

2020

**ASSESSMENT REPORT
ON GBV PREVENTION
AND COVID 19 EFFECTS
IN UGANDA**





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gender Based Violence Prevention Forum is grateful to the following initiatives and organizations that have worked hand in hand with the GBV Prevention Forum towards the realization to the most of the baseline survey and research activities highlighted under this assessment report.

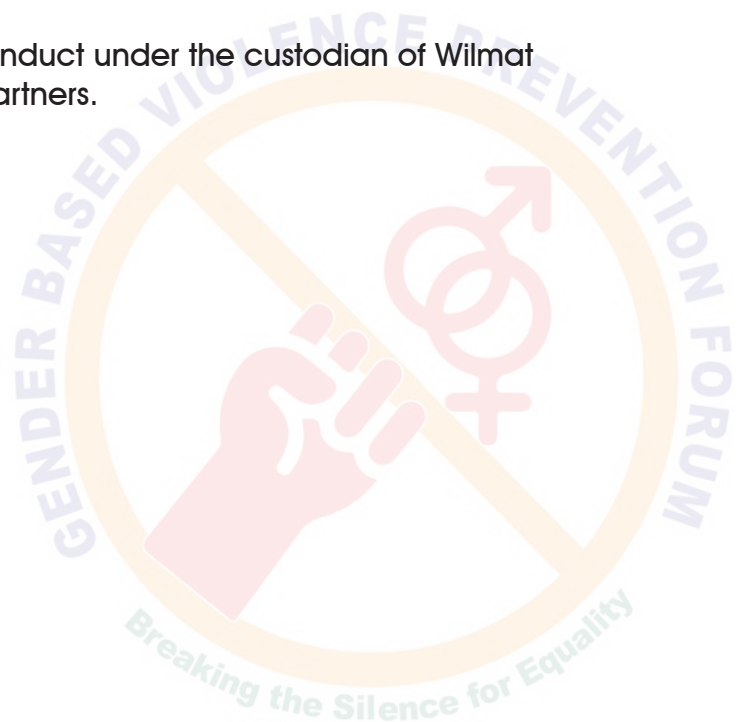
In a special way thanks to;

- **Wimat Development Foundation**
- **Rescue Women Foundation**
- **Einstein Rising**
- **Anthill Foundation**

Special thanks to all media houses of Uganda and other key stakeholders for the impactful involvement and contributions to this report.

DISCLAIMER

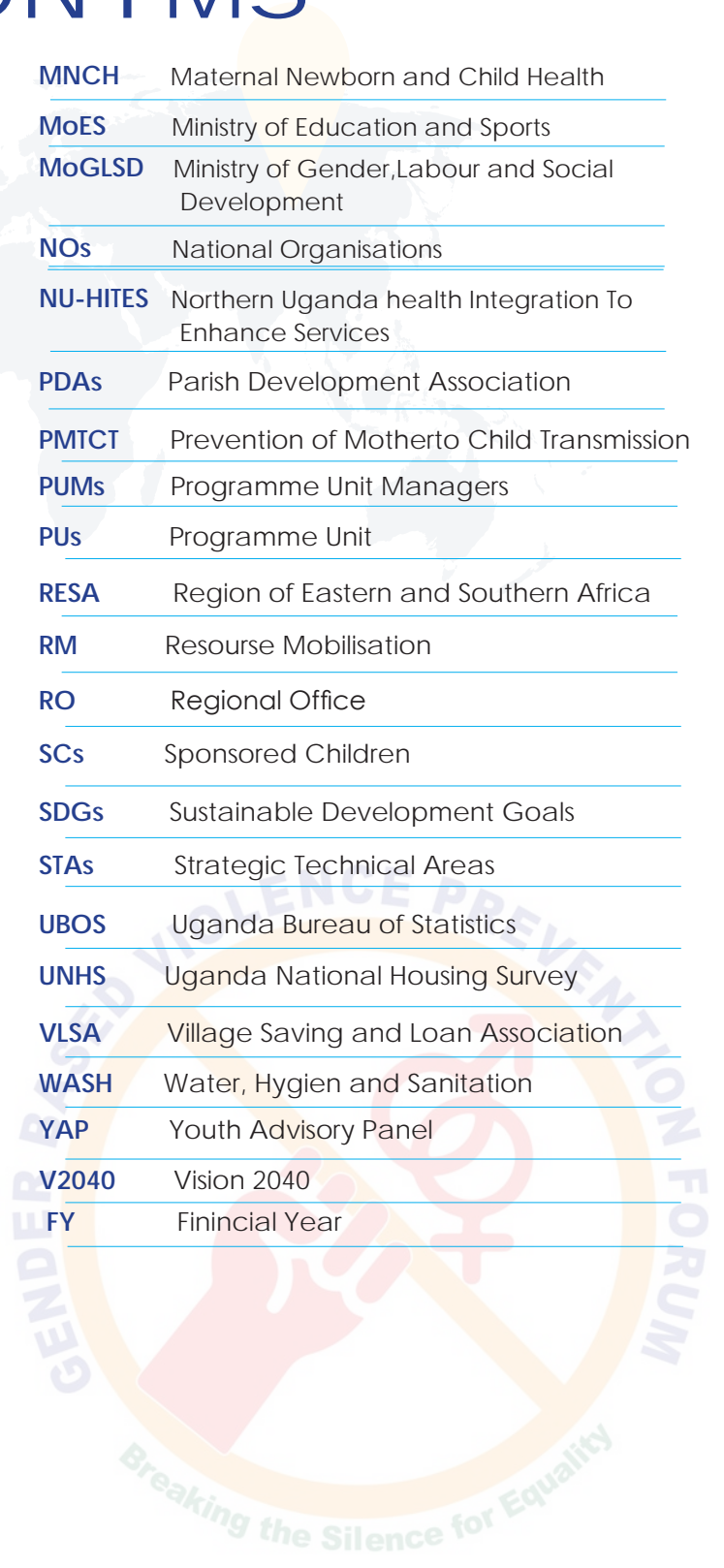
This report and survey was developed and conduct under the custodian of Wimat Development Foundation with support from partners.





ACRONYMS

ASRH	Adolecents Sexual Reproductive Health	MNCH	Maternal Newborn and Child Health
CCCD	Child Centered Community Development	MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation	MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
CDF	Community Development Facilitator	NOs	National Organisations
CEDAW	Convetion to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Woman	NU-HITES	Northern Uganda health Integration To Enhance Services
CLAC	Community Led Action for Children	PDA s	Parish Development Association
CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation	PMTCT	Prevention of Motherto Child Transmission
CRPD	Convetion of rights of People with Disabilities	PUMs	Programme Unit Managers
CRC	Convetion on the Rights of the Child	PU s	Programme Unit
CRSA	Child Rights Situation Analysis	RESA	Region of Eastern and Southern Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Orgnisations	RM	Resourse Mobilisation
CS	Country Strategy	RO	Regional Office
DRM	Disaster Risk Management	SC s	Sponsored Children
ECCD	Early Childhood Care & Development	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GBV	Gender Based Violence	STAs	Strategic Technical Areas
ICT4D	Information, Communication & Technology for Development	UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
IH	International headquarters	UNHS	Uganda National Housing Survey
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organisation	VLSA	Village Saving and Loan Association
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	WASH	Water, Hygien and Sanitation
MER	Monitoring Evaluation & Research	YAP	Youth Advisory Panel
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management	V2040	Vision 2040
		FY	Finicial Year

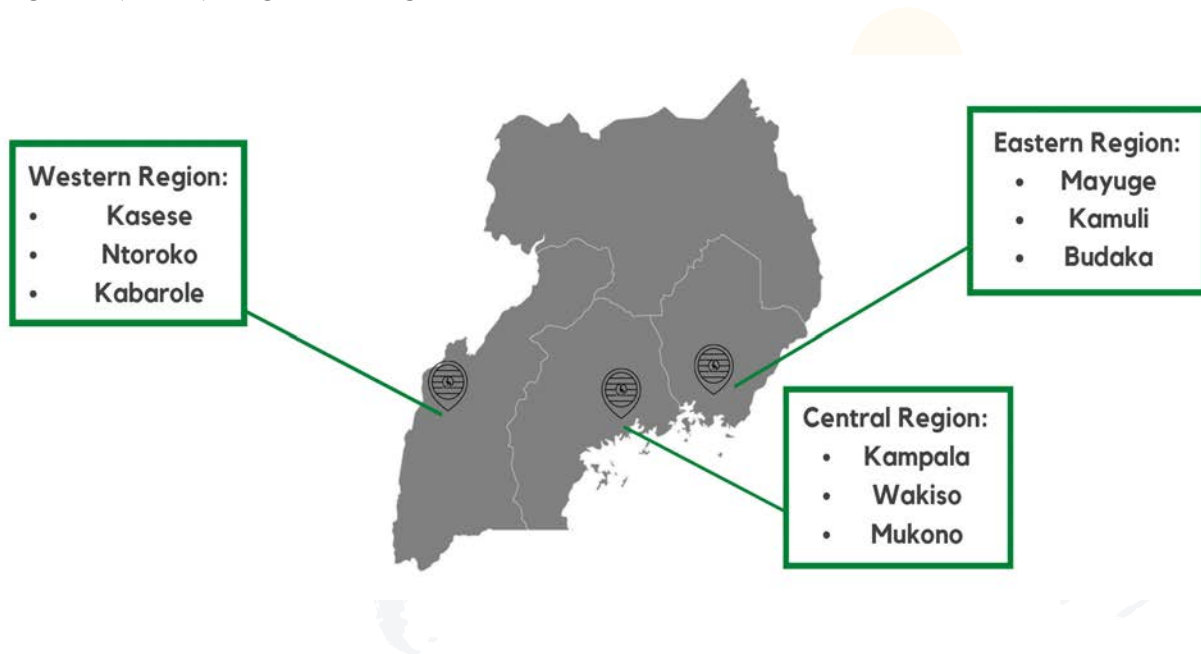




WHO ARE WE?

Founded in 2014, Wilmat Development Foundation (WDF) is a Not-For Profit Organization focused on Empowering Underprivileged Communities in Uganda, East Africa.

We Envision Building Resilient and Self-Reliant Communities with a Mission of Empowering Underprivileged Communities With Practical Skills For Sustainable Livelihoods. So far, we are working in 3 (Three) Regions of Uganda as below;-



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & PROGRAMS

Livelihood

Promote entrepreneurship engagements of communities and global allies.

Increase agricultural productivity to enhance food security and income of rural women and youth.

- Climate Smart Agriculture
- Women Empowerment Initiative
- Youth Empowerment Initiative

Advocacy

Empower young women to engage in policy advocacy & good governance to establish favourable economic & health policies.

Enhance child protection through Advanced Childhood Effects trainings and CIVIC education.

- Gender Based Violence Prevention
- Adverse Childhood Effects

Education

Enhance access to appropriate knowledge and skills development for youth at all learning institutions.

Develop effective effective management capacity building through teaching information management and networking skills.

- Schools Outreaches
- Caring Hand Initiative
- TEENS Talk Initiative



MESSAGE FROM THE RESEARCH CUSTODIAN



The year 2020 has experienced a lot of challenges in relation to the rights of women and young girls in Uganda and the world at large. Wilmat Development Foundation being the lead partner and custodian of this report puts us at a milestone to acknowledge the tremendous work by the research team for the leadership and the support from partners towards this assessment survey.

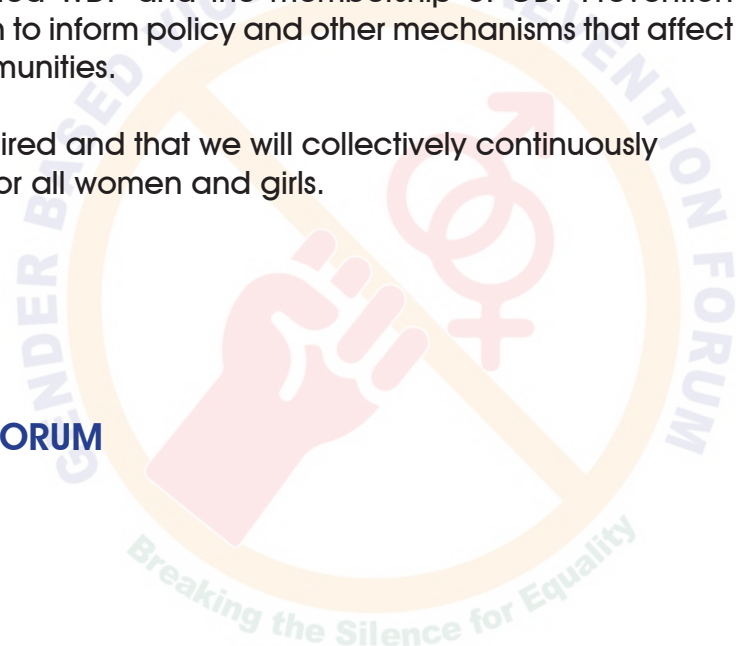
The year 2020, is a milestone year as it is both the 25 year commemoration of the ICPD25 and the International Community campaign on "Accelerating the promise". It will also be important to acknowledge that the year 2020 will have some key anniversaries among them The 75th anniversary since the establishment of the UN, The 25th anniversary since the Beijing Declaration, The 10th Anniversary for UN Women and the 5th Anniversary since the adoption of SDGs and yet young people have not really received any action and the commitments still tokenistic and on paper not much has been done to concretely position young people on the world stage. This research highlighted the need to support structural mechanisms sexual reproductive health rights and this could be a great opportunity for women and girls to work together in setting structures to work since they are the most affected at risk persons.

The 16 Days of Activism are flagship platforms for women and girls' rights and Fighting GBV from an international perspective towards ending gender inequalities to achieve SDGs 5 and making it a reality.

The COVID19 pandemic has had a heavier effect on access to justice and the enjoyment of human rights for both women and girls since studies and reports have identified them as vulnerable groups, but above all, this led to the escalation of violence against women especially in rural communities. The effects of COVID19 prompted WDF and the membership of GBV Prevention Forum to conduct analysis and basic research to inform policy and other mechanisms that affect the wellbeing of women and girls in our communities.

We hope our readers of this report will be inspired and that we will collectively continuously work together to make Uganda a country fit for all women and girls.

JOCKAS MATTE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WILMAT DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
MESSAGE FROM THE GBV PREVENTION FORUM





MESSAGE FROM THE GBV PREVENTION FORUM



In June 2020, the Gender Based Violence Prevention Forum underwent a survey to assess the impact of COVID19 on the livelihood of women and girls as well as its impact on GBV. Through this process, we took stock of progress and challenges, which provided us with the basis to make strategic adjustments in our work plan for the 2020 GBV prevention road map. The Government of Uganda has made considerable progress in improving the survival and well-being of women and girls during this pandemic, but critical sectors like health, Justice, agriculture and education need urgent attention. Gains in poverty reduction amongst women have also been reversed.

Across all our programs and the 2020 GBV prevention road map, the challenges to progress are broadly similar: the women and girls' population, elements of unemployment, policy adjustments, cultural effects and climate change, all within a context of moderate economic growth, stagnant budget allocations and strained capacities to plan and deliver essential social services that promote and protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of women and girls. However, the GBV Prevention Forum is well positioned to break down the barriers that continue to deprive women and girls of their basic right to engage these forces to earn a living. Our programs in capacity building, policy advocacy, and research are underpinned by a strategic approach that emphasizes systems strengthening; advocacy and public engagement; strategic partnerships; working closely with the private sector, regional bodies and government agencies; and fostering innovations – with complementary investments in the enabling environment, including strengthening data and evidence on the various sectors that lead to women and girls flourishing.

ALVIN MUTEBI
COORDINATOR
GBV PREVENTION FORUM





CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

Whilst there has been some progress in the attainment of a desirable egalitarian society in Uganda, majority of the marginalized women and girls, remain poor and exposed to all shocks of stresses and to a large extent voiceless. Most progress has been achieved in such technical spheres as the establishment of institutional and policy frameworks meant to enhance women and girls involvement at community, district and national drivers for self-reliant community. As such whilst policy, legal, research, educational and institutional frameworks and processes exist, the provisions are still inadequate, implementation is inconsistent and women and girls' real influence and access to justice and human rights in these spaces remains questionable. These challenges are reflected at international level and envisaged in the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 5: ending inequalities and SDG16: promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Women and girls are represented in key state structures in the executive arm of government, in parliament and local councils, as well as in political parties, the judiciary and other key state institutions. However, age parity has not been achieved and young girls influence, particularly in the legislative and policy arena

remains limited. Youths and women who hold these positions need to be supported and the institutions held accountable to reshape the legislative and policy agenda to be age-responsive rather than dominated by political experience. The importance of strengthening women's effective leadership and participation in governance is globally recognized in the discussions on the SDGs and was also considered a possible priority focus by the 2018 review of Uganda's progress towards implementation of the UN-Resolutions 2250, and Beijing platform for Action.

Failure to empower women and girls to enable them control and voice in their livelihoods, has a direct impact on their productivity and contribution to overall economic growth. A key reason for the failure is attributed to the persistent patriarchal control and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding their roles of youths in all spheres of life, which consequentially perpetuate the discrimination against youths. Access to quality and affordable health services remain a major challenge to women and girl in Uganda and this escalated during the outbreak of COVID19 pandemic and this affected their overall productivity. While age parity in education has been achieved, progress at higher institutions is still wanting. It should be noted that women and girls' access to information and other inessential services remains far from the ideal.

1. Uganda's demographic composition, Political approaches, social-economic aspects and 9 situations

Uganda is known for an increasingly youthful population, according to the United Nations Population Index, Uganda has a high birth rate (3.04%) and population density (138.1 per sq km). Uganda has an estimated population of 40 million people (55% below 18 years). According to the statistics from MoFEPD, economic growth has been steady for the last five financial years at an annual GDP growth of 1.69% with agriculture, Tourism and industrialization employing approximately 82% of the labor force. According to the Uganda's multidimensional poverty profile by UNICEF, most people (35%) live below the International Poverty Line, the profile notes that poverty is more rampant and severe in rural areas and urban slums where unemployment is high, particularly among youth and Women. Economic development is guided by various policies and programs of government, these include but not limited to V2040, UNPA 2018/22, OWC, among others. All these aim at transforming Uganda into an upper-middle income status country. However the NEPP 2018 highlights a number of challenges towards the attainment of V2040: Government Policies, Corruption and excessive bureaucracy, Misappropriation of priorities, Weak financial institution and low access to credit by Women and Youth.



2. Institutional and legal framework on rights of Women

A number of regional and international Women Rights instruments have been ratified and domesticated in Uganda these include: CEDAW, ICPPR, ICSECR, ACRWC and ACRW. The Uganda Constitution (1995 as Amended) and the Women Amendment Act provide the basis for the protection and promotion of the rights of women in Uganda. The 1995 Constitution provided for an affirmative action clause that gave women and other marginalized groups more priority to uplift their rights, enforcement and coordination of women and young girls' rights laws and provision of service are spread among multiple government agencies, (MoGLSD, NCW, NYC, and Courts). However, at the grassroots these structures are faced with a lot of structural challenges that affect the realization of protection and promotion of these rights thus giving room to escalation of violence against women, children and girls.

3. Uganda GBV profile

Over the past years, the government of Uganda has made tremendous approaches to progress in the quest to eliminate all forms of violence against women, Children and Girls as well as the promotion of Gender Rights. It is clear that between 1995 and 2015 the GBV proportion dropped drastically from 54% Violence on Women and Girls related cases to 20%, this was attributed to the effectiveness of laws and policies on Human Rights and the rule of law.

Besides, while the methodology used to track and record these developments in policy and programs, however, this does not capture the extent and in depth analysis on the matter of deprivation and silenced victimization of Women, Girls and Children since the UNICEF annual report of 2018/19 highlights undocumented violence against children at local levels. Expanding and broadening the understanding of the Ugandan GBV prevention context requires going beyond the traditional and conventional aspects as well as the national dynamics to expound the nature through which GBV prevention mechanisms trickle down to districts and local communities.

Seeking aspirations and drawing data from the MoGLSD Ministerial Statements 2014/15, the ministry made clear pronouncements on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWGs), this report seeks to present the national strategy and mechanism on EVAWGS. Additionally, this report seeks to address the need for a national multidimensional GBV prevention strategy, consensual approaches in national statistics and the methodology underpinning the construction of a clear national GBV prevention profile.

4. Our Findings and Experience

Women and girls experience societal and community challenges due to the underlying factors of patriarchy, according to findings, women and girls are faced with various challenges that limited their independence and innovative solutions to provide remedies towards the various gender discrepancies between women and men, 50% of the women and girls have access to various underlying skills and information for sustainability, it should be noted that most development project and programs address only livelihood and exclude social-economic independence and resilience of women. 45% of women and girls have participated in various livelihood initiatives however these have failed to amplify the need to expand mechanisms and strategies towards gender responsiveness and GBV prevention mechanisms at all levels



GBV and COVID19 Steaks

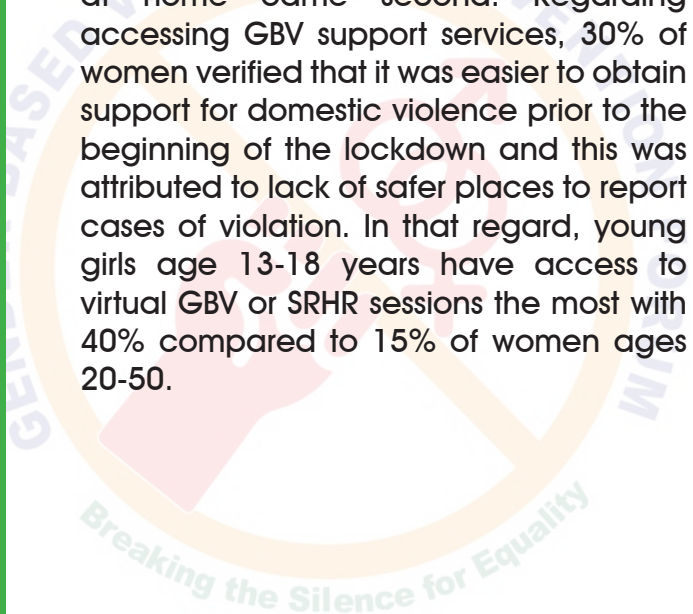
40% of Young girls respondents were at school before the outbreak — only 20% are now having any formal learning. • In East and Northern Uganda, 75% of the respondents do not have enough food to last the next two weeks. • Still in Northern and Eastern Uganda, only 5% of the women respondents own a mobile phone. • Only 15% Women and girls reported having access to information on SRH services during the lockdown compared to 30% before. • 60% of girls verified that it was easier to obtain support for domestic violence prior to the beginning of the lockdown.

Around the world, there have been terrifying reports of increased rates in gender-based violence (GBV) as a result of the lockdown. The survey and qualitative data collected reflect this trend of increased rates of GBV among women and girls, particularly domestic violence.

According to this survey, 70% of women and girls survey respondents stated they strongly agree with or somewhat agree with the statement that 'since the lockdown GBV against girls and young women has increased'.

Regarding the types of GBV experienced by women and girls 60% point to physical violence and sexual exploitation as a common practice. Women stated that their economic situation is a major driver of sexual exploitation, particularly in exchange for goods such as food and sanitary pads.

When asked what was driving this increase in violence the economic situation was the greatest concern, while lack of privacy, the inability to go out, and crowding at home came second. Regarding accessing GBV support services, 30% of women verified that it was easier to obtain support for domestic violence prior to the beginning of the lockdown and this was attributed to lack of safer places to report cases of violation. In that regard, young girls age 13-18 years have access to virtual GBV or SRHR sessions the most with 40% compared to 15% of women ages 20-50.





GBV service providers spoke about the challenges in supporting people to come forward during the pandemic and a loss of depth of the service due to not meeting face to face: the constant presence of husbands and other potential abusers in the household with women and girls prevents them from calling into hotlines or leaving the house to obtain help. GBV service providers also lamented that girls and some women do not have private access to their own mobile phone. Women and girls using their own phones may find that their partners or families regard them with suspicion, especially if the phone is password protected.

Globally the data looks similar with UNFPA estimating that:

- If the lockdown continues for 6 months, 31 million additional gender-based violence cases can be expected.
- For every 3 months the lockdown continues, an additional 15 million cases of gender-based violence are expected.
- Due to pandemic related disruptions in prevention programs, 2 million FGM cases could occur over the next decade that would otherwise have been averted.

(UNFPA. (2020, April 27). Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage.)



LIVELIHOOD

Access to jobs or other economic opportunities appear to have greatly decreased since the outbreak of Covid-19. This is particularly concerning considering that a lack of income generating activities thus assistance increases the risk of exploitation, including sexual exploitation of women and girls. In Eastern Uganda, only 5% of women reported accessing credit and finance in comparison to 20% of Men. Food Security 100% of Uganda respondents spoke of lower food rations and this was the number one cause of stress across the survey. Many respondents advised that they were now only eating once a day.

Child marriage and teenage pregnancy

Since the inception of a lock down and closure of schools, rural and semi urban areas recorded increase in child marriage and teenage pregnancy in their communities. There was a particular concern that those girls wouldn't return to school. As a result of the Covid-19, so many girls are being married in exchange of bride price to sustain families amidst the pandemic situations According to Plan International report, by the time schools resumes, drop in the population of girls who would be coming back to continue their education Comfort.

Research and survey have shown that such crises and pandemic out breaks often lead to a rise in the rates of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Research conducted during the Ebola outbreak by Plan International showed that between March 2020 and August 2020 in parts of Eastern Uganda, teenage pregnancy had risen by 55% and this is expected to rise more in the months of November and December.



Women and Girls as predisposed to GBV

Much as the government, stakeholder and development partners have increasingly invested much more into the protection of the rights of women and efforts to EAWGs, according to the national wide coverage, GBV cases dropped in with 4% 2018/19 from 15% to 11% respectively. From the findings it should be noted that almost half of the Women and young girls aged 12-17 year have experienced any form of GBV from 2018 to 2020. Majority of the case and hotspot areas being concentrated in the urban and semi urban areas, this is attributed to the nature and classification of various forms of GBV in these communities. Finding to this was collected under the following formats:

House Hold/Domestic exposure:

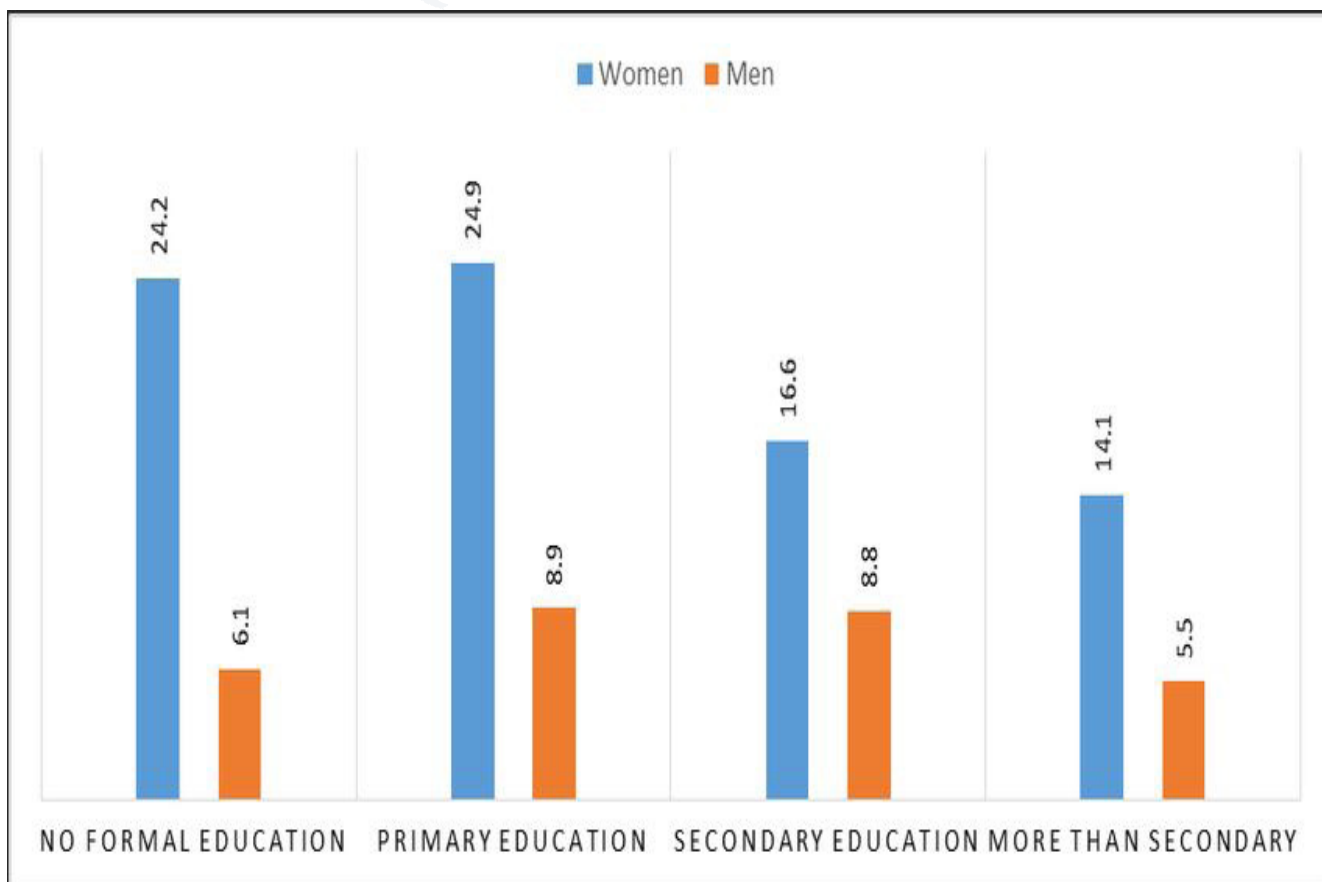
This approach highlighted domestic violence, homicides and domestic child abuse.

The percentage of Uganda's population experiencing GBV related exposure at house hold and domestic level accounts for an overall of 46% during the time of the COVID19 pandemic, this is more than double as to what was recorded by UNFPA in 2019. The rate at which homicides and domestic violence escalated was attributed to the lock down measures.

House hold GVB exposure was highest among households where the household head has no formal education and knowledge of the existing legislation and policies on the rights of women with 54% likelihood to exposure. However, house hold GBV exposure was very low in households with the elementally and advanced educational levels with 25% likely hood of exposure, this was the same to households headed by male that recorded a higher GBV exposure rate than those related to households headed by women. Households where there are more children than adults experienced higher levels of exposure to GBV related cases ie child labor and domestic child abuses. For instance, households with four children per adult represent a particular at risk group with 70% likely hood of exposure, this was also characterized by rampant early childhood marriages in households in eastern Uganda and girl children trade in Arapai Market, however there was lower risks among households with no or low number of children per adult at only 30%.



Uganda	National Estimate	49%
Sex of House hold	Female	32%
	Male	54%
Education level of Household head	No Formal Education	69%
	Some Primary	62%
	Completed primary	45%
	Some secondary	34%
	Lower secondary	30%
	Higher secondary	19%
	Diploma	15%
	Degree	5%

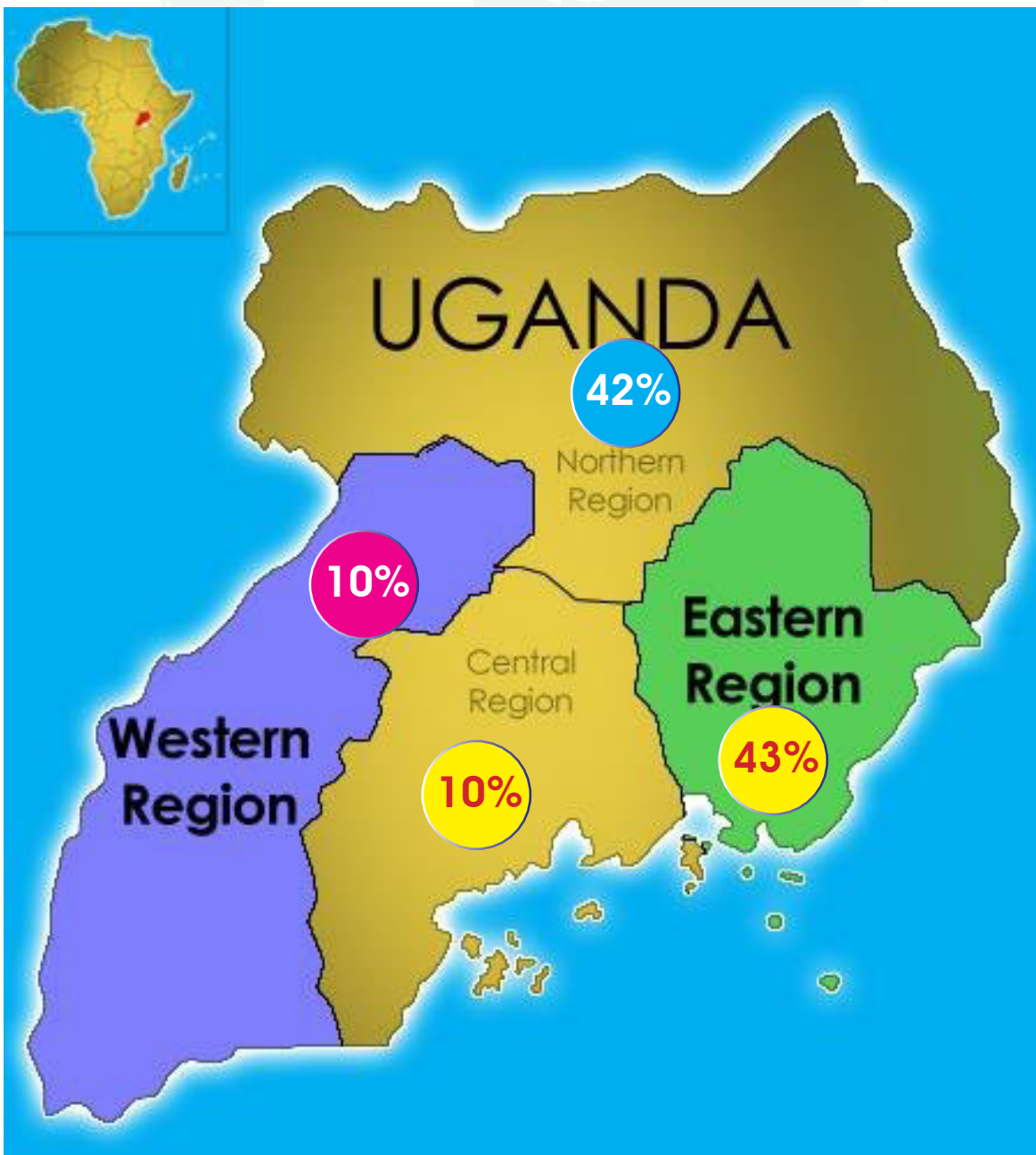




Regional/Cultural Characteristics:

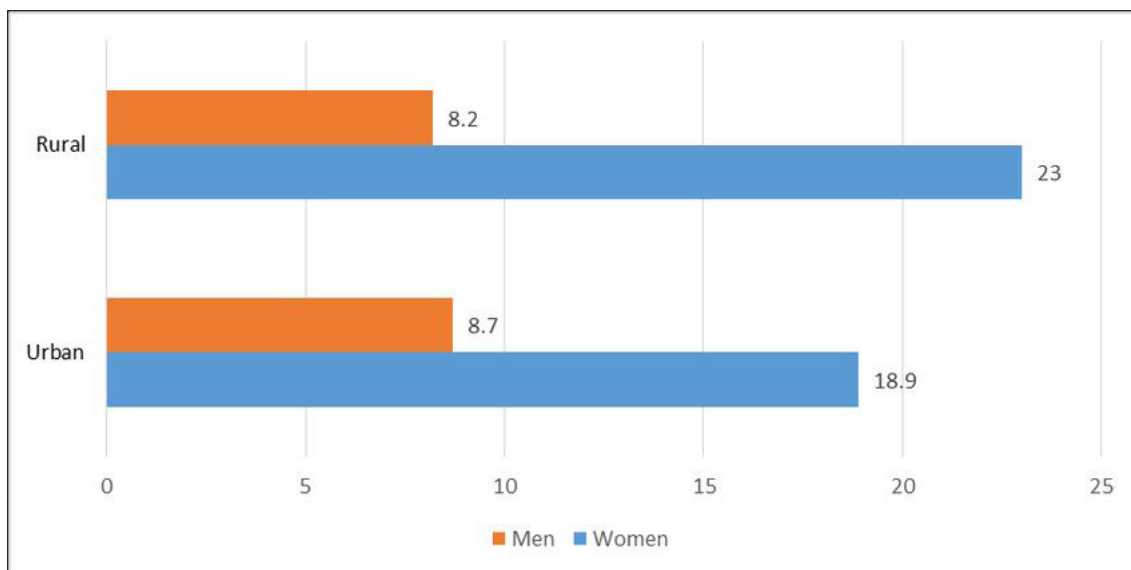
This looked at practices of FGM in a cultural context, Sexual Violence against Young girls and women, un-health Male circumcision, Child Sacrifice, Young Girl Labor and Slavery.

At least 58%, the rate of exposure to GBV in rural communities is not only above the national average but also more than double to that of the urban and semi urban. Prevalence of GBV rates are the highest in Eastern Northern rural areas. Sub-regions with GBV rates below 40% include Kampala, Ankole, Bunyoro, Tooro and Lango, the other remaining regions have GBV rates higher than the national average. The variations and changes in rates is attributed to various cultural practices in these regions, due to diversity and cross cultural aspects in urban and semi urban centers, the rate of exposure to GBV is low as compared to rural-culturally dominated areas such as Sebei region which still holds to practices of FGM and other regions with cultural practices that affect the universal aspects of gender.





Sexual Gender Based Violence accounts is very rampant, this account to 45% in urban centers due to the fact that the police and other law enforcement agencies reported an increase in GBV cases in form of sexual violence against women and young girls.



Our Retort and Strategy

The world population index highlights challenges to addressing the various gender and arithmetical power relations between male and female, from the studies and finding of the study, it should be noted that these exist due to bleach in policy and programing of government and other actors to respond to GBV prevention and mitigation.

Enhancing Common GBV Prevention Practice:

According to the research findings, there has been an improvement in GBV prevention common practice but only limited at national level and CSO partnership at sub national level. However there is need for a common and harmonized understanding and GBV prevention tools are still needed to embed a classical grass root mechanism to archive high standards, especially on targeting the most at risk and vulnerable women and children.

Cross Cutting intervention:

The organization and the GBV prevention forum will work closely with partners to transform and address arithmetical power relations between male and female, developing an improved strategy of intervention at local levels to archive an improved social inclusion and approach to support the position of women and girls as well as address the various bottlenecks that limits women and girls' enjoyment of rights, there is need for a cross cutting relation between the government to relate with CSOs to fast track the various policies, mechanism and programs

that support and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

Strengthening Young girls (SGBV Victims) protection:

The forum has a network of organizations working together to strengthen approaches and mechanisms to promote and protect Young Girls from SGBV, the Forum has addressed harmful gender based practiced and cultural norms as well as the protection issues of Young women victims of SGBV, here the forum has established shelters in Budaka and Wakiso for children and women respectively.

The forum will create a platform for the cross-fertilization of ideas between young people and relevant national government and regional leaders in efforts to establish Gender Based Violence Prevention mechanisms and strategies. Also, the forum will promote the ethos that Activism against GBV which is still relevant in organizing the international community in a bid to fast-track the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as other relevant international instruments and treaty organs



even before the set deadline.

Addressing Exclusion and Gender

Inequalities: Promoting gender equality and inclusions a critical cross cutting issue and priority at all levels of interventions to address GBV cases, the organization and the GBV prevention forum intends to ensure appropriate interventions to protect and promote the rights of women and girls at all levels of society, particularly centered towards access to justice, education and GBV protection. The organization and the GBV prevention forum will work with CSOs, NGOs and government agencies build capacity of local councils and district gender and human rights committees to mobilize victims of GBV as well as strategizing to provide remedies on violations.

Working with Women and Girls' Initiatives:

The GBV prevention forum and WDF will actively engage various women and girls' groups at all levels to understand the rights of women and issues affecting their rights, the forum will design and implement programs and projects that builds the socio-economic resilience and capacity of women and girls in rural communities. The GBV prevention forum believes that these women and girls groups will be supported to collaborate with local government and other actors to influence policies and access to resources and information to change policies. By involving cultural leaders and decision makers in community participatory process,

the forum believes that gradually all forms of cultural practices in conflict with GBV prevention mechanisms will be replaced and abolished.

Monitoring and Supervision of VSLAs:

WDF established Village loans and saving associations (VSLAs) in Mayuge and Mityana District as a strategic response for social-economic vulnerability of women and young girls, these VSLAs have equipped women and girls with substantial economic knowledge on savings for investments in agriculture, the various VSLAs can now manage their savings and loans much better as well as practice effective book keeping.

Systems Development:

The forum has established efforts to intensify its approaches to support the establishment and upgrading of substantial systems and approaches that facilitate the delivery of quality services to the most at risk women and young girls especially in rural communities.

The forum believes that systems strengthening as a powerful and central strategy to improve the quality of social services to increase their coverage and ultimately help women and young girls

to survive GBV relate atrocities, thrive and achieve their full human rights and potential. This kind of approach involves arrange of integrated actions, from increasing funding for social services, bolstering the capacity of national and sub-national partners.





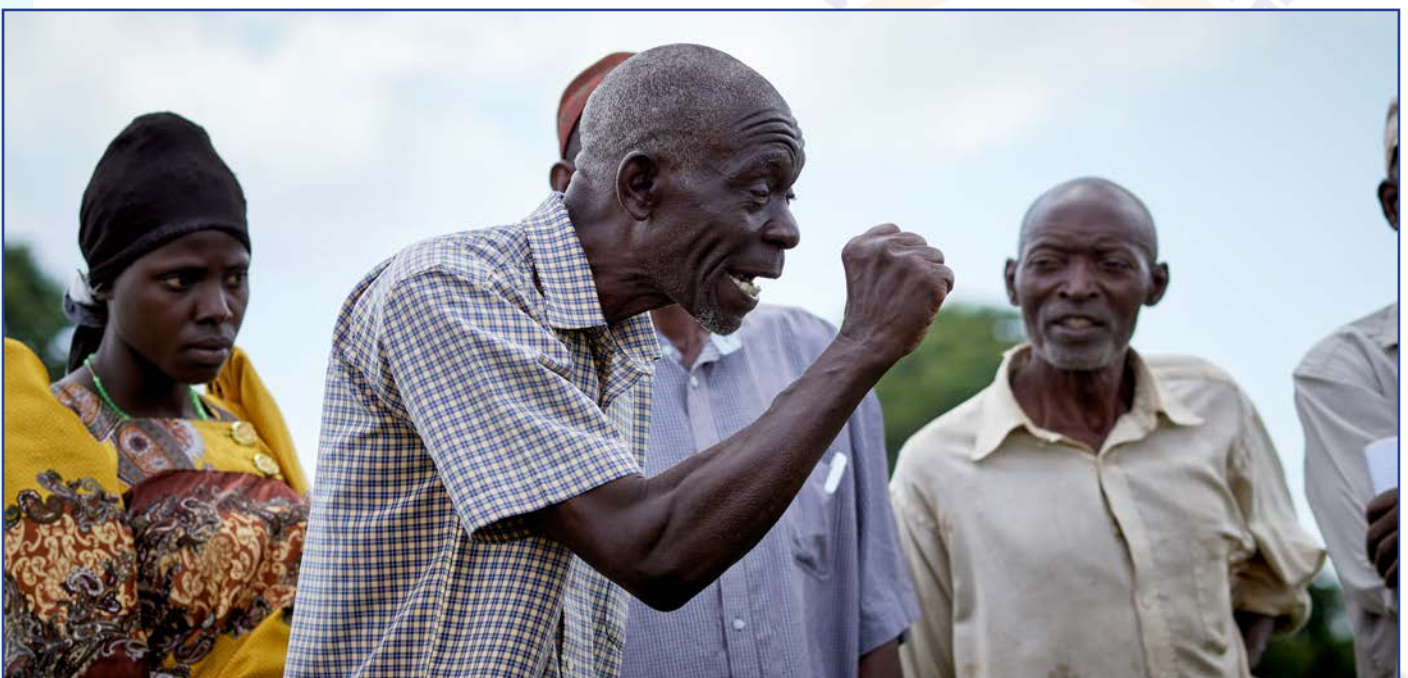
Recommendations

- Need to work with families, communities and district stakeholders to support the full establishment of low cost but high quality community engagement approaches and strategies to curb the escalation and prevalence of GBV related cases, especially in Northern Uganda.
- Conduct community gender dialogues and discussions to increase gender awareness and responsiveness among community members at local levels, these dialogues inform a bottom-up approach to addressing GBV and effecting policies as well as informing strategic approaches at National, Regional, Continental and International level.
- There is need to establish shelters for GBV victims, these are basically to enhance and provide psychosocial support to victims of SGBV, much as government operates remand homes for children, there is need for government to establish GBV shelters across the country. The Forum operates a shelter at Rescue Women Foundation home in Wakiso, however such shelters need more support and frequent supervision.











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