A SOCIAL CONTRACT
WITH YOUNG UGANDANS
THE NATIONAL YOUTH MANIFESTO 2016-2021

‘A Peaceful and Prosperous Nation Harnessing its Youthful Population’
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PREAMBLE

We the **YOUTH** of Uganda who constitute the majority of the population are ENTITLED to recognition on issues of governance;

**RECOGNISING** that the youth population is heterogeneous (male; female; youth with disabilities; educated and uneducated; those working in the formal and informal sectors; urban and rural including those in slums, remand homes and prisons; street youth; youth in refugee camps; unemployed youth; and youth living with HIV/AIDS) and that its participation in and impact on decision making processes at local and national level is not commensurate with its numerical strength;

**NOTING** that the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda realizes and recognizes this imbalance and thus explicitly calls for equal opportunity in several of its provisions;

**FURTHER NOTING** that young people have the right to work, associate, collaborate and network with others on shared values, aspirations, objectives and goals on an equal and mutually beneficial basis;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that government has made some progress against the 2011 Youth Manifesto but major challenges still exist.

**RECOGNISING** that youth can be the solution not the problem and can be seen as a resource to drive national development.

**RE AFFIRMING** the belief that the government exists to serve the will of the people and in this case youth, and that youth as a significant proportion of the citizenry of Uganda are the source of all political power enjoyed by the state;

Do hereby **COMMIT** ourselves to:

i.  Respect, promote and protect democratic and other values and uphold and affirm the rights of all citizens of Uganda;

ii. Use our strength in diversity to promote national harmony in all political, social and economic affairs;

iii. Exercise political tolerance, maturity, sobriety and respect for other people’s political views and opinions;

iv.  Desist from acts of violence, hooliganism and lawlessness;

v.   Desist from corrupt practices and promote transparency and accountability in public affairs;

vi.  Take active roles in the activities and affairs of political parties, organizations and society as a whole;
vii. Be sensitive to the rights of people with disabilities and recognize the important roles and contributions they can make to national development;
viii. Get involved in meaningful and acceptable activities that generate income; and
ix. Create safe and inclusive spaces for meaningful participation in decision making processes at local, national and international levels.

BACKGROUND

Uganda is experiencing high population growth, rapid increase in rural-urban migration and an HIV prevalence rate of 10% in urban areas and among young people in the age bracket of 15-29 (Ministry of Health, Sero behavioral Survey 2006).

The preliminary 2014 National Census results indicate that the population of Uganda currently stands at 35 million and is projected to grow to 91.3 million by 2050. 50% of the population is below 15 years of age which contributes to a relatively low proportion of the population being of working age hence leading to one of the highest dependency ratios in the world. A decrease in the dependency ratio, if achieved, is likely to impact positively on economic growth and create opportunities for Uganda to realize a demographic dividend as the huge population under 15 reaches working age. The East Asian ‘miracle’ of rapid economic growth between 1965 and 1990 was, for instance, realized because of an increase in the working-age population relative to the rest of the population coupled with government policies designed to harness this opportunity. This, however, represents a new challenge of ensuring that the greater supply of labour is productively employed.

Uganda is faced with a big challenge of a labor force that is largely unemployed. Despite this huge unemployed labor force, the Ugandan economy still has a shortage of appropriately skilled workers which means that the education system has failed to tailor its outputs to the needs of the economy. The result has been a large number of unemployed youth who are becoming a social and economic threat. Many youth remain trapped in unproductive labour in poor conditions in agriculture or the urban informal economy. The failure to match the skills needed in the economy creates a gap in the human capital which is critical for economic and social transformation. The creation of quality jobs is also a challenge for Uganda given that labour productivity is low and the labour market is fraught with great inequalities between men and women. Due to lack of noteworthy employment and educational opportunities, many young people work in exploitative and/or dangerous conditions in agriculture, domestic service, fishing, cattle herding, and the urban informal economy.
Related to these economic challenges of youth are their development challenges as they transition from youth to adulthood, including the areas of education, health and participation in civic and public life. Despite increasing access to education, only 57% of children complete primary education, with a disproportionate amount of the dropouts being girls. For those who do leave, access to vocational education opportunities remain limited, with only 43,000 students projected to be enrolled in the government’s BTWET program during the 2015/16 fiscal year; of which less than a third will be female.

Youth in Uganda also face numerous health challenges, including high teenage pregnancy rates, with approximately 25% of young women between the ages of 15-19 being pregnant, and approximately 2,400 young women between the ages of 15 and 24 dying from pregnancy related complications each year. The Global AIDS info Report (UNAIDS, 2012) suggests that a large proportion of Uganda’s 150,000 new HIV infections every year are among young people. In general terms, access to adolescent and youth-friendly health services remains a huge challenge.

Despite their numbers, youth also face challenges in influencing decision-making on governance issues that affect their well-being. The National Youth Council, the primary channel through which youth should participate in governance, receives negligible funding while its District Youth Councils are largely non-functional. According to the USAID-funded Uganda YouthMap Study conducted by the International Youth Foundation in 2011, youth exclusion from decision-making, planning and implementation of government programs that could benefit them often breeds frustration.

Uganda’s future socio-economic prosperity comes from harnessing the creativity, energy and talents of today’s youth and supporting their health, education, employment and participation in decision making now. Therefore, we believe the demands contained in this Social Contract with Young Ugandans and an approach to development that seeks to harness the youth population for national development will lead to the achievement of National Vision of: “A transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years.”

POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Social Contract was generated with full consideration of the legal and policy framework expressly provided for or implied in international, regional and Uganda’s legal instruments and policy documents below:

» The National Development Plan II (NDP 2) 2015/16- 2020/21,
» National Vision 2040,
Thousands of young Ugandans from across the regions of the country participated in the development of this Social Contract with Young Ugandans through a consultative process that enabled them to share their thoughts and aspirations. The consultative process led to the production of a draft Social Contract which was validated at a national event which took place on 20th and 21st July 2015 attended by 315 participants comprised of youth from political parties, District Youth Councilors, youth in CSOs, Guild Presidents, UNSA, youth with disabilities, secondary school youth, National Youth Council and Youth Members of Parliament. The initial consultative process comprised meetings; interviews; focus group discussions; social media interactions; and engagements during major youth-focused events like the Youth Camp, Annual National Youth Festival and an Inter-Party Youth Platform (IYOP) Symposium. In addition to the Social Contract itself, an Assessment/Audit Report of the extent to which the NRM Government has addressed the key youth empowerment and development demands as espoused in the previous National Youth Manifesto (2011 – 2016) over the last four years was compiled.

The Youth Coalition on Electoral Democracy in Uganda (YCED) intends to monitor the extent to which the demands set out in this Social Contract are reflected in party manifestos and the program of the next government elected in 2016, and the extent to which these are acted upon in practice during the 2016 – 2021 Government. It intends to conduct an annual Youth Sector Review during which the monitoring findings will be discussed.

THEMATIC AREAS

From the broad array of issues collated during the consultative process, five main thematic areas emerged as priority which include:

2. Health care for all
3. Education for opportunities (More training than education)
4. Sports and creative arts
5. Participation

These issues are further discussed in subsequent sections.
1. JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!

**Objective:** ‘High quality job and enterprise opportunities for young Ugandans with the skills and attitudes to benefit’

**THE STATUS**

There have been many recent studies and plans that have analyzed the problems of youth un- and underemployment. These include the National Action Plan on Youth Employment (NAPYE), studies by ActionAid and *YouthMap*, NDP II, and an NPA PEC paper entitled ‘Strategies for Employment Creation’, amongst others. Without re-iterating comprehensive reports, it is worth noting that the NAPYE, citing UBOS, refers to the youth share of unemployment in Uganda being estimated at 53.4 and NDP II, in addition to stating that youth unemployment rates in Africa are more than double those of the adult population, points to a significantly higher proportion of the youth population working in the informal sector. All these documents also highlight the lack of general skills youth possess for entry level jobs and the skills mismatches that exist whereby jobseekers do not possess the specific skills employers require.

It is to be welcomed that NDP II includes youth skills development measures but added to this, employers cite a lack of experience, and attitudes which lead to inappropriate workplace behaviors such as poor time-keeping. As a result, there is a tendency for foreign investments coming into Uganda to recruit workers from other EAC countries with the hotel and tourism industry being one such example. Furthermore, the lack of opportunities at home has led young Ugandans to seek opportunities abroad but this has led to exploitation as it is unregulated.

Even during a period of economic growth, the creation of quality jobs is still a challenge for Uganda given that labour productivity is low and the labour market is fraught with great inequalities between men and women meaning that finding gainful employment will continue to be a major challenge for youth in the years ahead. Furthermore, for many youth, particularly those in rural areas who still constitute the majority, an actual job is a distant aspiration. There is need for measures that support increased incomes and therefore more secure livelihoods.
The problems are further compounded by numerous barriers to business startups which include: limited access to finance; absence of an enabling environment, high taxation and absence of youth-friendly policies to promote youth-led enterprise development; bureaucracy and costs associated with formalization of businesses.

There are and have been interventions with varying degrees of success but the problems persist and, indeed, with the huge numbers of youth joining the labour market annually, could be said to be increasing. There is clear need for a concerted government-led drive which includes enhanced coordination to maximize the impact of numerous isolated initiatives. The previously proposed Youth Fund Bill which would bring together all grant and loan funds under one legal framework and ensure a consistent approach would be one way of achieving this.

The proportion of the youth workforce in the informal sector leads to other challenges for youth and the economy. The informal sector is hard to regulate meaning that minimum wage legislation cannot be enforced leading to a greater likelihood of exploitation. Unregistered businesses are less likely to pay taxes so the economy as a whole does not benefit from the income that would accrue. Measures to formalize are necessary but care must be taken to focus on tackling exploitation rather than stifling innovation or reducing opportunities for small scale enterprise.

Inequalities in the labour market between female and male youth have been cited above but in addition, for other categories such as youth with disabilities, the problems have an even greater impact and specific measures are needed to address their specific issues.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The challenges presented by youth un- and underemployment, as outlined above, are huge but there are opportunities both to divert youth from anti-social into productive behaviors, thus avoiding social unrest, and to harness the youth population to drive economic development. The National Action Plan on Youth Employment (NAPYE) contains a coherent program that can make a difference but it needs to be operationalized and to be integrated into the overall National Development Plan (NDP) II process.

The East African Community (EAC) Common Market Protocol that came into force on July 1, 2010, makes a case for intensifying skills development because labour productivity will become more important in determining the employability of workers, given the larger labour pool available to employers when labour moves freely within the Common Market. NDP II includes measures to address this by the creation of Skills Development Centres but these need to be more clearly linked to the Plan’s key growth areas of agriculture, tourism and minerals, oil and gas.
The tendency for the hotel and tourism industry to employ workers from other EAC countries and the projected technical jobs in mining and oil extraction both indicate the existence of clear opportunities for Ugandan youth within these NDP II key growth areas. However, given the numbers of youth already involved in agriculture, albeit for women often as unpaid family workers, and the proposed value addition and value chain pathways through the likes of agro processing, agriculture is likely to provide the most opportunities. With the right policies this can not only be actual jobs in the likes of agribusinesses but through the development of new enterprises both small and large. Added to this, the global demand for agricultural projects cited in NDP II suggests that there is huge potential for young entrepreneurs, with right support measures, to contribute to Uganda’s competitiveness on the world market and boost foreign exchange earnings.

The National Vision 2040 predicts improvements in employment levels and labour market conditions through a mix of measures that include: implementation of the National Employment Policy as well as other laws, policies and guidelines on labour productivity and employment; strengthening of labour market information systems; establishment of a minimum wage; provision of non-formal skills development targeted at women and youth; and enhancement of opportunities for medium-sized businesses through improved access to finance, entrepreneurship training and promotion of value chains. NDP II includes proposed major investment in transport, energy, ICT and water infrastructure. The public works projects that will result from this, coupled with public procurement generally, which constitutes a significant proportion of Uganda’s GDP, can also be geared to enhance youth employment and provide opportunities for youth-led businesses.

Existing government programs such as the revised NAADs program, the Youth Livelihood Program and the Youth Venture Capital Fund all present opportunities to enhance youth employment. It is vital, however, that there is greater coordination between them and explicit links with the NDP II growth areas are created.

**OUR DEMANDS ARE:**

1. An enabling legal and policy environment to facilitate job creation, skills development and enterprise opportunities for young Ugandans. It is vital that the needs and opportunities of female youth and youth with disabilities are specifically addressed in all the following:

   a) Institute measures to require employers, particularly foreign investors: to target local youth in recruitment; take steps to develop the local workforce such as offering internships; and procure from the area within which they operate. In addition to regulations incentives such as tax breaks should be considered.
b) Reserve at least 40% of public procurement contracts for youth-led businesses or businesses that employ the youth.

c) Reserve at least 40% of jobs created in public works projects such as major road constructions for youth.

d) Facilitate the formalization of the informal sector in such a way as to generate new job opportunities for young people. However, care must be taken not to stifle innovation or inhibit the development of small scale enterprise.

e) Review the Minimum Wage to ensure it reflects the cost of living and applies robustly to all young workers.

f) Strengthen implementation and monitoring of legislation that requires all foreign contractors to develop and implement a technology transfer plan.

g) Institute labour export regulations and policies to eliminate human trafficking and improve the working conditions of youth in the Diaspora.

h) Fast-track the enactment of the Youth Enterprise Fund law.

i) Instigate measures to support youth business start-ups and to nurture new businesses.

j) Allied to the Skills Development Centres of excellence that will be established through NDP II, establish Regional Incubation Centres for invention and innovation to create opportunities for business growth thereby increasing the pace of job creation. Steps must be taken to ensure these are accessible to all youth and ensure they are geared to the NDP II growth areas.

k) Fast-track the establishment of National Youth Service and Internship Schemes by all sectors including government.

l) Develop clear guidelines for the implementation of the National Disability Policy ensuring enforcement is robust where it applies to youth with disabilities.

2. Youth in Agriculture:

a) Institute mechanisms to encourage youth involvement in the agricultural sector across the value chain by promoting the establishment of youth cooperatives and availing public land to youth.

b) Stimulate the establishment of special products through the banks to facilitate youth access to finance for agricultural activities.

c) Support access to markets for youth engaged in agriculture at home, within the EAC and beyond to increase the likelihood of business sustainability and maximize the contribution to strengthening the economy.

d) Support infrastructure development, such as storage facilities, that enable small-scale producers to increase their efficiency.
2. HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

Objective: Increased availability, access to and uptake of quality and affordable health care services for young people

THE STATUS

Over the past decade, government has focused on expanding health infrastructure through construction of more health facilities in a bid to bring services closer to the people. As a result, the health trends indicate a general improvement over the years. However, a significant number of the health facilities are neither manned with the right cadre of health workers nor adequately equipped (NDP, 2010). While the Government of Uganda strives to have an effective and functional health care system, it is hard to ignore the fact that its efforts are severely inhibited by a less productive health workforce characterized by absentee staff and the double work strategy where public health workers engage in for-profit health care delivery alongside their government jobs. Drug and medical supply stock outs remain a common occurrence in most health centers. The allocation to health as percentage of the total Government budget reduced from 9.6% in 2003 to 8.6% in 2014/15 as opposed to the Abuja Declaration target of 15%. There is also an outcry among young people, especially those living with HIV, about limited financial support for adolescent and youth-friendly programs and services.

Many HIV programs rarely involve young people living with HIV and those with disabilities in planning, designing, implementation and evaluation of measures meant to benefit them. Moreover, the right of involvement is enshrined in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) document. This undermines the effectiveness of these programs because there is evidence that young people prefer services provided by their peers.

Adolescent and youth-friendly Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) service provision is still at just 5% for all public and private service providers (UDHS, 2011). Only 10% of public health facilities in Uganda provide youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services. Furthermore, young people continue to
face considerable social and cultural barriers to accessing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services because sex and related matters is a taboo in many cultures. They are often left alone to grapple with issues of new sexual feelings, physical changes, disease prevention and avoidance of pregnancy.

Recent evidence shows that maternal mortality ratio and the number of HIV/AIDS infections have started going up again. Young people aged 16 to 24 years account for 45% of the new HIV infections annually in Uganda—the majority of whom are young women in rural areas. A report published by the Uganda Aids Commission in June 2014 indicates that up to 570 Ugandan girls aged 15 – 24 get infected every week. Teenage pregnancy is the number one cause of mortality for girls between the ages of 15 and 19 years. Harmful traditional practices such as child marriage mean that 49% of Ugandan women are married before their 18\textsuperscript{th} birthday while 24% of girls aged 15 to 19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child. Additionally, 3 out of 10 girls in Uganda drop out of school due to pregnancy related issues.

THE OPPORTUNITY

National Health Policy and the National Adolescent Health Policy as well as the Adolescent Health Standards and Guidelines provides an avenue for the provision of youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services.


Uganda already has preventive care approaches, as it is cheaper and easier to prevent disease spread than treating them. These need to be strengthened if the benefits that accrue from a primary health care approach are to be realized. In addition, the availability of numerous traditional and new media platforms can go a long way in enhancing information dissemination on Sexual and Reproductive Health for adolescents and young people.

Investing in policies and programs that address health needs across the lifecycle can enable young people to develop into healthy adults who can contribute more significantly to economic growth. Greater political commitment and increased resources for adolescent health programming not only ensures youth health and well-being, but also transforms fertility and population age structure—the first step toward a demographic dividend.

Increasing availability, access to and uptake of quality and affordable health care services for young people will empower them to live healthier lives and lay a realistic foundation for building a more stable, prosperous, and hopeful future for Uganda and its young people.
OUR DEMANDS ARE:

1. Expedite the passing of the National Health Insurance Bill which will provide universal and affordable health care for all.

2. Provide accurate and comprehensive health information to the youth through the most convenient, affordable, and effective method; including support to ensure language and formal education levels are not barriers to access to information especially for young people with disabilities.

3. Review and streamline the health worker training curriculum to equip them with skills and knowledge on delivering client-friendly health services to all adolescents and young people, including those with disabilities.

4. Strengthen multi-sectoral partnerships between the health sector and other like-minded sectors to ensure coordinated access to health information and services for youth.

5. Invest 5% of the annual Ministry of Health budget as a stand-alone allocation for the establishment and sustenance of youth corners in all public health facilities at all levels.

6. Invest in health research to explore the unique health needs of young people according to different determinants such as age, disability, gender, school status, orphan hood status, and school status; and ensure evidence-based decision making.

7. Eliminate harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation and child marriages.

8. Institute mechanisms to reduce teenage pregnancies.

9. Eliminate laws and policies that contribute to gender-based violence and inhibit access to sexual and reproductive health services (such as the criminalization of HIV exposure and transmission).

10. Support youth involvement in efforts to prevent drug and substance abuse.
3. EDUCATION FOR OPPORTUNITIES

Objective: To develop a skilled, talented and competitive workforce through access to quality education.

THE STATUS

Uganda’s education system aims at promoting citizenship, ethical and spiritual values; scientific, technical and cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes, literacy and citizens that can contribute to the building of an integrated, self-sustaining economy. The Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Secondary Education, Students’ Loan Scheme BTVET, UPPET, Government Scholarships, Skilling Uganda among others are government programs that have significantly contributed to the growth of the education sector. Over the years we have seen the enrollment levels increase from 2.5 million to 8.5 million in primary, 26% in secondary and 5.4% in tertiary and university education. Despite this improvement, the sector is still marred by a number of challenges.

NDP II flags the inadequate quantity and quality of the human resources as one of the seven major constraints to national development. The education system still lacks adequate funding and effective implementation and supervision mechanisms to ensure effective service delivery. Additionally, teachers most of whom are of a youthful age are not well remunerated. Their take-home in terms of salary is below the standard that can offer one a favorable or average living standard. Furthermore, crowded classrooms remain a problem and are very likely to deteriorate the quality of education with the national pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools at 48 in 2011. The pupil-classroom ratio (PCR) was even higher, 57, 40 but had decreased from PCR of 74 in 2005.

With UGX 2 trillion of government spending FY 2015/16 dedicated to education, Uganda is still falling further behind our competitors. Millions of our youth are being consigned to a life of unemployment and poverty. Without an effective universal school system, that provides relevant education and equips our youth for the challenges of the global economy, Uganda will never reach its full potential. We must ensure that we provide quality education in our schools in order to prepare our youth for the competitive knowledge
economy of the 21st century. Supposedly practical courses like agriculture and entrepreneurship taught in secondary schools are still theoretical hence a secondary school dropout lacks skills to initiate and invent.

The sector still grapples with the challenge of inclusion of students with special needs. The infrastructure in majority of the schools is not adapted to meet the needs of these students. Assistive devices for such students are also very expensive making it difficult for many of them to access and own them. Majority of human resource in the sector do not have the relevant skills to handle students with disability which makes is extremely difficult for them to be fully included.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The ongoing curriculum review provides opportunities for further research and inventions that can make education productive.

Availability of free skills training opportunities by UPPET and BTVET provides an opportunity for creating new vocational centers and utilizing the available community polytechnics.

Long school vacations provide an opportunity for skills enhancement i.e. for senior four and senior six vacationers to gain vocational and other practical skills to enhance their employability and capacity for invention and innovation.

The Students Loan Scheme provides students an opportunity to attain higher education and pay later.

OUR DEMANDS ARE:

1. Enhance free skills training opportunities through UPPET and BTVET which provide an opportunity for creating new vocational centers and utilizing the available community polytechnics.
2. Incentivize private sector investments in education in hard to reach areas.
3. Create and implement clear policies to regulate the operations of schools both in the private and public sector.
4. Increase funding to the education sector over the next 5 years.
5. Improve teachers’ welfare (including housing and salaries)
6. Refresher courses for teachers to keep them relevant to the changing academic demands of the world. Teachers must also be equipped with skills to teach students with special needs at all levels.
7. Improve the learning environment at all levels of education e.g. build classrooms, provide laboratory equipment among others. Ensure appropriate adaptations are made to meet the needs of students with special needs.

8. Provide free daily school meals for all primary school children.

9. Strengthen School Management Committees through capacity building.

10. Outsource management of primary schools to parents and communities.

11. Establish a secondary school in each sub county to cater for those completing primary education and lower secondary.


13. Establish six regional centres of excellence in special needs education to address the issues of capacity in infrastructure, access, knowledge and skills etc.

14. Establish library services in places where they are absent and integrate them into the educational system to promote holistic learning.

15. Strengthen and expand polytechnics to stimulate industrial growth thus creating employment opportunities.

16. Increase investments in research and development to generate knowledge and stimulate growth.

17. Design and establish school vacation programs to enhance vocational and practical skills, inculcate an enterprising mindset and build citizenship.
4. SPORTS & CREATIVE ARTS

Objective: To enhance talent identification and development as a means of stimulating social and economic wellbeing of young people

THE STATUS

Sport has become a business in which associations and private enterprises are participating by offering various services. Furthermore the market for sports events through TV broadcasting rights, the marketing of major events and the sale of tickets has tremendously grown. These three markets – sports activities, sports equipment and sports events are inter-dependent and exert an influence on each other and together form an economic branch which is constantly growing. Sport generates income and new jobs as well as having a positive influence on behaviour.

Sport is a key aspect of youth development and is being increasingly used in imaginative and innovative ways to contribute to education, employment, health, gender equality, social inclusion and peace building. Not only does sport provide a basis for healthy living, it also captures the interest of young people, and provides many with a point of entry into society. The unique ability to engage and bring young people together makes sport an effective catalyst for strategic development programs. However the sports sector is constrained by limited funding and inadequate facilities and equipment.

Creative arts are an essential investment for peace and stability, and are a prerequisite for the success of human development. A more visible and effective inclusion of creative arts in development programs at local, national and international levels is critical for sustainable development. Creative arts is a powerful global economic engine generating jobs and income with a value of US$1.3 trillion in 2005. Cultural industries account for more than 7% of global GDP. (2009 UWR). Cultural heritage not only generates income, but also builds social cohesion, mobilizing communities around its care and management. Arts can also be a brilliant outlet for young people by giving them skills for the future, a chance to express their thoughts and feelings, and an opportunity to find something they excel at. Arts and culture are intimately related, as arts contribute to and are part of national and individual identity. Not only does arts education shape children’s behaviour and vision of life, it also provides a means of responding to the identity crisis and social breakdown.
The creative arts industry is likely to be the fastest growing sector in Uganda and could be worth more than $1 billion in 1 year by 2016 and create jobs in music, poetry, crafts and paintings, film, and theatre among others thus contributing 7% of the workforce, the limited protection for innovations, absence of music academies notwithstanding (www.contadorharrison.com/creative-industries-can-drive-uganda-competitiveness/).

Uganda needs to engage, challenge and empower its youth through the provision of proper sports infrastructure, equipment and opportunities and promotion of Uganda’s visual and performing arts. The value and importance of sports and creative arts in building a cohesive and progressive society cannot be over emphasized.

OPPORTUNITY

» Investing in sports and creative arts industries can create jobs that bring higher employee satisfaction.

» Sports enhances social cohesion and promotes a healthy and wealthy nation

» Income will be realized from investments, branding, government revenue and remittances from sports personalities abroad.

» Sports and the creative arts sector can promote tourism, social inclusion and national identity, a healthy nation and should be celebrated in their own right.

OUR DEMANDS ARE:

SPORTS

1. Establish community sports recreation centers to harness talent.
2. Review the structure of major sports in consultation with key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan of action to revitalize the sector.
3. Gazette land for sports facilities and establish sports complexes at regional level and revamp district stadia that have fallen into disuse.
4. Provide tax incentives to the private sector to encourage investment in sports.
5. Review the Lotteries and Gaming Bill to provide for the re-allocation of revenues realized from lotteries to sports activities.
6. Strengthen school sports competitions to enhance talent identification, nurturing and development.
7. Institute mechanisms towards making sports assessable in schools as part of the study program albeit in very practical terms.

CREATIVE ARTS

1. Provides incentives to the entertainment, arts, and creative industries to fully develop the sector to enable it compete effectively on the world stage.

2. Strengthen the copyright regime to enhance protection for creative works.

3. Establish a series of ‘creative industry hubs’ with full infrastructure facilities such as high-speed internet facilities and design studios as low-cost incubators for new creative industries and artists.

4. Strengthen Music, Dance and Drama competitions to enhance talent identification, nurturing and development.

5. Strengthen partnerships with traditional and cultural institutions to promote creative arts and culture as part of our national heritage and individual identity fundamental to improving tourism.

GENERAL

1. Empower schools to organize annual talent and innovation days/weeks in sports and creative arts where young people can be given an opportunity to find something they excel at.

2. Equip the big traditional schools to serve as Centers of Excellence in sports and creative arts which can be used by other schools and stakeholders within their respective regions who lack these facilities.
5. YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

**Objective:** To ensure that youth actively and meaningfully participate in the development, implementation and monitoring of government policies and programs

**THE STATUS**

The challenges to effective youth participation in decision making emanate from poor education and training where youth are not prepared for such engagement. They do not develop the necessary analytical skills for critical thinking or problem-solving through participatory, active learning, and appropriate information that enables them to make informed decisions.

Many youth especially those in rural areas don’t have access to information on government policies and programs. This is further compounded by limited space for engagement. While there has been quite a lot of both political and civil society attention to gender issues in Uganda, this has not translated into a high increase in young women’s participation in decision-making which is majorly caused by their position in community and family which is one of very little authority. For example, out of the District Youth Chairpersons (2011 – 2014), only two were female.

Another challenge comes with weak and fragmented systems in Uganda where young people lack direct access to institutional systems and structures within government, the media and private sector. This severely impedes their ability to advocate for their rights. In the rare cases where young people have been able to influence or make decisions, barriers such as patronage and patriarchy within complicated structures have tended to limit implementation. This erodes young people’s confidence and trust in such mechanisms.

Addressing inequality and the social exclusion of particular groups of young people is a big challenge within the youth sector, even for youth organizations. Creative mechanisms, such as the use of radio, to reach out (to rural illiterate youth in particular), must always be prioritized and reviewed. Harnessing the potential of new and social media tools to improve access to information and expand space for civic engagement is equally vital to improving youth participation.

The cost of non-participation is high because then youth will fall through the cracks of the government programs and policies. As a result, there will be less employment opportunities, increase in crime, vulnerability and uncertainty.
THE OPPORTUNITIES

Policies and legal frameworks including (National) Youth Policy, Local Government Act, African Youth Charter, United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, African Charter on People and Human Rights, provide an opportunity for youth to participate in decision making.

There are also platforms for engagement including youth organizations, student associations, political party youth leagues, civil society organizations, religious organizations, Youth Centres, and Youth Councils. This therefore provides a platform and an opportunity for an integrated approach to youth participation such that their views are mainstreamed across board.

The availability of various virtual and on line forums provides an opportunity for youth mobilization and participation across the board.

Youth MPs, Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs, National Youth Council all provide opportunities to enhance youth participation in decision making.

OUR DEMANDS ARE

1. Change the mandate of National Youth Council to place it at the center of addressing issues of youth. Female youth should be empowered to take on leadership as District Youth Chairpersons.

2. Recruit Youth Engagement Officers in Ministries, Departments and Agencies. Youth participation should be in terms of youth-led development, which always acknowledges the importance of local contexts and cultural values and practices.

3. Increase budget allocations to youth activities at a district level i.e. at least 5% of the local revenue and at least 5% of the unconditional grants from the central government should go to youth.

4. Establish a Multi-Sectoral Working Group on youth development to represent youth in the various government decision making platforms and act as a link between youth and government bodies.

5. Reinvigorate the existing student’s movement (UNSA) to enable the students community meaningfully participate in and influence decision making processes. Strengthen the governance systems of UNSA to ensure that it acts as a training ground for leaders.

6. Establish an independent Youth & Sports Ministry – to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate youth and sports development programs in the country.

7. Ensure representation for YWDs at all governance levels and in institutions like UNSA, NYC, Parliament, among others.

8. Lower the age to contest for LCV seats and harmonise with the age for contesting for other political positions like MP.
About the Youth Coalition on Electoral Democracy

YCED is a broad coalition spearheaded by youth like-minded civil society organization united to in the desire to create synergy in various electoral democracy efforts currently being undertaken throughout the country. Launched on August 19th, 2014, the Youth Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (YCED) is a broad coalition that brings together like-minded youth led and youth focused civil society organizations and individuals to advocate for meaningful youth participation towards electoral democracy in Uganda. The overriding agenda of this coalition is to advocate and promote integrity, transparency and active youth participation in Uganda’s 2016 electoral process and beyond.

The core membership of the Coalition include; UPFYA, IYOP, AYDL, YLF, GPAU, NUDIPU Youth, UYONET, RDP Uganda, and their subsidiary constituencies of membership and partners spread across the different regions and districts of Uganda.

In the run up to the formation of YCED, several consultations were held with both state and non-state actors representing a range of constituencies and disciplines, including youth from NGOs, civic associations, government, Political parties, students groups and development partners. A key outcome from these consultations was a desire to see youth civil society actors play a more front line role in mobilizing youth to make demands and participate in efforts aimed at realizing an electoral process in Uganda that is respected by youth and has legitimacy.

**Goal**

Increased meaningful, non violent youth participation and influence on the 2016 electoral process & beyond

**Objectives**

To facilitate platforms for increased youth participation and involvement in the electoral process

To develop ideas, mechanisms and proposals that will inform pre and post 2016 engagements on youth issues in Uganda

To create awareness on the need and action for non violent youth participation in the pre and 2016 electoral processes and beyond

*For more information about the National Youth Manifesto contact the Secretariate below;*