



Uganda Youth and Adolescents
Health Forum

Position Paper

**ON ENHANCING YOUTH
UNDERSTANDING & NAVIGATION
OF DISTRICT STRUCTURES.**



1. Introduction

Uganda is one of the youngest nations in the world (UNFPA, 2017) with over 78% of its population under the age of 30 years old. (Uganda Demographic Health Survey, 2016). Youth participation in decision making is therefore crucial as young people are the shapers of the world that they are inhabiting and the world to come. Uganda's 2040 development goals emphasize the importance of equal involvement and participation of all cohorts of Ugandans including youth, women, men and marginalized groups for the overall achievement of development. (National Population Authority, 2013). Youth participation is also mandated by the Uganda Constitution and the National Youth policy. The National Youth Policy's mission is to achieve "youth empowerment" and focuses on `respect for cultural, religious and ethical values; equity and accessibility; gender inclusiveness; good governance and national unity; youth participation and youth empowerment. (National Youth Policy, 2016).

While there is varying age disaggregation of youth, this paper adopts the definition forwarded by the National Youth Policy which considers youth to be individuals between the ages of 15 to 30 years. (National Youth Policy 2016).

Uganda has commendably made efforts to provide for affirmative action towards ensuring active participation of young people in government structures and decision-making processes. Despite this, young people are still left behind when it comes to active meaningful participation in decision making processes in Uganda (Action Aid, 2014). This cuts across all levels of leadership from national to grass root level. A 2014 study showed that about 48% of youth are aware that they can participate in their communities through their local council leaders, youth council and savings groups; noting still that these structures still did not engage young people. Additionally, close to 77% were not aware of any opportunities of engagement beyond these structures, or their roles in participating in community. (Action Aid, 2014).

Youth participation is defined as the interplay of different structures coming together to offer young people opportunities to meaningfully engage and inform economic, social and political policy processes and outcomes that affect their lives. These include human resources, programs, institutions and systems of influence and power. (OECD 2013, World

Bank 2014). Meaningful youth participation, therefore, ensures that young people are empowered and supported to influence policy, decision making and programming in order to contribute to development of their communities, countries and the world. Meaningful youth participation also includes skills development, creation of positive habits, attitudes and a sense of awareness and responsibility in a young person so that in turn, they can translate these into opportunities to influence the social, economic and political policy affairs of their lives communities and countries. Meaningful youth participation must include a commitment to gather young people's views, honoring their input and contributions; and should not only be viewed as a means to achieve developmental goals but as a human right that needs to be respected, fulfilled and monitored with specific policy indicators. (WHO, 2021).

Youth have the right to participate meaningfully in all stages of decision-making about their health and well-being (WHO, 2021). Meaningful engagement of youth ensures that their insights on their challenges are shared as well as the drivers of these challenges identified. Even more, meaningful youth participation ensures that youth are at the center and front of advocacy and action towards improving their lives and their communities.

This position paper focusses on youth's meaningful participation with the district departments of health, education, gender and the overall governance structures and relies primarily on desktop literature review of youth from various districts in Uganda as well as verbal and written feedback from youth specifically from the districts of Busia and Isingiro as case studies for the rest of the country. It highlights key issues faced by youth that hinder and stifle their meaningful participation at district level ; and makes some key recommendations from youth on how they would like to be engaged and supported to improve their meaningful engagement at district level.

This paper is benchmarked upon Hart's ladder of youth participation which describes different ways of engaging youth in order to make recommendations for further engagement of youth and to create awareness for policy makers on whether or not their method of youth engagement is participatory and empowering.



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre as cited in www.freechild.org/ladder.htm

2. Youth engagement at district level

This section focuses on how youth are currently engaged at district level; highlighting the existing gaps and how they are being engaged. It is based on information gathered from consultative meetings with youth and district officials in Isingiro and Busia district; as well as desktop reviews of the status quo of youth engagement in the country.

2.1: Youth engagement at administrative /council level

According to the Speaker of Busia district and the Probation officer of Isingiro district, young people are often engaged through existing youth Committees and Councils; in addition to their elected representatives. Every district is meant to have a district youth council which is made up of the district youth committee, youth chairpersons at sub county level, the secretary for women's affairs at sub county, Division, Municipality or Town level; The Secretary responsible for Finance at the sub-county, Division, Municipality or Town level;

One representative of a youth Non-governmental organizations; One youth with disability; The District Officer in charge of Youth Affairs; Two student representatives; The two youth councilors on the district Local Government Council; The Executive Secretary of the District Secretariat. (Uganda National youth Action Plan, 2021). While this is a robust structure intentioned to meet young people's needs at all levels, it is not functional in most districts (Uganda National coordination mechanisms for youth, 2021). Young people, in Busia and Isingiro reported not being aware of such structures. Some young people reported that while they are on such committees, they are rarely invited for meetings or have their input included into district decision making processes. This is reflective of the country situation where most young people are left out of decision making processes due to an assumption that they are inexperienced, not knowledgeable and unfit to participate in decision making. (SN Mukwaya et al, 2021).

According to the Speaker of Busia district, young people are often engaged through interactions with the secretaries of different working groups at the district for particular focus areas. Different districts have different working groups for production and natural resources, works and technical services, finance and administration, social services and whatever key area the district leadership deems necessary. (Uganda Local Governments Act 1997). The speaker of Busia also noted that young people are also engaged through the Speaker's office who is able to take their issues to the District Executive Committee meetings. The functionality and frequency of this is still wanting in most districts. This factor points to the nascent presence of structures that offer vast opportunities for young people to meaningfully participate; but also conversely retain structural limitations that prevent them from participating; for example a lack of awareness on how they can take up roles in these structures. (M Mugisha et al, 2016).

By book, young people are allowed to submit feedback to these working groups in order for their views to be tabled. However, during the consultative meetings in both Busia and Isingiro, young people reported that most of them are unaware of these processes including how to submit their views to such committees. The youth in Isingiro district, especially those coming from refugee settings, reported that this was it was their first time to hear of such structures, during the meeting. In addition to this, young people shared that their low levels of education hindered them from taking part in such processes due to lack of formal knowledge on how to 'formally write letters' or 'order papers'.



2.2 Youth Engagement at the Health Department

Some districts have functional District Committees on Adolescent Health (DICAHS) whose major mandate is to deal with adolescent health issues. However, this may limit the age range of the issues being handled as a large cohort of youth are above adolescent age. Both the District Health Educator from Busia district and the representative of the district health officer from Isingiro district reported that one way in which youth are engaged is through being hired to be a part of the human resource. In Busia, the health management team is working on ways to train young people as community health workers to support the efforts of the village health teams since the latter group is often made up of older people. Additionally, nationwide, some health facilities have put in place youth corners and youth led `adolescent days` which are mostly run by young people. Additionally, young people are engaged as champions and peer educators in community health outreaches championed by health facilities. While this is a positive progression towards improved youth engagement in the health departments, young people still reported that there is a general lack of engagement and involvement when it comes to feedback processes and designing of programs. For example, young people in Busia district reported that the suggestion boxes at their health facilities are merely a suggestion(that is, they are never opened and or recommendations read) while young people in Isingiro district shared that the staff at most local level health facilities, specifically health centre IIs were almost never around so there was no one to engage with and share issues with, in the first place.

2.3 Youth engagement at the Gender department

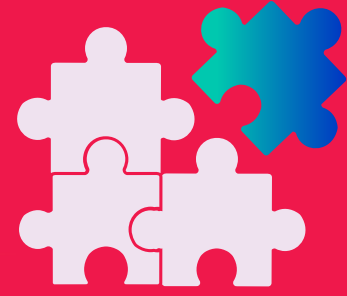
The gender department is the department in charge of youth and youth issues. Within this department, youth activities are mainly implemented by the Probation and Social Welfare Officer and Community Development Officers. (Uganda National youth policy, 2016)These officers have other roles and responsibilities; which makes handling youth issues an added issue that may get delayed focus depending on the available resources dedicated to them. (Uganda National coordination mechanisms for youth, 2021).

Majority of the programs for youth fall under the community development officer or the probation officer who are responsible for working together with youth for their overall development. The youth probation officers in both Busia and Isingiro shared that youth are engaged through community groups, as gender champions and through different government led programs targeting youth development. This finding is reflective of other national data for example...

2.4 Youth engagement at the education department

According to the District Education Officer in Busia district, young people are not directly engaged at the district level but are engaged through bodies formed in education institutions. For example, prefects bodies, students bodies, Parent teacher associations etc. Issues concerning schools are often presented on these platforms and further presented to the district inspector of schools or the district education officer.

~ 3. Key challenges expressed by young people



- **Youth are often engaged as tokens and puppets and not as agents of change.**

The majority of young people from both Busia and Isingiro reported that most of the participation that they had with their leaders was often in a tokenistic manner. Young people are often engaged in a *‘pour young people and stir’* manner which focuses more on bringing many young people together in order to report that they have been engaged; without actually engaging them or implementing their suggestions and decisions. Other young people reported that the level of youth engagement with their leaders is either manipulative, decorative or sometimes simply assigned; where they are not involved in the design of programs but are simply told what to do and how to do it without an opportunity to exercise their own agency. Young people are rarely at the lead of their own change and their input rarely listened to.

- **Poor accessibility of the district offices:**

The district leadership is made up of different structures which come together for the overall aim of local development. The leadership involves different structures that involve district council leaders at different levels as well as leadership in specialized departments. The district leadership has the overall goal of debating budgets, decisions and by-laws. It is therefore crucial that young people are involved in these processes at all levels in the district governance. In spite of this, anecdotal evidence shows that the district structures are not porous enough to allow for easier access by young people. Even more, young people share that they are not aware of the different procedures to follow in order to participate in key policy processes for example in the presentation of bills or motions.

- **Political influence on youth participants.**

Some youth leaders and positions are appointed as tools of political patronage. This often means that young people belonging to different political affiliations are intentionally not included or engaged. This stifles democratic representation and perpetuates discrimination which makes it hard for young people to freely participate. In addition to this, while the fact that young people’s population is of the highest percentage in Uganda, most leaders only engage them for their numerical advantage and use them to offer backing to political or otherwise causes that have nothing to do with any youth issues. (DGF, UYONET, 2017).

- **Lack of access to information:**

Young people reported that there is very scanty and sometimes, no information made available to them on how they can meaningfully engage with the district structures. Most young people reported that there was no way for them to know how to report their issues to the district, besides using their elected council members. They also pointed out that they lack information on how to adequately utilize or access alternative means of engaging the district except through their Councilors. This often means that if the councilors are ineffective, their matters may not be dealt with. Additionally, youth advocates who stand up and request for civic education or civil rights education are often viewed as opponents of government and often face backlash; this leads to young people not getting access to correct information. Furthermore, young people in both Busia and Isingiro districts reported a lack of information on budgetary allocations for youth.

- **Poor relationships between the district leadership and young people:**

This is mainly based on negative attitudes that older leaders have about youth. Young people reported that it is hard for them to have objective dialogue with their district leaders because they are viewed as combatant and rowdy. This is often a misconception that hinders young people from having meaningful interactions with their leaders. Additionally, some leaders view young people simply as beneficiaries and not as agents of their own change.

- **Lack of youth responsiveness within some district departments and structures.**

Youth responsive service provision is the mainstreaming of capacity at all levels of service delivery to respond to the priority health and development needs of young people. (World Health Organization, 2014, USAID , 2021). Many young people reported a lack of youth responsiveness at most health facilities at the district including some health centre IIs being understaffed and others closing before closing hours. Additionally, they have no staff dedicated to community health work who would ideally be well placed to reach young people in the communities. Some services are priced in ways that make it hard for young people to access these services.

• **Unsustainable support given to young people:** During the consultative meetings, young people reported that most of the support they receive is from Civil Society Organizations and not as much from the government. This often means that young people feel that they are only listened to during the periods when civil society organizations have projects on ground but must go back to business as usual, of not being included, when the CSO projects end. Additionally, such engagement by CSOs often only views young people as beneficiaries of programs and not drivers of their own change (Action AID, 2014). The inability of the young people to own these programs acts as a factor in hindering its sustainability or scalability. Furthermore, while there are a number of existing programs championed by the government to cater primarily for young people, most of the young people from both Busia and Isingiro reported that they face various challenges accessing these opportunities. A district official in one of the districts reviewed, shared that most of these youth programs look good on paper but the roll out processes are often not as smooth. This makes it hard for all young people to be reached especially in cases where budgets are constantly being reduced. One example of this is in the Parish Development Model, where they noted, the district budgets are constantly being revised and implementation is being delayed in the process.

• **Corruption and abuse of power.** Young people are often barred from interacting with some district offices due to the requirement that they give their leaders bribes to get attention. This is especially regarding getting access to funds and resources dedicated to youth for example the youth livelihood program where many young people reported that they have been asked to give their leaders `kick-backs` or bribes in order to be given funds.

• **Dysfunctional youth representation.** Young people reported that one of the challenges that they face is that some of the leaders they voted to represent them are only there for decorative purposes and rarely make time to meet and interact with their constituents. Some youth reported that they are not even aware of their youth leaders; especially those from marginalized groups for example refugee youth and youth with disabilities. Additionally, youth reported that the chairpersons for youth at sub county and village level are often not brought on board when discussing district issues. This leads to information rarely reaching them at the grassroots. Furthermore, young people often have no representation on health committees which makes decision making at that level rarely youth focused. Health Management Committees at health facilities are meant to have youth representatives but youth are not included in the meetings. Youth are not put on school management committees either.

• **Lack of effective coordination from district to village level.** Young people reported that programs often stay at district level and rarely even spill down to the grass root level due to poor coordination for youth. The issue of poor coordination sometimes stems from the fact that the different roles played by the Local Councils and Youth Councils have not been very clear since in some cases, the same individuals sit on both structures executing similar functions. (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2021). Additionally, district leadership often relegates youth issues to youth councils. Most district executive committees do not have a youth representative as this

is left to the national youth council executive committees in the district. Such a structure makes coordination difficult since these separate entities make different decisions. Poor coordination makes information flow strained and makes youth unable to access information on policies which affect them, the available interventions and opportunities; which have contributed to the current high levels of unemployment and poverty in their age bracket.

• **Performative solutions offered for youth participation.** Young people shared that while their leaders give them an idea that they want their voices to be heard, it is only decorative and for performative purposes because their ideas are not listened to. One example of this is through the suggestion boxes in health centres which are never opened or read. Additionally, structures are established but they are not supported to engage youth from sub-county to village level. Only district youth councils are active. Young people lose hope in following up issues when they report because their decisions or input is often not respected.



- **Lack of empowerment of young people to take up key spaces of influence.** Some young people shy away from actively participating because of a lack of confidence they may have to fit in; since they lack information on processes and policies. Additionally, some young people reported that they are not as educated enough to understand some of these processes for example when told that they needed to write professional letters to the speaker's office to get their views added to the meeting agendas, they shared apprehension being that they were unskilled on how such formal documents should be structured. Additionally, most laws, policies and guidelines are not simplified for their consumption and this ends up barring their meaningful participation.

- **Lack of adequate funding dedicated to young people.** While young people come up with innovative programs to develop their communities, very little of the district budgets are dedicated to them. One example is in Masinya subcounty in Busia district, the youth leaders shared that their budgets offer only 100,000 a year to cover all youth issues in 3 parishes. It becomes difficult to determine which activities to prioritize since that money can only do so much in improving youth participation in a year. Furthermore, there is a lot of corruption within the district offices in that some of the country programs that have dedicated funding for young people never reach the young people who need them. Some young people reported that they sometimes experience scenarios where their identification cards are collected to be submitted for access to youth livelihood program funds but they never receive the funding although district reports show that the program is ongoing. Sub county budgets are often not reflective of any intention or participation of young people. Additionally, youth Council members from Isingiro district reported that while they have the will to be able to engage with young people in their districts and sensitize them on some youth opportunities in the district, they are given meagre funds to support these activities and are paid a very small salary which cannot be able to support their work.

~ 4. Key Recommendations

4.1 For district executive committee members

- District council leaders should create more awareness for young people on how they can engage with different district offices. This can be done through the provision of adequate, accurate and timely information through innovative youth friendly channels. They should also provide opportunities for the strengthening of interpersonal relationships between leaders and youth to promote persuasive communication and youth empowerment in decision making. This can be done through creation of platforms like district `kimeeza`s that encourage intergenerational dialoguing.

- District leaders should include civic education in their programs to ensure that youth are knowledgeable about their roles and how they can meaningfully engage with the district. Young people need to have their capacities built on policy advocacy and accountability. Therefore, deliberate effort should be made to build skills of young people to participate governance effectively, for example through mentorship programmes.

- Youth representatives voted into Council offices should take up their roles and ensure frequent advocacy and accountability to ensure that youth voices are added to the decisions made.



District leaders should create and support youth platforms like youth forums which are made up of youth leaders at district levels, youth led civil society organizations and student councils. In districts where they exist, these platforms should be strengthened. Creating a stronger movement of youth challenging action at different levels has the potential to increase their meaningful engagement at the district.

- Youth should be actively engaged in the budget making processes to ensure that their programs are adequately funded and for them to be able to rightly hold their leaders accountable. This involvement should include active mobilization of youth to be a part of budgetary meetings, implementation and accountability processes. Additionally, they should earmark sufficient amounts of money towards youth issues and initiatives.
- District leaders should revive nonfunctional youth structures at district level and should ensure that youth are supported to be on decision making panels and committees where their voice is not being aired.

- Leaders should support multi-sectoral collaboration and programming specifically focused to youth issues across different departments by creating youth forums and platforms in order to ensure that the young person's needs are addressed as a whole human being.

- District leaders should work to address the barriers that hinder young people's engagement and participation with the district. They should also be intentional about dismantling barriers that discriminate youth based on age, gender or social status. Adolescents, young people from marginalized groups and young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds should be empowered and supported to make decisions in the districts.

- To improve monitoring and accountability processes, district leaders should come up with key youth participation indicators that are tracked by young people; allowing room for young people to make suggestions on how their engagement can be improved and offering opportunity for them to design their own methods of active meaningful participation with the district.

4.2 For the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development

- The MOGLSD, in line with Article 32 of the Constitution should strengthen programs that focus on youth economic empowerment as a means to address their vulnerabilities and marginalizations in key decision making processes. These programs should be implemented with youth at the lead and taking note to ensure inclusion, multi-sectoral involvement and the multi-dimensional approach to youth development that focusses on addressing youth issues using a life cycle model.



- The MOGLSD should build the capacity of district, subcounty and village teams to roll out key youth participation strategies and programs like 'the national youth coordination mechanisms' to guide district teams on meaningful engagement of young people.

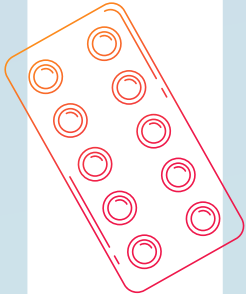
- They should improve access to correct information for the district structures and young people on youth meaningful participation. This can be done through developing and disseminating translated and simplified popular versions of key policies and strategies on youth participation to guide districts on how to meaningfully engage with young people and to offer young people information on how they can meaningfully engage with the district structures.

- The MOGLSD should increase the budget allocations for youth issues at the district to facilitate more frequent youth participation at the district.

- They should support districts to revive inefficient youth structures for example youth forums, youth secretaries etc who will be key support in improving youth participation at district level.

The MOGLSD should ensure that they include young people from grassroot areas during national meetings and program design workshops to ensure that their voices are not left out of programs targeting the entire country.

- The MOGLSD should work with local leaders and young people to improve budgeting processes and ensure that these processes are inclusive, participatory and transparent. This also includes the roll out of youth programs like the Parish Development Model whose funding includes supporting local youth programs.



- MOGLSD should work with other line Ministries to ensure youth mainstreaming and youth inclusion in all policies, programmes, project, laws and other initiatives in order to ensure that the contemporary interests and concerns of the youth are planned for by all the national, regional and local players.

- The MOGLSD should empower the district gender offices to ensure that all youth are engaged in district programs including refugee youth and youth with disabilities. This can be done through reviewing and improving their data collection tools to ensure that youth participation in programming is an indicator that the district must report upon.

- Young people should be included as gender champions at district level. The gender department, with support from MOGLSD, should actively engage young people in decision making around sexual reproductive health and gender based violence in order for them to be at the forefront of fighting against and addressing negative social norms that perpetuate violence against women in communities.

- The MOGLSD should simplify and roll out the national youth action plan to all district offices. The Action plan promotes youth participation and mandates leaders to support young people by building their capacities and skills in lobbying and advocacy.

- The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development District should support the gender departments, particularly the community development department, to operationalize the youth coordination mechanism structures which center youth participation and make it easier for young people to engage with district offices.

4.3 For the Ministry of Health

- The Ministry of Health should support the district health office to carry out regular supervisory visits that include getting feedback from young people to ensure that health facilities are youth responsive and that young people are actively engaged in decision making at those levels. Young people's involvement in the feedback processes can be done through client exit interviews, suggestion boxes, or during focus group discussions among young clients visiting the health facilities.

- There should be youth actively engaged and included in higher level decision making structures like the health management teams to ensure that young people's decisions are included in health sector planning and programming.

- The district health teams should work with the Ministry of Health to budget for, support and operationalize District Committees on Adolescent Health(DICAHs) as these are great platforms for young people to participate and for their health needs to be considered and put in place.

- There should be employment and training of younger people in the roles of community health workers as young people may find it easier to relate to health workers who are their peers.

- One of the key challenges faced by young people in meaningfully engaging with the health departments is the low staff attendance at some lower health facilities, poor attitudes of health workers and a general lack of youth responsive service delivery. The Ministry should support the district budgets and staffing plans to address these issues and also support trainings in youth responsive service delivery in health facilities.

4.4 For Ministry of Education

- Creation of more supportive structures for adolescent mothers to be able to have their voices heard when it comes to programs targeting getting them back in school.

- There is need to empower schools to take in suggestions of adolescents and young people without the interference of parents.

- Support the development of school clubs and inter-school clubs that empower adolescents to gain the skills and knowledge to be able to take up spaces and advocate for their participation in the communities and districts.

- Young people should be included in school management committees as active decision making members.

4.5 For the National Youth Council

- With their mandate to organize, mobilize and engage youth in development activities, the National Youth Council should take lead in building the capacities of district leaders as well as young people in lobbying and advocacy for youth inclusion in development strategies.

- The National Youth Council should review the capacities of district and subcounty youth council members in order to address any existing gaps or challenges that hinder them from reaching young people at grassroot level. Young people reported that some of them had only seen their youth council representatives during elections; this hinders their engagement with the district since they are unable to reach their own youth representatives to share their issues. The National Youth Council should come up with strategies to strengthen this level of coordination in order to ensure that all young people are adequately represented by their youth leaders.

- The National Youth Council should lobby increased funding for their district Councillors to support their engagement with young people especially those in far reaching areas.

- Weak infrastructure of youth councils, poor coordination mechanisms and fragmented programming has been identified as a hindrance to active youth participation (USAID, 2009). The National Youth Council should work with local Council members to identify gaps in coordination and design alternative channels to improve it in order to ensure that all young people are reached and adequately served.

- The National Youth Council should work together with local youth groups and youth led organizations to strengthen youth networks for change. These networks can be an added avenue to promote youth engagement and expand the number of platforms through which young people can be engaged; beyond the formal elected channels.

4.6 For youth

- Young people should take initiative to try and understand the existing structures at district level and how they can effectively engage with them.

- Youth should seek out opportunities to become determinants and agents of change as opposed to simply recipients of policies passed down to them. While this may be difficult in a policy environment that does not offer such spaces, young people should continue to advocate for more representation and engagement as it is their right.

4.7 For Non Governmental Organizations and Development partners

- They should involve young people as representatives and champions during district engagement meetings to build rapport among district leaders for the value of their participation.

- Non Government Organizations and development partners should come up with youth advisory councils for whom one of the roles is district engagement. These advisory councils can act as youth representatives for these entities when discussing youth issues and also help advise the organizations on key issues that young people face within the districts.

- They should support youth skilling and capacity building in policy advocacy and accountability; ensuring that youth from different cohorts are engaged including young people from far reaching areas, refugees, teenage mothers etc.

- Development Partners should include indicators on youth meaningful participation in their district support strategies and plans and ensure that they monitor these indicators directly from young people as key actors, rather than as beneficiaries of their programs.

- They should build capacities of district departments in youth engagement. This should be done beyond their project focus areas to cover youth participation in achieving development goals, as a whole.

- Considering that minimal budget allocation for young people has been highlighted as a hindrance to their participation, development partners should build capacity of district leaders and young people on lobbying for funds as well as raising local funds to improve youth engagement in district programmes; so that they do not remain dependent on donor funding.

5. Conclusion

Although youth engagement and understanding of district structures is still fairly low, the challenges that drive this factor are not insurmountable. With the right support and empowerment, youth can be able to meaningfully engage with different existing structures and take up opportunities that only they should. As the demographic majority, youth have an undeniable role to play in the development of Uganda today; for the Uganda tomorrow. Therefore, the Government of Uganda and Development partners must ensure that all existing hindrances to their meaningful participation are addressed so that that they are included, empowered and listened to in decision making processes. Additionally, youth should exercise their agency and take up this mantle and continue to lobby and advocate for their active involvement in areas where they are being left out.



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