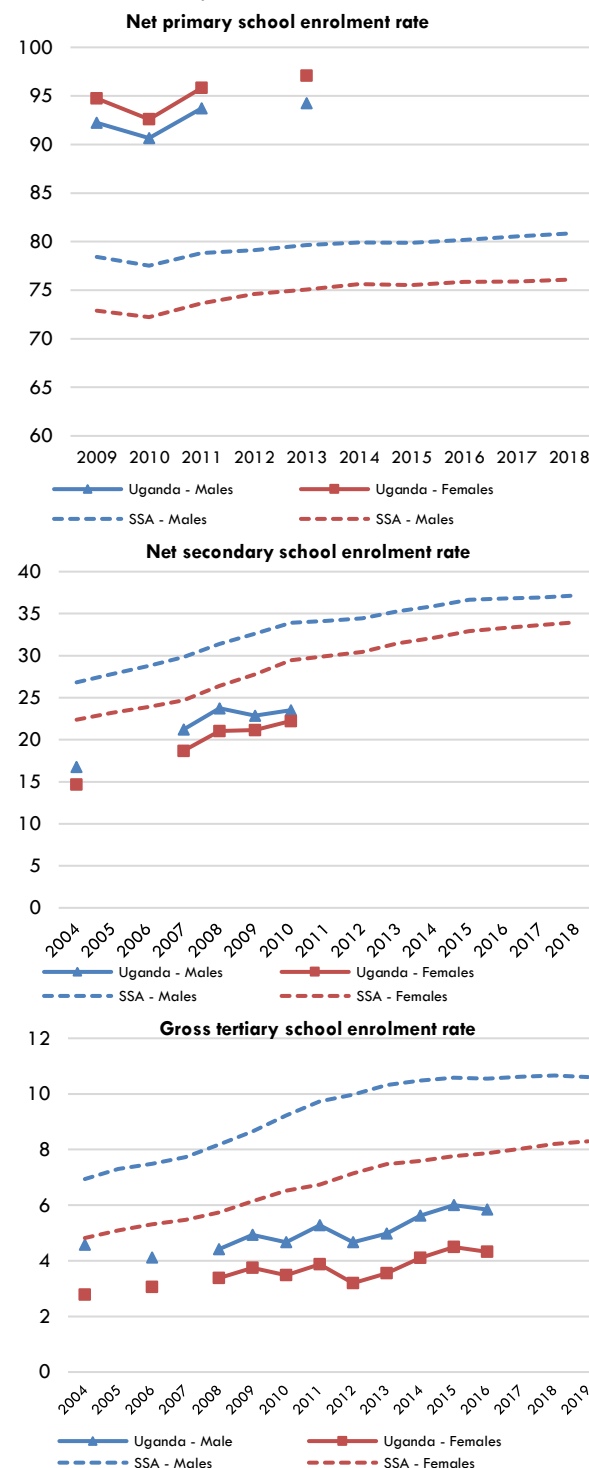
The recent comprehensive evaluation of the UPE policy from 2018 found it increased equitable access to education, benefiting a solid legal framework. For example, the policy has enabled every pupil to progress to the following levels, reduced the dropout rate, increased access to education and motivated pupils to learn. Repetition reduced by 31% from 2005 to 2016. The primary seven completion rate improved from 52% in 2009 to 72% in 2014/15 before declining to 62% in 2016/17. The use of local language has enhanced the comprehension ability of the children. Still, the diversity of languages hinders instruction in local language due to inadequate local language

instructional materials. Inadequacy and poor school infrastructure in primary schools continue haunting the education system, along with neglect of parents on their roles and duties. Household poverty emerged as another major obstacle to educational success for children. Leakages within the system affect learning outcomes. To attain the desired UPE quality, estimations suggest it requires sixfold higher investments per pupil than the government is contributing.⁸⁹

In 2007, the government introduced the Universal Secondary Education (USE) programme to extend free, high-quality lower secondary education. In 2012, the government also opened free upper secondary education. Updated data on the secondary school enrolment rate are scarce, but some information suggests that the programme's success in expanding overall access to secondary education has been mixed. In the years immediately following USE's introduction, total secondary enrolment increased by 47% from 2006 to 2009, reaching nearly 1.2 million. But the pace slowed considerably after that: After peaking at just under 1.5 million in 2016, enrolment declined to less than 1.4 million in 2017. Other data show that Uganda's lower secondary completion rate increased from 21% in 2006, peaking in 2013/14 at 30%, dropping to 26% in 2017. It stood significantly lower than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 44%.

Demand for higher education in Uganda at the tertiary level has increased over the last two decades. Post-secondary institutions' enrollment grew from around 125,000 in the 2005/06 academic year to at least 250,000 in 2015/16. Uganda's higher education system has been haunted by strikes and protests by students, faculty, and staff over late pay, low salaries, tuition hikes, and safety concerns Ugandan universities year after year. More and more students crowd into lecture halls and student housing-built decades ago. Facility upgrades and new construction projects lag significantly behind growing student numbers. Low and late pay and a lack of academic freedom have made qualified professors hard to find and led to increasing corruption, with degree forgery scandals rocking even the country's top university.⁹⁰

Figure 14: Enrolment in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in Uganda and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), %, male and female, 2004-2019



Note: Net enrolment is the ratio of children of official school age, who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Gross enrolment is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the corresponding official school age. Gross enrolment could therefore be higher than 100%.

Source: World Bank, Education Statistics.

Significant issues disturb Uganda's education system concerning a high level of teacher and student absenteeism, the lack of teachers in remote areas, weak school-level management structures, and inadequate availability of learning material. Furthermore, these aspects explain why only one out of three reaches a basic education level in Uganda.

The education sector is often characterised as supply-oriented rather than demand-oriented, leading many in job mismatch of skills on the labour market. For example, about 71% of young working Ugandans are undereducated for their work. Those workers in mismatch are most often concentrated in skilled agriculture, forestry and fishery work, plant and machine operators, assemblers and craft and related trades work. The high under-education rate is challenging economic development and the young worker's sense of financial security.⁹¹

The country has experienced a high influx of refugee children, and more than half a million children were out-of-school: 57% of refugee children in Uganda (at least 353,000) and 34% of local children in refugee-hosting districts (around 171,000) did not have access to education.⁹² Although the Ugandan government is promoting a quite 'open' migration policy, which includes access to education, it has created a high pressure on the country's education system. On the positive side, the Government of Uganda launched the Education Response Plan (ERP) in September 2018 to provide education for refugees. It is too early to assess the impact of the plan.

Ugandan schools experienced the longest closed in the world due to the Covid-19 pandemic from March 2020 and are not planned to resume until January 2022 at the earliest. It brought an abrupt of the education plans in 2020-2021 and created educational setbacks for children; for some, school closures have led to dropout, rebound child labour and child marriage, not to mention economic insecurity, food insecurity, gender-based violence, and the health risks of the pandemic. The government launched a series of interventions to tackle the education system's unexpected challenges; among others, schools introduced

distance learning through physical print materials. Zoom lessons were initiated, and an online learning portal was developed to continue with the curriculum. During a total lockdown with restrictions on passenger transport, this option became unviable for parents from a distance. Also, many pupils, especially in rural areas, have limited internet access (see next section).

Vocational Training

Vocational education and training are part of sustainable economic development. Where more skilled workers are available, companies can be more competitive. Uganda's vocational programmes are oriented towards pre-employment, supply-driven and targeting modern sector needs. The Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTJET) Act from 2008 was put in place to address the redundancy of the different institutions for vocational training.

Generally, Uganda is standing in a weak position in vocational education and training in practice. National survey data suggest that two out of three (67%) of the population did not have any trade/technical skills or any area of specialisation.⁹³ As previously mentioned, the education sector is underfinanced; government expenditure on secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary vocational education is low at 0.1% of GDP compared with neighbouring countries like Kenya (0.3%) and Rwanda (0.5%). The BTJET system faced insufficient training and practice facilities/equipment, making it hard for the students to attain the best training and experience required. The equipment purchased to facilitate the work in the sector is expensive and cannot be secured by the people pursuing this training.⁹⁴ The vocational training system has not been in sync with economic and employment needs.⁹⁵

Uganda's government launched the Technical, Vocational and Education Training (TVET) Policy in January 2019. This policy sets a flexible TVET system geared toward changing labour market demands. It further provides a structure to coordinate, regulate, and harmonise TVET at all

levels; a framework for resource mobilisation, utilisation, and sustainability for quality TVET provision and delivery; and career path and linkages between general education and TVET. In addition, the policy provides the basis for reviewing and harmonising the current laws.⁹⁶

The Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) is the apex body that offers relevant technical and soft skills across different sectors. This institution consists of over 200 business associations, corporate bodies, and major public sector agencies. PSFU has served as a focal point for private sector advocacy and capacity building, and it continues to sustain a positive policy dialogue with the government.

BTET established at least 124 (110 public; 14 private) training centres, schools and institutions, and polytechnics in 2018, aimed at achieving a vocational school per district by the end of 2021. Other private TVET providers represent a more robust segment, estimated at more than 1,000 institutions, representing approximately 81% of all TVET providers.⁹⁷

There is an upsurge of students and openings of new TVET institutions. For example, enrolment in the BTET increased by 16% from 111,479 students in 2014/15 to 129,599 in 2016/17; 46% were women (Table 15). Other data from the LFS 2018/19 in the distribution of the employed population illustrates that 10% of education attainment link to post-primary/secondary specialised training.

Table 15: Status of Vocational Training in Uganda, 2015/16

Indicator	Value
Pupils in vocational training	129,599 *
Vocational pupils (% women)	46%
Government expenditure on secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary vocational education (% of GDP)	0.1%

* Covers enrolment in the BTET.

Source: The Government of Uganda, Uganda's Progress Report: To the Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child, 2020; World Bank, Education Statistics.

Many young Ugandan workers do not fit with the qualifications required in the labour market, and this continues a significant concern. Relatively few

employees have permanent employment status and even fewer benefit from programmes of in-employment training provided by their employers. One approach to tackling a skill mismatch problem is to combine formal education with work-based training. For example, about one out three (35%) Ugandan firms offer formal training programmes for their permanent, full-time employees. It was close in line with the neighbouring countries like DR Congo (38%), Kenya (37%), and Rwanda (36%).⁹⁸ It is important to realise that formal firms continue to be a small group compared to the widespread informal micro-and small enterprises, which significantly reducing the programmes' scope. Instead, most private enterprises operate in the informal economy, and they cannot afford to offer long-term vocational training schemes. Individuals who have completed informal apprenticeship or skills training are prevented from finding jobs in the formal sector due to the absence of formal recognition of their training.

The global Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) introduced disruptions in the labour market: job losses due to digitisation are becoming more urgent, upskilling and retooling is putting pressure on the TVET system. The Digital Uganda Vision provides an overarching framework that responds to the national Vision 2040 by providing a unified ICT policy direction. Uganda's government established a National Expert Taskforce on the 4IR in 2018, leading to the National 4IR Strategy geared as a continental 4IR hub that enables a smart and connected Ugandan society.

As part of the 4IR, the demand for digital services – such as mobile cellular, internet, and other digital payments – is increasing worldwide. A significant digital divide persists in Uganda in urban/rural and education levels. On the positive side, studies found that despite limited resources, schools are investing heavily into ICT.⁹⁹ Generally, Ugandans using the internet increased from 8% in 2008 to 23% of the population in 2020, which was in line with neighbouring countries like Kenya (23%), Rwanda (26%), and Tanzania (20%). Ugandans' demand for mobile cellular subscriptions soared from 0.5 in

2000 to 61 per 100 people in 2019, relatively low compared to neighbouring countries.

Uganda's TVET system suffered from the school closure in 2020/2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, relying heavily on face-to-face learning using equipment and other experiential learning strategies; apprenticeships from industries also were abruptly closed. These learning strategies do not lend themselves easily to online interventions and, as such, are affected by the school closures.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social protection in Uganda has evolved and has established a broad framework of specific laws and policies. For example, the national constitution and the Employment Act provide for workers' rights and employers' obligations, including the duty to give maternity and paternity leave, and prohibits any dangerous or hazardous work to a child's health. The Pensions Act, the National Social Security Fund Act, and the Uganda Vision 2040 further underscore social protection's importance in addressing risks and vulnerabilities (see more in Appendix Table 23). The country has not ratified ILO's central Social Protection conventions. The National Social Protection Strategy 2015 aims to improve the coordination of a unified policy framework on the social protection programmes.

Uganda's pension sector mainly has two schemes: i) the non-contributory Public Service Pension Scheme (PSPS) for civil servants and ii) the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) for other formal workers, including government agencies, non-government organisations, and formal private sector business firms with five or more workers. Another scheme is the Parliamentary Pensions Scheme. Studies found that the pension sector is limited in regulatory requirements to cover the entire pension sectors and haunted by ineffective mobilisation workers savings (see more ahead).¹⁰⁰ Other social protection initiatives are embedded in various government programmes such as the Orphans and other Vulnerable Children Programme, Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme for persons with disabilities, School Feeding Programme and Social

Assistance Grants for Empowerment, among others. These initiatives have limited scope and coverage as well as are not coordinated under a unified policy framework (see more in the Appendix Table 24). It is only recently that Uganda's government also planned to expand the services to include unemployment benefits, funeral grants, and school fees for the children of workers.

Concerning traditional and informal social protection, mechanisms exist in the communities such as family and clan support systems, mutual assistance schemes, and neighbourhood support groups. These social protection initiatives have played a significant role in assisting individuals and families during times of need and distress.¹⁰¹

Although the government's commitment to social protection through the enactment of various laws, policies, and programmes, deep coverage gaps continue, especially regarding the inclusion of workers from the informal economy. For example, just 2.8% of population were covered by at least one social protection benefit in 2020, significantly smaller than the neighbouring countries: DR Congo (14%), Kenya (10%), Rwanda (8.9%), South Sudan (16%), and Tanzania (14%). Vulnerable persons covered by social assistance continues very modestly at 1.2%. See more proportions of population covered by social protection in other aspects in Table 16.

Table 16: Proportion of population covered by social protection systems and health in Uganda, %, 2020

Indicator	Coverage
People covered by health insurance, % of population	<2%
Population covered by at least one social protection benefit	2.8%
Proportion of older persons receiving a pension	11%
Unemployed receiving unemployment benefits	0.0%
Mothers with newborns receiving maternity benefits	5.3
Employed covered in the event of work injury (2019)	16%
Vulnerable persons covered by social assistance	1.2%

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM); World Bank, World Development Indicators; John Hopkins and Bill & Melinda Gates Institute.

Social protection programmes also reflect the low penetration trend and leakage issues (i.e., programmes benefit the non-poor group). For example, coverage of social protection and labour programmes dropped from 7.2% in 2009 to 1.2% of the Ugandan population in 2016, superseded by DR Congo (14%), Kenya (10%), Rwanda (28%), South Sudan (16%), and Tanzania (13%). Likewise, the social insurance programmes stood at 0.6% of the population in 2016 with a relatively stark gap between the poorest and richest quintiles, 0% and 1.8%, respectively.¹⁰² Besides, Uganda's coverage of social safety net programmes also stayed low at 0.5% of the population.

Uganda's health expenditures declined at the beginning of the 2010s but stabilised at 6.5% of GDP from 2016 to 2018. It was 2.4 percentage points higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average. Uganda's health expenditure per capita dropped from US\$66 in 2010 to US\$43 in 2018. It signals that the country fell below the US\$44 per capita threshold defined by the High-Level Task Force on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems (HLTF) and substantially below the regional average (see more in Table 17).¹⁰³

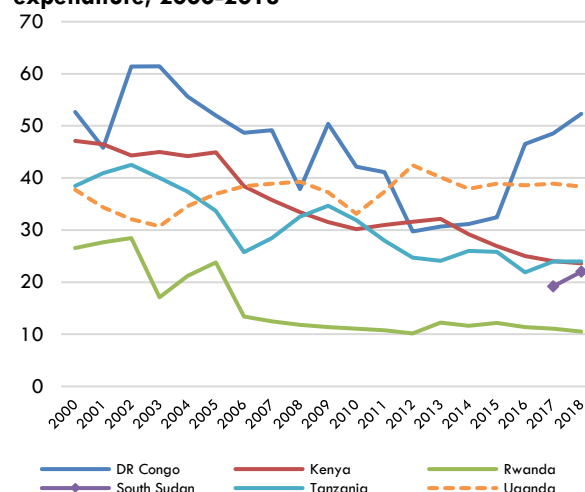
Table 17: Status of expenditure on health in Uganda and sub-Saharan Africa, 2010-2018 average

Indicator	Uganda	Sub-Saharan Africa
Total health expenditure, % of GDP	7.5%	5.1%
Current health expenditure per capita, US\$ current	US\$ 50	US\$ 87

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Figure 15 depicts Uganda's share of healthcare expenditure financed by private households' out-of-pocket payments stood stable during the 2010s and relatively high compared to the neighbouring countries, except DR Congo. Uganda's out-of-pocket health expenditure reached US\$17 per capita in 2018, which continued significantly higher than Rwanda (US\$6.1), South Sudan (US\$5.9) and Tanzania (US\$8.8) but lower than DR Congo (US\$25) and Kenya (US\$21). Continuously high out-of-pocket expenses on healthcare in Uganda has contributed to stalling the poverty reduction.

Figure 15: Out-of-pocket expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure on health in Uganda and neighbouring countries, % of current health expenditure, 2000-2018



Note: Out of pocket expenditure is any direct outlay by households, including gratuities and in-kind payments, to health practitioners and suppliers of pharmaceuticals, therapeutic appliances, and other goods and services whose primary intent is to contribute to the restoration or enhancement of the health status of individuals or population groups. It is a part of private health expenditure.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Some health improvements were detected: The maternal mortality rate fell from 585 in 2000 to 481 deaths per 100,000 live births on average in 2016; estimated significantly higher than Kenya (346), Rwanda (260) and DR Congo (397), but lower than South Sudan (1,130) and Tanzania (539). The mortality rate under-5 dropped from 146 in 2000 to 46 per 1,000 live births in 2019; again, it stood higher than Kenya (43) and Rwanda (34) but lower DR Congo (48), South Sudan (96), and Tanzania (50).

The country's pension sector went through liberalisation during the 2010s. As an aftermath of protest by NOTU, the government eventually repealed the 2011 pension schemes liberalisation act in March 2018, annulled the privatisation of the social security schemes. However, a combination of factors such as the country's fast-growing population, ageing workforce, life expectancy increasing, and the low tax effort is likely to challenge the fiscal sustainability of public pension in the long run.

Uganda's health insurance options have been based on employer or community-based schemes

and were estimated to cover around 2% of the population.¹⁰⁴ It was also the only country in East Africa without a national health insurance scheme until the national health insurance bill finally was passed in the parliament in March 2021. This bill sets the general structure for the broad national social health insurance scheme (NHIS), including every employer with at least one employee is obliged to register with the fund; the government can now borrow from the fund; the law made it mandatory for every Ugandan above 18 years to pay for the national health insurance and intended to improve accessibility, acceptability, and quality of health care services.¹⁰⁵ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development argued that the government and private employees need to contribute 4% of their monthly salary to the NHIS; employers will contribute 1% of each employee's monthly salary. Self-employed individuals are expected to pay UGX 100,000 (US\$27) per year, and pensioners to contribute 1% of their monthly pension payment. However, the president has not yet signed the bill due to uncertainties of the premiums on how much and what percentages the formal and informal employees and employers would contribute to the scheme. An ongoing study undertaken by the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda (IRA) continues, and it will affect universal enrolment to the scheme.¹⁰⁶

The NSSF is a scheme funded by contributions from employees and employers of 5% and 10% respectively of the employee's gross monthly wage. The government has attempted to control the NSSF's management board members to govern loans through the fund. However, the High Court ruled in April 2019 in favour of NOTU to order the government to remove the blockade of worker's representatives in the NSSF Board. For many years, NOTU further has advocated reforming the NSSF Act of 1985, including the members of NSSF should be entitled to have mid-life access to parts of their savings. These reforms evoked during the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a slight reduction in NSSF members' contributions; registered 2.1 million members in 2020.¹⁰⁷ Out of these registered members, around 15,000 informal workers

contributed to NSSF, which equals 0.7% of NSSFs total membership rate.¹⁰⁸

Mounting political pressure and intense advocacy finally led to the new National Social Security Fund (Amendments) Act from January 2022, which was considered a victory for the trade union movement. Previously, it has only been mandatory for businesses of five employees and more to make employer payments to NSSF. Now, all employers have to contribute. Other changes are summarised below:

- No taxation on benefits.
- Members aged 45 and above and have saved for at least a decade, mid-term access to 20% of their savings.
- Persons with disabilities get access to 50% of their accrued benefits once they clock 40 years and have contributed to the fund for the preceding 10 straight years.
- A self-employed person may apply for membership to the fund and shall make voluntary contributions to the fund.
- Any other person may apply for membership and make a voluntary contribution to the fund.
- Every employer, irrespective of the number of employees, shall register with the fund as a contributing employer and shall make regular contributions for their employees.

From 2010 to 2015, the government promoted the Expanding Social Protection (ESP) Programme focusing on developing a Social Protection Strategy and initiating a cash transfer pilot programme, known as Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE), divided into two schemes: a Senior Citizens' Grant and a Vulnerable Families Grant; both schemes include an extension of social security coverage to the informal economy.

The Senior Citizens' Grant is a universal pension system. The scheme was gradually rolled out, reaching 61 districts at the end of the 2010s. In FY2019/20, the government started to roll out the scheme to all the 135 districts in the country. The aim is to start covering people who are 80 years and above. Still, gradually coming down and ultimately

covering all older persons 65 years and above (60 in the more vulnerable Karamojong region) within a few years, while at the same time keeping all the older persons already on the programme (since 2010).¹⁰⁹ The Vulnerable Family Grants is paid to poor and vulnerable households that lack labour capacity. Data suggest that the proportion of older Ugandan persons receiving a pension increased from 6.6% in 2016 to 11% in 2020 (revisit Table 16 above).

A recent evaluation of the SAGE programme found it has helped households retain and build their productive assets. It has reduced their vulnerability by supplementing their natural coping strategies in the face of shocks. It helped to increase health expenditure for senior citizens and improve health outcomes for some households. SAGE's direct impact appears minimal in other fields, such as education or access to financial services. The programme's relatively low transfer value (around 12% of total household consumption expenditure) has made some difference to beneficiaries' lives, but its broader potential to affect livelihoods and local markets, as well as enable transformative investments in education, is somewhat curtailed.¹¹⁰

Uganda's Employment Regulations 2011 covers female employees are entitled to 60 working days of fully paid maternity leave. The compulsory leave is four weeks after childbirth or miscarriage. The worker may also have to provide a certificate of her medical condition from a qualified medical practitioner or midwife if required by the employer.

The maternity leave is granted full pay, and the employer finances the payment during the leave period. Male employees are entitled to four days of paternity leave.

To curb the emerging public health concerns triggered by the global Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the government issued several regulations, including Public Health (Notification of Covid-19) Order, SI No 45/2020; Public Health (Prevention of Covid-19) (Requirements and Conditions of Entry into Uganda) Order, SI No 46/2020; Public Health (Control of Covid-19) Order, SI No 52/2020; and Public Health (Prohibition of Entry into Uganda) Order, SI No 53/2020. These regulations aimed at preventing the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. The initiatives lead to closing schools; banning religious, social, and cultural gatherings; ban all manner of public transport and "non-food" markets. The ban on public transportation, coupled with a call on citizens to "stay home", has greatly affected the ability of the majority of employees to access workplaces. In addition, this pandemic's rupture of on-site work is challenging the labour regulations concerning employment contracts. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development call for consensual arrangements by employers with employees in terms of i) reviewing terms of casual workers and laying them off where necessary; ii) granting employees annual leave and negotiating with them to take unpaid leave; iii) exploring the provisions of collective bargaining agreements if the employees are members of a labour union.¹¹¹

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA

Table 18: List of approved labour related legislation in Uganda, 2014-2022 (January)

Type	Legislation
2014	
General provisions	Free Zones Act, 2014 (No. 5 of 2014)
Education, vocational guidance, and training	Higher Education Students Financing Act, 2014 (No. 2 of 2014)
2015	
General provisions	Presidential Elections (Amendment) Act, 2015 (No. 14 of 2015) Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2015 (No. 12 of 2015)
Equality of opportunity and treatment	National Women's Council (Amendment) Act 2015 (Act 17 of 2015)
Employment policy, promotion of employment and employment services	National Council for Disability (Amendment) Act (No. 19 of 2015)
2016	
General provisions	Non-Governmental Organisations Act, 2016 (Act of 2016) Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions & Money Lenders Act, 2016 (Act No. 4 of 2016).
Elimination of child labour, protection of children and young persons	Children's (Amendment) Act, 2016.
Migrant workers	The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Republic of Uganda Agreement on Employing Ugandans Workers in Jordan
2017	
-	-
2018	
General provisions / Equality of opportunity and treatment	The East African Community Regional Contingency Plan for Epidemics due to communicable Diseases, Conditions and other Events of Public Health Concern (2018 – 2023).
International agreements	Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Hungary and the Government of the Republic of Uganda on Education Cooperation
2019	
General provisions	Human Rights (Enforcement) Act , 2019. Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019. The National Environment Act, 2019 (Act 5 of 2019).
Equality of opportunity and treatment	RIATT-ESA Strategic Plan and Costed Implementation Plan (2019-2022).
2020	
General provisions	Public Health (Control of COVID - 19) (No. 2) Rules, 2020 (SI 55 of 2020). Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020 (SI 52 of 2020). Public Health (Notification of COVID–19) Order, 2020 (SI 45 of 2020).
2021	
-	-
2022	
Social security (general standards)	National Social Security Fund – NSSF (Amendment) Act, 2021.

Source: ILO, NATLEX, Uganda; DTDA SRO-East Africa, Uganda: Data-collection tool, 2019/2020.

Table 19: Central laws and policies to the labour market conditions in Uganda, 2016/17

Laws	Issues
Employment Act No. 6 of 2006	The Act was “to revise and consolidate the laws governing individual employment relationships, and to provide for other connected matters”. A bill from this act is before the 10th Parliament for approval.
The Workers Compensation Act Cap. 225 of 2000	The Act gives employees automatic compensation for any personal injury from an accident arising out and in the course of his work. It further details that, for an injury that leads to death, the compensation should be equivalent to an employer’s monthly pay multiplied by 60 months. Based on the act, compensation in case of occupational injury is automatic.
The Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 9 of 2006	The Act applies health and safety measures to every workplace or working environment and covers both the private and public sector Employers. The Act necessitates that the Employer provides compensation for any injuries sustained, diseases contracted or death suffered in the course of and as a result of employment. It also provides for general health and welfare provisions, including the provision of sound construction sites, proper ventilation of working environment, cleanliness, proper lighting, water, toilet services and first aid facilities for the workers. The Act applies to all Workers and Employers but excludes Men and Officers of the Armed Forces.
The Labour Unions Act No. 7 of 2006	Under the Act, employees are granted the right to organise themselves into Labour Unions and participate in the management of the said unions; collectively bargain; engage in other lawful activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or any other mutual aid practice; and withdraw their labour and take industrial action. Employers are also prohibited from interfering with the right of association of the different Unions; contravention of this legal position is an offence on the part of the Employer.
The Labour Disputes (Arbitration & Settlement) Act No. 8 of 2006	The Act provides for avenues of resolving disputes involving workers. The Act provides for the establishment of the Industrial Court, which is mandated to arbitrate on labour disputes and to adjudicate upon questions of Law and fact arising from references to the Industrial Court by any other Law. The Act also provides for other dispute resolution mechanisms such as references to the Labour Officer or a board of inquiry.
The Minimum Wages Advisory Boards and Wages Councils Act Cap.164 of 1964	The Act provides for the establishment of Minimum Wages Advisory Boards and Wage Councils, and for the regulation of the remuneration and conditions of employment of Employees.
Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTJET) Act 2008	The Act was put in place to address the redundancy of the different institutions for vocational training in Uganda and unemployment that was resultant from the scholar-oriented education system that provided minimal or no practical skills for students.
The Employment (Recruitment of Ugandan Migrant Workers Abroad) Regulations, No. 62 of 2005	The main objectives of these regulations are to promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all and to uphold the dignity and rights of Ugandan migrant workers; to allow deployment of Ugandans to countries which have existing labour and social laws or are signatories to international agreements protecting the rights of migrants; to protect every Ugandan desiring to work abroad by securing the best possible terms and conditions of employment; to provide a mechanism for issuing licenses to recruitment agencies.
Policy	Themes
National Youth Policy, 2001	The Policy recognises the right of youth to seek meaningful employment without discrimination.
National Employment Policy, 2011	The Policy sets to stimulate Government objectives and processes for generating jobs and ensuring a better employment environment for all workers.
National Development Plan II	The National Development Plan (NDP) II prioritised the question of job creation and employment. Evidence of this is shown by the theme of the development plan which is “Growth, Employment and Socio-Economic Transformation for Prosperity”.

Source: UBS, National Labour Force Survey 2016/17, 2018.

Table 20: Ratified ILO Conventions in Uganda, October 2021

Subject and/or right	Conventions	Ratification date
Fundamental Conventions		
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948	2005
	C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	1963
Elimination of all forms of forced labour	C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930	1963
	C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	1963
Effective abolition of child labour	C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973	2003
	C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	2001
Elimination of discrimination in employment	C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	2005
	C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	2005
Governance Conventions		
Labour inspection	C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	1963
	C129 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	Not ratified
Employment policy	C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964	1967
Tripartism	C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	1994
Technical Conventions (Up-to-date)		
Wages	C094 - Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949	1963
	C095 - Protection of Wages Convention, 1949	1963
Young persons	C124 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work), 1965	1967
Migrant workers	C143 - Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975	1978
Industrial relations	C154 - Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981	1990
Employment Policy	C159 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (disabled persons), 1983	1990
Occupational Safety and Health	C162 - Asbestos Convention, 1986	1990

Note: Fundamental Conventions are the eight most important ILO conventions that cover four fundamental principles and rights at work. Governance Conventions are four conventions that the ILO has designated as important to building national institutions and capacities that serve to promote employment. In other words, conventions that promotes a well-regulated and well-functioning labour market. In addition, there are 73 technical conventions.

Source: ILO, NORMLEX, Uganda.

Table 21: List of trade unions and affiliated organisations and number of collective bargaining agreements in Uganda, 2020

Trade Union	Total Members	No. of CBAs
NOTU		
Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (ATGWU)	101,350 *	9
Uganda Beverage Tobacco and Allied Workers Union (UBTAWU)	3,962	8
Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement & Allied Workers' Union (UBCCECAWU)	6,000	14
Uganda Government and Allied Workers' Union (UGAWU)	5,300	1
National Union of Clerical, Commercial, Professional and Technical Employees (NUCCPTE)	213	6
National Union of Education Institutions (NUEI)	6,400	2
Uganda Medical Workers Union (UMWU)	6,000	1
National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Work (NUPAWU)	120,000	12
Uganda Communication Employees' Union (UCEU)	221	3
Uganda Public Employees Union (UPEU)	5,050	1
Uganda Electricity and Allied Workers' Union (UEAWU)	920	6
Uganda Railways Workers Union (URWU)	300	1
Uganda Hospitality Leisure and Allied Workers Union (UHLAWU)	32	2
Uganda Media Union (UMU)	814	4
Uganda Nurses and Midwives Union (UNMU)	5,000	1
Uganda Fisheries and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU)	1,500	1
Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU)	160,000	1
National Union of Co-operative Movement Workers' Union (NUCMWU)	3,545	6
Uganda Horticultural, Industrial, Service Providers and Allied Workers Union (UHISPAWU)	1,000	3
Uganda Mine, Metal, Oil, Gas and Allied Workers' Union (UMMOGAWU)	1,760	6
National Union of Theatrical, Domestic, and General Workers (NUTDGW)	175,000	8
National Union of Infrastructural, Civil Works and Wood Workers (NUICWWW)	2,929	8
Uganda Hotels, Food, Tourism and Allied Workers Union (UHFTAWU)	50,000	150
Uganda Printers, Polyfibre and Allied Workers Union (UPPAWU)	1,329	5
National Union of Government and Allied Workers (NUGAW)	5,000	1
Uganda Private Teachers Union (UPTU)	500	3
Uganda Bottling, Bakers, Millers and Aligned Workers Union (UBBMAWU)	10,005	8
Uganda Local Government Workers Union (ULGWU)	1,200	1
Uganda Civil Society Organisations Workers' Union (UCSOWU)	1,214	2
National Union of Creative, Performing Artists and Allied Workers (NUCPAAW)	755	-
Uganda Journalists Union (UJU)	1,000	1
Uganda Markets and Allied Employees Union (UMAEU)	400,000 *	-
COFTU		
National Union of Drivers Cyclist and Allied Union Workers Union (NUDCAWU)	-	-
University Professionals and Academic Staff Union (UPASU)	-	-
National Union of Micro-Finance Savings and Credit Organization Workers (NUMFSCOW)	-	-
Agro Based Workers Union (ABWU)	-	-
Uganda Artisan and Allied Workers Union (UAAWU)	-	-
Uganda Courier and Telecom Union (UCTU)	-	-
Uganda Chemicals Petroleum and Allied Workers' Union (UCPAWU)	-	-

Uganda Parastatals, Statutory Authority and Judicial Workers' Union (UPSAJWU) **	680	-
Uganda Scientist, Researchers and Allied Workers Union (USRAWU) **	510	-
Uganda Liberal Teachers Union (ULTU)	-	-
Independent unions		
Kampala Metropolitan Boda-Boda Association	64,000	-
Namabitabodaboda association	-	-
Seetabodaboda association	-	-
AbaitaAbariki pick up and lorries association	-	-
Malaba taxi drivers' association	-	-

* Within the total membership in ATGWU, 97% (98,000 workers) are representing organised workers from the informal economy; in UMAEU, all are informal members.

** Trade union apply for affiliation to NOTU.

Sources: NOTU and DTDA.

Table 22: Ease of Doing Business in Uganda, 2020

Topics	Value
Overall	116
Starting a Business	169
Dealing with Construction Permits	113
Getting Electricity	168
Registering Property	135
Getting Credit	80
Protecting Minority Investors	88
Paying Taxes	92
Trading Across Borders	121
Enforcing Contracts	77
Resolving Insolvency	99

Note: Doing Business 2020 indicators are ranking from 1 (top) to 190 (bottom) among countries.

Source: World Bank, Ease of Doing Business 2020 in Uganda.

Table 23: Uganda's social protection legal and policy framework

Legal framework
The Pensions Act, (Cap. 286) which provides for granting and regulating of pensions, gratuities, and other allowances in respect of the public service of officers under the Government of Uganda.
The National Social Security Fund Act, (Cap. 222) as amended 2022 provides for social security benefits for employees in the private sector.
The Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority Act, (2011) provides for an Institution to regulate the establishment, management, and operation of retirement benefits schemes in Uganda in both the private and public sectors.
The Workers Compensation Act, (Cap. 225) provides for compensation to workers for injuries suffered and scheduled diseases incurred in the course of their employment. It commits employers to provide compensation to workers in case of injuries at work or to and from work.
The Domestic Violence Act (2010) provides for the definition of domestic violence, domestic relationship, and the basis for legal protection of victims or those threatened with domestic violence.
Employment Act No. 6 (2006), which provides for rights of workers and employers' obligations, including the duty to give maternity and paternity leave, prohibits any kind of work that is dangerous or hazardous to a child's health.
The Children Act (Cap 59) gives a legal framework for the rights and duties of parents, protection of children's rights, protection from harmful customary practices and harmful employment. It emphasizes the right of a child with a disability to have early diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation, the legal powers to make care and supervision orders, juvenile justice provision including possibilities for diversion.
The Succession Act (Cap 162) provides for succession matters for both testate and intestate succession in case of death of an adult male or female.
The Land Act (Cap 227) provides for restrictions on transfer of family land and states; "that no person shall sell, exchange, transfer, pledge, mortgage or lease any family land, enter into any contract for the sale, exchange, transfer, pledging, mortgage or lease of any family land, or give away any family land, inter vivos, or enter into any other transaction in respect of family land, except with the prior consent of his or her spouse".
The Birth and Death Registration Act (Cap 309) provides for registration of birth and deaths for purposes of enabling government planning and programming.
The Persons with Disability Act (2006) provides for comprehensive protection of PWDs against all forms of discrimination and equalization of opportunities.
The Minimum Wages Board and Wages Councils Act, (Cap 221) provides for the establishment of minimum wages advisory boards and wages councils, and for the regulation of the remuneration and conditions of employment of employees.
The Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 9 (2006) which regulates the safety and health of workers at the workplace and requires employers to put in place measures to ensure safety of workers and provision of protective gear to avoid injuries or occupational disease.
Policy framework
The National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy (2004) provides for survival, development, participation, and protection of vulnerable children and obliges Government to design appropriate instruments to achieve this.
The National Child Labour Policy (2006) provides a framework for addressing child labour and actions that need to be taken to deal with child labour.
The National Policy on Disability (2006) seeks to promote equal opportunities, care, and support for the protection of PWDs. It recognizes the fact that given the same chances and conditions, PWDs can perform to their full potential.
The National Policy for Older Persons (2009) provides for equal treatment, social inclusion, and provision of livelihood support for older persons. It identifies provision of direct income support and social insurance as key social protection instruments for addressing the needs of older persons.
The National Employment Policy (2010) supports provision of social security for workers in the formal sector especially those who can contribute to social security schemes such as the NSSF, private pension or health schemes. It also specifies responsibilities of employers to provide contingencies for their workers such as paid maternity, paternity and sick leave.

The Uganda Gender Policy (2007) promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in all spheres and provides guidance for engendering social protection interventions.
The National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management (2010) emphasizes the critical importance of restoring and maintaining the quality and overall welfare and development of human beings in their environment. It advocates for an approach to disaster response that focuses on reducing risk of loss of life, property, and livelihoods
The Special Needs and Inclusive Education Policy (2012), provides guidelines to all stakeholders to ensure that learners with special needs have equal education opportunities in this country.
The National HIV/AIDS Policy (2011) provides a broader framework for delivering HIV/AIDS related services in Uganda.
The National Health Policy (2010), aims to provide a good standard of health for all people in Uganda in order to promote healthy and productive lives.
The National Food and Nutrition Policy (2003), aims to promote the nutritional status of all the people of Uganda through multi-sectoral and coordinated interventions that focus on food security, improved nutrition, and increased incomes.

Source: Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the National Social Protection Policy, November 2015.

Table 24: Status of social protection programmes and population coverage in Uganda

Programs	Population coverage
The Public Service Pension Scheme	436,000
The National Social Security Fund, Workers Compensation	458,000
Voluntary retirement benefits Schemes	Very narrow and do not reach many individuals who requires social protection.
Workers Compensation Act	Only a few employers in the private sector. Government does not cover for its employees.
Private health insurance	Between 1% and 2% of the population.
Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) with two components: the Senior Citizens Grant (SCG) and the Vulnerable Family Grant (VFG).	Approximately 157,000 direct beneficiaries (59% are women, 41% are men) in 2018 in at least 15 districts out of 112. Senior citizens received their monthly allocations of UGX 25,000 (US\$6.7).
Public Works Programs	About 500,000 people.
The Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment	limited in coverage and do not guarantee regular and predictable minimum level of income for vulnerable households
Social Care and Support Services	Limited in scope and coverage
Informal and Traditional Social Protection, e.g., family and clan support systems, local credit and savings groups, mutual assistance schemes and burial groups.	Small proportion of the population

Source: Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; Uganda Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

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