

VNR MESSAGES FOR UGANDA 2020

Uganda's development journey has been guided by a deliberate and well-planned effort to transform it from a peasant to a modern, industrial and prosperous society. Since adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, Uganda has been steadfast in its efforts to realise the aspirations of her people. Since 2018, the economy registered strong recovery and was projected to grow at 6.0 percent in 2019/20, before the COVID 19 outbreak. Income per capita increased from USD 833 in 2016/17 to USD 891 in 2018/19, and Ugandans are living longer with an average life expectancy of 63.7 years. Gains have been registered in the education sector as manifested in improved literacy levels and increased enrollment at all levels.

Government recognises the need for high-quality and inclusive development planning to consolidate gains and advance achievement SDGs. The 3rd National Development Plan (2020/21-2024/25) underwent a wide consultative process and will be a vehicle for accelerating SDGs and Vision 2040. Using integrated SDG modeling approaches, the Government has fully mainstreamed the SDGs, identifying key accelerators based on their relative return on investment. In addition, Sectoral and Local Government plans and policies will also be enhanced to address inclusiveness, a key principle of the 2030 Agenda.

The Government has continued to strengthen institutional coordination for SDGs implementation. As part of efforts to operationalise the national SDG Coordination Framework, the President appointed the Minister in charge of General Duties in the Office of the Prime Minister as Cabinet Focal Point Minister in charge of SDGs. A fully-fledged national SDG Secretariat has been established to support the SDG Coordination architecture to ensure that Uganda stays on track in implementing the SDGs. While Government is enhancing statistical capacity to monitor and report progress, it is also building strong institutions at subnational level to accelerate the implementation of SDGs through localisation and voluntary local reviews

To strengthen efficient development planning, resource utilisation, and enhance cross-sectoral synergies, Programme Based Budgeting (PBB) was adopted during NDPII and advanced further in NDPIII. Uganda has developed a comprehensive Public Finance Management (PFM) Reform Strategy (2018-2023) that acknowledges several financial management challenges and presents recommendations to address them. A Domestic Revenue Mobilization Strategy (2019/20-2023/24) was completed and efforts are under way to prepare an Integrated National Financing Framework in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda--this will boost innovative mobilization and utilization of resources.

As Uganda advances the implementation of its plans, it is committed to ensure no one is left behind. Government has put in place laws and policies to support inclusion of vulnerable persons. For instance, the PFM Act (2017) ensures gender and equity responsive budgeting. The Government increased funding to livelihood and special grants for youth and women. The Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment program has improved social security and reduced vulnerabilities for older persons aged 65

years. Uganda continues to support over 1.4 million refugees through a globally acclaimed programme Refugee model.

As the Government fast-tracks progress on the 2030 Agenda, it has embraced the global wave of digital transformation which presents significant opportunities. This is through strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation as well as the National Information Technology Authority to minimize possible exclusions that could be posed to some population segments with limited capacity to embrace it. Whereas the 2030 Agenda is strongly anchored on environmental integrity and sustainability, there are increasing effects of climate change reducing Uganda's natural capital. Therefore, the NDP III sets out ambitious climate actions through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted Uganda's progress in some sectors but has also given impetus to the country's industrialization drive. As a result, growth projections are down to 3.9 percent for fiscal year 2019/20. The toll that the pandemic has had on jobs, hitherto promising sectors could significantly impact on efforts to reduce poverty, vulnerability, and inequality. However, it has awakened the discourse on how Uganda build its systems to generate the required resilience to withstand such shocks.

Moving forward, the Government will sustain and strengthen collaboration with all actors and commits to the regional integration agenda as a means of accelerating efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda.