



THE 2026–2031 NATIONAL YOUTH MANIFESTO

(Popular Version)



AUGUST 2025

YOUTH AS DRIVERS OF A MODERN
AND PROSPEROUS UGANDA

Introduction.

The National Youth Manifesto (NYM) is a social contract between youth, civil society organizations and the Government of Uganda. It is a policy document conceptualized to articulate the key priorities and demands of Ugandan youth.

Today, over **78%** of the population is under the age of 30, and more than **23%** are between 18–30 years old, the very age group this Manifesto speaks for. This generation represents both the present and future of Uganda — its workforce, innovators, leaders, and citizens. Yet, if neglected, this youth population could easily become a demographic burden, marked by unemployment, exclusion, and vulnerability.

Past political manifestos and national strategies have acknowledged the importance of youth but often fallen short of delivering practical, measurable outcomes. Many young people feel that political promises have not translated into real opportunities for decent work, quality education, affordable healthcare, or meaningful participation in governance. This Manifesto seeks to be different. It is built on evidence, on the lived realities of Uganda's young people, and on their aspirations for a more secure and prosperous future.

Importantly, the Manifesto aligns with Uganda's long-term development blueprints and global commitments. It situates youth priorities within Vision 2040, the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV), Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By doing so, it ensures that youth demands are not isolated or aspirational wishes, but integral to Uganda's broader agenda for inclusive growth, human capital development, and global competitiveness.

This document is also rooted in consultation and collective voice. Across districts, communities, and social groups, youth were engaged in shaping its content. In the next five years, with the right policy choices and political will, Uganda can unlock the potential of its youth. This Manifesto outlines how — by addressing education, employment, health, climate resilience, governance, and social justice. It is a call for transformation, for leadership that places young people at the center of national priorities, and for a future where Uganda's greatest resource — its youth — is empowered to drive sustainable growth.



Principles of the Manifesto



1. Youth as Rights Holders: Young people are entitled to quality education, decent jobs, health care, and meaningful participation in governance.



2. Youth as Partners in Development: Recognizing young people as agents of change, innovators, and entrepreneurs whose contributions can strengthen national development.



3. Youth as Leaders of Today and Tomorrow: Building pathways for youth leadership across political, civic, and economic spheres.

What makes this manifesto different

- 1. Youth-designed and evidence-led:** distilled from nationwide surveys and targeted dialogues with youth in their diversity, including out of school, rural, peri urban, and refugee hosting communities.
- 2. Systems-thinking lens:** links reforms across human capital, governance, climate/green jobs, and digital transformation for compounding impact.
- 3. Policy-entry points:** each ask is actionable, measurable, and tied to existing government programmes, laws, and policy windows.
- 4. Accountability architecture:** annual Youth Manifesto Scorecard, youth budget tagging, and procurement reservations to ensure delivery.

What's changed since 2021–2026

Over the last cycle, a number of youth relevant advances were recorded: new or reformed legal frameworks (e.g., mining and local content), apprenticeship/graduate volunteer schemes, climate and green finance facilities, strengthened IP enforcement for creatives, TVET policy implementation, and a sharp rise in sports financing. At the same time, binding constraints persist: slow school to work transitions, mental health gaps, uneven creative and sports infrastructure, the high cost of internet, and limited youth influence in governance.



The next five years must therefore prioritise scale, affordability, and inclusion, backed by clear metrics and annual review.

Lessons to carry forward

1. **Focus on delivery at scale:** expand what worked (skills, sports, creative economy, SRHR) with predictable financing and local capacity.
2. **Price and access matter:** internet costs, insurance coverage, and access to finance decisively shape youth opportunity.
3. **Voice and agency:** resourcing youth structures and civic participation improves policy uptake and accountability.

Five Big Asks, National Youth Manifesto (2026–2031)

The policy demands made by the young people in this National Youth Manifesto have been aligned to the programmes contained in the fourth National Development Plan (NDPIV). This is to ensure easy measurement of progress made in the realization of the policy asks as well as ensure that the asks are aligned to national development priorities.

A. Invest in Human Capital

1. **Education for employability:** expand secondary enrolment, mainstream digital learning and rights, scale TVET/entrepreneurship in every district, and align tertiary curricula with labour market demand.
2. **Youth health and wellbeing:** dedicate budget to mental health services (including staffing critical gaps), expand youth friendly SRHR, and fast track national health insurance to grow coverage.
3. **Jobs at scale:** catalyse a 24 hour urban economy, expedite the Startups law and supportive tax measures, formalise the jua kali sector, and operationalise procurement reservations for youth associations.

B. Expand Youth Voice in Governance

1. **Finance participation:** ring fence a share of public party funding for youth leagues; adequately resource District Youth Councils.



1. Civic capability: sustained voter education beyond electoral cycles; a national policy on civic engagement; campaign finance reforms.
2. Justice that works for youth: fast-track alternative dispute resolution, strengthen anti-corruption delivery, and adopt youth-centred community policing.

C. Catalyse Agro Industrialisation & Green Jobs

1. Finance and risk sharing: scale youth access to agriculture finance, insurance, and contract farming; expand post-harvest and agro-processing facilities.
2. Youth farm estates: utilise public land for irrigated, year-round youth farm schemes with on-site agronomy support.
3. Green growth now: adopt a National Green Jobs Policy and a coordination secretariat; accelerate renewable energy entrepreneurship and circular e-waste systems.

D. Power the Digital Generation

1. Affordable access: reduce dedicated internet costs and extend last mile connectivity; remove distortionary taxes that raise data prices.
2. Digital skills & 4IR: integrate coding/AI/robotics from primary to tertiary; expand innovation hubs and ICT BPO job pipelines.
3. Digital state capacity: accelerate e government and interoperable digital ID for service delivery and youth friendly programmes.

E. Make It Stick (Accountability & Finance)

1. Youth Budget Tagging: under Programme Based Budgeting, tag and publish youth relevant allocations and outputs across MDAs and Local Governments.
2. Youth Manifesto Scorecard: annual, public review co led by youth coalitions, Parliament youth caucus, MDAs and independent watchdogs.
3. Smart financing & integrity: streamline tax incentives, curb illicit financial flows, and implement procurement reservations for youth, women, and PWDs.



What success looks like by 2031

1. **Education & skills:** secondary enrolment rises; digital learning mainstreamed; TVET access in every district; stronger school industry pathways.
2. **Youth health:** mental health coverage increases with staffed services at regional hospitals; youth-friendly SRHR is widely available; insurance coverage expands.
3. **Jobs & enterprise:** higher survival of youth startups; expanded night-time economy in major cities; youth-led firms winning reserved public contracts.
4. **Creative & sports ecosystems:** national creative economy policy in force; regional hubs operational; upgraded sports facilities and certified coaches across regions.
5. **Green transition:** more insured young farmers; climate smart agriculture scaled; growth in youth led renewable enterprises and circular e waste ventures.
6. **Digital transformation:** lower internet costs; expanded last mile connectivity; more youth in ICT BPO and tech entrepreneurship.
7. **Governance & justice:** resourced youth structures; ongoing civic education; ADR mainstreamed; improved anti corruption delivery.
8. **Accountability:** public Youth Budget Tagging dashboards; annual Scorecard guiding mid course corrections.

Delivery architecture (who does what)

1. **Government (MDAs & Local Governments):** align sector plans to the manifesto's Big Asks; publish youth tagged budgets and results; enforce reservation schemes; integrate climate and green jobs across programmes; scale e government and digital ID for access.
2. **Parliament & oversight bodies:** enact enabling laws (e.g., startups, ADR, creative economy), conduct annual hearings on the Youth Scorecard, and strengthen anti corruption and value for money oversight.
3. **Private sector & finance institutions:** offer apprenticeships, co invest in hubs and sports/creative infrastructure, and expand youth friendly financial products (including agricultural and green finance).
4. **Youth coalitions & civil society:** mobilise participation, co design local delivery, lead citizen feedback loops (U Report, scorecards, social audits),



1. and publish independent performance briefings.
2. **Development partners & academia:** de risk youth investments, back national training standards, fund evidence systems and learning networks.

Risks and mitigations

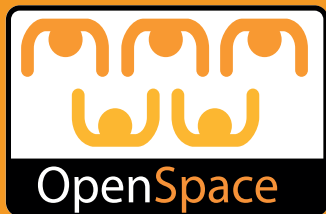
1. **Implementation gaps:** mitigate via quarterly delivery reviews and a public Scorecard; publish corrective actions.
2. **Financing shortfalls:** sequence reforms, crowd in blended finance, and repurpose underperforming incentives.
3. **Digital exclusion & inequality:** subsidise last mile access and devices; inclusive design for gender, disability, and rural youth.
4. **Governance slippage:** reinforce transparency (open data on budgets, procurement, and results) and whistle blower protection.

Call to action (2026 launch window)

1. **Government & Political Parties:** adopt these Big Asks in party manifestos and sector plans; publish time bound commitments in the first 100 days.
2. **Youth & Communities:** use this manifesto as a civic tool—organise, engage your leaders, and track delivery.
3. **All partners:** invest in youth capability and voice. No decisions about us without us.



This Popular Version of
The National Youth Manifesto
2026-2031
is produced by:



A member of the Youth Coalition
on electoral democracy (**YCED**)

"Our Future, Our Voice, Our Uganda."