

The Domestic Violence Law; Keeping every man, woman and child in Uganda safe at home!"

A Call for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to re-energize the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act

Background/Introduction

Gender based violence (GBV), including physical, economic, sexual, and emotional violence remains a pervasive challenge in Uganda. Across the country at least 56% of women aged 15-49 years report having ever experienced GBV.¹ Based on Uganda's population of 34.8 million persons in 2014, the above prevalence rates translates to about 4 million women that have ever experienced GBV out of 7 million women aged 15-49 years. Violence has a serious economic impact—both to the survivors of GBV as well as institutions that respond to GBV incidents. In 2012, it was estimated that GBV incidents cost the Uganda economy about UGX 77 Billion annually.²

The national GBV (NGBV) policy earmarks specific responsibilities with regards to preventing GBV as well as providing care and support services to GBV survivors to a number of public institutions. The responsibilities for the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) under the NGBV include: (i) establishing appropriate coordination mechanisms for implementing the policy; (ii) setting standards and developing GBV guidelines; (iii) coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the GBV policy; (iv) building capacity of stakeholders to mainstream GBV issues in their programs; and (v) establishing a centralized GBV information documentation centre.

This brief highlights the gaps in implementation of the National Action Plan on GBV by MGLSD and call for the need to maintain current GBV response and prevention activities implemented by MGLSD. In June 2014, the MGLSD produced the annual ministerial policy statement which details the nature of activities different departments within MGLSD intend to allocate resources during 2014/15.³ The brief is based on the analysis of this specific policy statement.

Gaps in implementation of the National Action Plan on GBV.

- 1) Direct financial allocations for GBV interventions under MGLSD are very low as captured by allocation for the Directorate of Gender and women affairs. Given the very high cost of GBV to the economy, there is need to increase funding to the parent ministry to coordinate the GBV response and prevention. Since the enactment of the DVA, the overall for social development only increased by 66% national budget for all ministries has nearly by 100% from UGX 7,552 Billion in 2010/11 to UGX 15,054 Billion in 2014/15. As such, at UGX 54 Billion in 2014/15, the MGLSD budget remains very low in comparison to the needs.

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- 2) Most of the GBV interventions implemented by MGLSD are still heavily reliant on donor grants and this raises overall sustainability issues as well as national recognition of the extent of the challenge and the need to provide appropriate response to GBV. Overall, dependency on external financing does not create sustainable ground for sectors to main stream this work as core government work and donor funded activities are often viewed as projects that have limited life span.
- 3) Apart from reliance on donors, substantial GBV interventions implemented by MGLSD are off-budget i.e. outside the mainstream sector budget. Such a scenario implies that the full extent of GBV interventions may not be accurately captured and MGLSD staff are not able to develop capacity to continuously implement GBV interventions.
- 4) The MGLSD's interventions are geographically concentrated in Eastern Uganda-specifically in the Busoga sub region; there is need to scale up to the entire country. Although GBV prevalence is highest in Eastern Uganda, other parts of the country—especially Northern Uganda also have relatively high GBV prevalence rates.
- 5) There is limited capacity at the MGLSD to fully implement GBV activities; the ministry grapples with human resource challenges in terms of lack personnel to push through issues regarding ministerial budget allocation and roll out the GBV programmes. In addition, there is limited staff to support other sectors to mainstream GBV response into their core pieces of work.
- 6) Another challenge affecting GBV response in Uganda is the lack of adequate information and data regarding response to GBV. A number of government institutions including MGLSD collect different sets of information about Uganda's GBV response. Indeed, the MGLSD has developed and designed a Gender Based Violence Management Information System (GBVMIS) to collect real-time GBV data. The data is disseminated to stakeholders at the national and district on quarterly basis. Nonetheless, although the system has been established and districts trained on how to use it, the operationalization of the systems remains inadequate. For instance, it does not capture and report on the different GBV interventions by the various duty bearers.

Table: Analysis of GBV activities in the 2014/2015 budget proposals for MGLSD

List of intervention: Source 2014/2015 budget estimates	Issues addressed in GBV policy	Budget Allocation 2014/15 (UGX millions)	Analysis	Proposed activities	Estimated Cost (UGX millions)
1. Commemorating 16 days of activism against GBV and International Women's Day	Broaden the knowledge about GBV prevention and response	25#0	A substantial increase in the allocation compared to 2013/14 (.e. UGX 90 million). Commemoration is important to keep GBV issues on the national agenda.	Host the days; Conduct Radio talk shows; Radio spot messages and TV talk shows.	290
2. Prevention of FGM activities through REACH programme	Strengthening Community based prevention programmes	200	Support for the REACH project is through National Women Council		200
3. Printing and distributing copies of the DVA and DV regulations; simplified versions,	Creating awareness and strengthening sensitization on attitudes towards GBV in the community		No specific budget earmarked.		62

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List of intervention: Source 2014/2015 budget estimates	Issues addressed in GBV policy	Budget Allocation 2014/15 (UGX millions)	Analysis	Proposed activities	Estimated Cost (UGX millions)
4. Holding thematic and high level meeting for GBV reference group	Mainstream GBV issues in legislations, programmes and plans.		No specific budget earmarked.	Coordinate line ministries and other institutions in the prevention, response and management of GBV	60
5. Print and disseminate 2,400 copies of guidelines for establishment and management of GBV shelters in Uganda	Broaden the knowledge about GBV prevention and response	43	Educate communities on the 2010 DV Act and the need to treat DV as a public issue (Radio spots)		43
6. GBV Coordination	Strengthening coordination of public institutions:	230	Establish appropriate coordination mechanisms for implementing GBV policy at different levels for networking, sharing of information and effective synergies.	Establish dedicated GBV desk with the Ministry with at least 5 staff members	330
7. Capacity building for 2 MDAs in gender mainstreaming	Mainstream GBV issues in legislations, programmes and plans.	51	Coordinate the Monitoring and evaluation of the GBV policy at all levels	Perform gender audits of MDAs; monitor activities of LG. Conduct at least 2 monitoring and technical support visits to each established shelter (14).	53
8. Capacity building, monitoring and supervision of LGs in gender mainstreaming	Building partnerships to expand coverage of GBV response. Also build capacity of different stakeholders to mainstream GBV issues in their program design and implementation of effective prevention and response	94	Proposed expenditure is a reduction compared to amounts spent in 2013/14 i.e. (UGX 109 million)	Conduct 4 training workshops (one in each quarter) targeting various MDAs.	120

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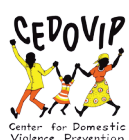


List of intervention: Source 2014/2015 budget estimates	Issues addressed in GBV policy	Budget Allocation 2014/15 (UGX millions)	Analysis	Proposed activities	Estimated Cost (UGX millions)
9. District IEC material for GBV	Creating awareness and strengthening sensitization on attitudes towards GBV in the community. Also build partnerships to expand coverage of GBV response	430	Educate communities on the 2010 DV Act and the need to treat DV as a public issue (Radio spots)	Conduct community parliament meetings (Barraza's) in at least 2 sub counties in each of the districts with a GBV shelter. Procure and distribute 500 bicycles to support community activities. Mobilize communities to prevent and respond to GBV using LC system.	640
10. Finalizing CEDAW Country report	Mobilizing financial resources to support services at all levels of GBV interventions		No specific budget earmarked.		
11. GBV Information centre	Establish and manage a centralized GBV information documentation centre		No explicitly considered in the 2014/15 budget	Operate a data collection centre; Run established GBV E-Resource centre	144
Total		1,298			1,942

Recommendations:

1. The funds and resources allocated to GBV specific activities are so little compared to the magnitude of the problem. Without increased funding to address GBV, this will see the problem escalate. The funds are a drop in the ocean compared to the deep-rooted problem of GBV. Therefore there is need to allocate funds on an incremental level every year and ensure that the work is scaled up to all districts in Uganda.
2. GBV is a continuous problem therefore allocation of resources and funds should not be a one off activity. For example, printing of copies of DV Act is a one off compared to other activities like awareness raising.

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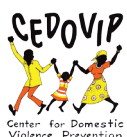


3. Awareness raising should be intensified and scaled up country wide away from only Busoga region in Eastern Uganda. The Ministry should function like government (country wide) rather than as civil society to implement projects with in specific intervention areas and short term projects.
4. There is need for increased human resources to implement GBV activities. Furthermore, the MGLSD should also place more emphasis on its role to enforce guidelines for GBV shelters; there have been instances where shelters are directly involved in arresting GBV suspects, which not supposed to be the case but may arise to limited supervision by MGLSD.
5. Just like other components under ministry of Gender, there is need to create a GBV department since Gender department is overwhelmed. Both gender and GBV are wide, complex and equally important and putting them together creates precedence of one over the other. As the ministry rethinks resources there is need to create a streamlined unit for GBV.
6. The need to harmonise the GBVMIS data with police and UBOS statistics cannot be underscored. There is no need to reinvent the wheel but rather need to be clear of what this information is to be used for and how it can be used to influence budget and the kind of services needed which will influence the amount of resources to be allocated.
7. Strengthening coordination to function as a whole, share resources, ethics on response, hold each other accountable. There is need to build capacity on coordination. We need to see coordination in action. For example each region should have key actors from the different sectors of JLOS, health and civil society to come together and share on what and how it is done or going on and act together to undertake principles set by the ministry.

Endnotes

- 1 Uganda Bureau of Statistics and ICF Macro International (2012). **Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011: Preliminary Report**. Calverton, Maryland: UBoS and Macro International Inc.
- 2 CEDOVIP (2012) Economic Costs of Domestic Violence in Uganda(Mimeo Kampala: CEDOVIP)
- 3 Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (2014) Ministerial Policy Statement for FY 2014/15 for Social Development Sector (Kampala: Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development).

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