

THE CUSP BULLETIN

GENERATION NEXT: PAVING THE WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL



Namugobe Vicky is sworn-in as the Speaker of the 2024 national youth parliament, on 16 August 2024 © Racheal Tumwebaze/Faraja Africa Foundation

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| BMZ | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| CAO | Chief Administrative Officer |
| CFP | Citizen Feedback Platform |
| CSBAG | Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group |
| CSO | Civil society organisation |
| CUSP | Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme <i>Component of the Governance and Civil Society in Uganda Programme</i> |
| EU | European Union |
| FAF | Faraja Africa Foundation |
| GCSF | Governance and Civil Society in Uganda Programme |
| GIZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH |
| HEDCHE | Help Disabled Children Excel |
| HEVOT | HEDCHE Vocational Centre |
| OAG | Office of the Auditor General |
| PWD | Person with disability |
| SSF-U | Salama SHIELD Foundation Uganda |
| YES | Youth Environment Service |
| YSB | Youth Sounding Board |
| YSBU | Youth Sounding Board Uganda |

Glossary of Key Terms

CUSP stands for the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme. It is an initiative aimed at strengthening civil society organisations in Uganda through various capacity development measures, organisational support, and promoting cooperation between civil society and governmental actors. The programme focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of civil society's contributions to policy processes and development initiatives across different sectors. The Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP) is co-funded by the European Union (EU) and the Federal Republic of Germany. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) has been commissioned to implement CUSP as part of the Strengthening Governance and Civil Society programme by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The **BMZ** stands for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Germany. It is responsible for formulating and implementing the German government's development policy. The ministry focuses on global sustainable development, poverty reduction, and cooperation with developing countries to address global challenges such as climate change, education, health, and economic development.

The **European Union (EU)** in Uganda engages in various development partnerships and projects aimed at supporting the country's growth and addressing key challenges. The EU's involvement includes co-financing contracts and initiatives that align with Uganda's national development goals. Additionally, the EU's Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for Uganda guides its strategic focus and collaborative efforts with local and international partners to enhance development outcomes in the country.

The **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH** is a German development agency that provides services in the field of international development cooperation. GIZ works with partners in national governments, international organisations, private sector entities, and civil society to design and implement projects that promote sustainable development around the world. The agency operates in various sectors, including economic development and employment, energy and the environment, and peace and security, among others.

Civil societies, also known as civil society organisations (CSOs), encompass a wide range of non-governmental actors and groups that operate independently of state institutions. These include non-profit organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charitable foundations, social movements, community groups, faith-based organisations, professional associations, advocacy groups, and coalitions.

Civil societies play a crucial role in promoting democracy, human rights, social justice, and sustainable development. They often act as intermediaries between the public and the government, advocating for better policies, increased transparency, and greater civic engagement. By representing the interests of citizens, civil societies work to ensure that government actions are accountable and responsive to the needs of the community.

Generation Next: Paving The Way For A Better Future For All

A Note from The Head of The Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme:

Dear Readers,

Shaping policies and driving societal change should not only be done with young people in mind but pushed for and brought about by them. Uganda's large youth population can be a major driver towards sustainable development and creating a Uganda where no one is left behind. The prerequisite is youth consultation and involvement in all matters of governance – at all levels.

The 3rd Issue of The CUSP Bulletin focuses on a vital topic: youth involvement in governance. We explore various avenues for building youth capacities for sustainability and present some of the success stories that highlight the positive impact of youth engagement in political and civic spaces.

The Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP) supports youth empowerment activities in all regions of Uganda through working with state and non-state partners, in areas such as:

- Developing youth-led social enterprises contributing to individual and institutional growth and sustainability,
- Ensuring youth participation in budget planning and service delivery monitoring,

- Promoting leadership skills among young people, enabling them to participate in governance processes in their localities and at the national level,
- Supporting youth participation in the development of the Uganda National Development Plan IV, and platforms to amplify youth voices on all matters of good governance, service delivery, and poverty alleviation.

These initiatives are inspiring not only to the youth but also a reminder to leaders to dedicate efforts towards the issues affecting the youth in Uganda. This is the best educated and digitally savvy generation this country has ever had. With the right support, the youth will get Uganda ready for the most pressing challenges of the next decades: addressing climate change, embracing the potential of artificial intelligence for social good, overcoming inequality and ending corruption.

In this Issue, you will learn how CUSP engages with our invaluable, powerful, and influential partners to support youth in their endeavours to create a better reality for themselves to live in.

[Tassilo von Droste](#)
Head of Programme, Governance and Civil Society Programme



”
While we can all
shape the future in
the present, it is
the youth who will
live it.
“

Participants during the Northern region youth parliament, July 2024. © Racheal Tumwebaze / Faraja Africa Foundation



Sweet ventures: How beekeeping has transformed Francis Waswa's life

Meet Waswa Francis, an example of resilience and innovation, from Lyantonde District in Central Uganda. In 2018, Waswa embarked on a transformative journey by joining the Salama SHIELD Foundation Uganda (SSF-U)'s youth micro-finance livelihood programme. Through this initiative, he not only gained vital entrepreneurial skills to start and run his own business but also mastered the art of beekeeping.



Waswa Francis demonstrates to other youth how to inspect a bee colony. © Jackson Mpagi / SSF-U

This is the story of Waswa Francis, a 28-year-old who transitioned from an aspiring electrical engineer to dedicated beekeeper. In 2017, Waswa had to make the tough decision to withdraw from university as he could no longer afford the tuition fees. However, this setback led him to discover the Salama SHIELD Foundation Uganda (SSF-U), a turning point that would shape his future in ways he had not imagined.

SSF-U is a youth and women-focused organisation aiming to drive sustainable development and improve livelihoods by promoting entrepreneurship through microloans and training. During the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme phase I (2017-2022), SSF-U was identified to benefit from institutional capacity building activities and as a result supported more youth to create or access gainful employment. In 2023, the organisation piloted bee-

keeping as a social enterprise to not only contribute towards inclusive growth and job creation for the surrounding community but also for organisational sustainability.

Waswa Francis had joined the Salama SHIELD Foundation Uganda (SSF-U)'s youth micro-finance livelihood programme. Alongside his peers, he received comprehensive training in entrepreneurial skills, equipping him with the knowledge to build and manage a business. Additionally, he underwent practical training in beekeeping through exchange visits to local beekeepers in Lyantonde. Waswa visited two farmers in Kaliiro sub county, Lyantonde where he acquired essential skills such as bee handling and management, as well as the techniques for wild colony hunting and transfer.



Waswa constructs a Kenya top-bar beehive, at the SSF-U office in Lyantonde. © Jackson Mpagi / SSF-U

'In my first harvest on 18 June 2024, I collected 25 kg of honey and during the second harvest on 23 July 2024, I collected 23 kg. Both harvests combined earned me UGX 500,000. Additionally, I am currently offering services in apiary setting, beehive making, and honey harvesting, which supplement my income. I have developed a five-year plan with the aim of having at least 70 beehives and being able to train fellow youth and other interested community members in beekeeping.'

Supported by CUSP, Waswa and other youth further attended the 'Harvest Money Expo 2024' in Kampala - an event that introduced him to the Kenyan top-bar hive design which has a sustainable and bee-friendly method of honey production. Unlike the traditional Langstroth hives, the Kenyan top-bar hive focuses on horizontal expansion, making it easier for beekeepers to manage and harvest honey without disturbing the bee colony.

Following the exposure to the Kenyan top-bar design, Waswa built his own hives and started a simple apiary by identifying bee colonies in the neighbouring forests and transferring them.

Waswa collected his first harvest in 2024.

By Mr. Jackson Mpagi
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, SSF-U

Amplifying Youth Voices to Propel Societal Change in Uganda and Beyond

Uganda's youth, making up 78% of the population, present significant opportunities and challenges, necessitating measures to ensure their voices are heard. Since 2019, CUSP and the Faraja Africa Foundation have empowered young Ugandans to participate in democratic processes, organising youth parliaments to address local and national issues. These initiatives have led to key recommendations on economic policies, governance, and electoral reforms, amplifying youth voices in policymaking.



Key dignitaries stand in front the 2024 national youth parliament in August. © Racheal Tumwebaze/ Faraja Africa Foundation

Youth form a significant proportion of Uganda's population, with the 2024 national census by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics revealing that approximately 78 per cent of the population is under the age of 30. This demographic presents both a tremendous opportunity and a challenge, as measures are needed to ensure their voices are heard and their potential is harnessed.

Since 2019, CUSP has partnered with Faraja Africa Foundation (FAF) to mobilise, engage and empower young people in Uganda to participate in democratic governance processes. FAF creates platforms for youth to actively engage in economic, social, and political processes, at the sub national and national level as well as the East African regional space. Previously, FAF has collaborated with other youth-focused Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and successfully advocated for the restoration of funding for the National Youth Council, a vital institution for mobilising and empowering young people in Uganda.

With support from CUSP and other like-minded agencies, FAF organises parliaments where youth discuss matters affecting their well-being. In July 2024, seven sub national youth parliaments were organised for the northern, eastern, western and central regions in Uganda. The sessions, which gathered 310 youth participants, provided platforms for young people to voice their concerns and address local issues. The resolutions were then integrated into the national youth parliament discussions, for representation and consideration in policymaking.

The national youth parliament has proven to be a powerful platform for young people to actively participate in decision-making. The national youth parliament for 2024 was convened on 16 August in Kampala, and 229 delegates including young women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and refugees participated. These young leaders engaged in debates and passed key resolutions aimed at influencing policy decisions. The delegates at the national youth parliament made a call for change, and made recommenda-

tions on economic policies, accountability and governance, and electoral reforms.

On the economic front, the youth called for improved access to start-up capital, stronger partnerships with the private sector, improved financial literacy, and reduced tax burdens for young entrepreneurs. These measures aim to foster a more inclusive environment for youth-driven businesses, essential for economic growth.

In terms of governance, the youth advocated for a comprehensive review of Uganda's legal and policy framework to increase the involvement of refugees and PWDs in decision-making processes, the creation of a committee to investigate corruption, a more transparent and credible electoral process, a reduction in nomination fees for elective positions, and increased representation of youth in

politics. These proposals are essential in ensuring that the voices of Uganda's youth are heard in both local and national decision-making processes.

In November 2024, FAF, with support from CUSP, facilitated the participation of selected Ugandan youths at the 3rd East African Youth Parliament in Arusha, Tanzania, where youth concerns from all East African countries were streamlined and highlighted. The resolutions passed were discussed by the Ugandan national assembly and taken up for debate in the East African Assembly (Vijana) in November 2024. This regional collaboration amplifies the impact of youth contributions and ensures that the voices of Ugandan youth resonate across borders.

By Davina Joanita Kako
Technical Advisor, GIZ

The Budget planning and audit processes – nothing the Ugandan youth shy away from



In a remarkable initiative, Uganda's youth are actively engaging in budgeting and auditing, advocating for participatory processes that promote transparency and economic justice. Partnering with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) like the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), they are working to ensure that public resources are allocated effectively to meet their communities' needs.

Uganda's youth have taken interest in what many of us might only react to with a yawn – budgeting and auditing. In an inspiring turn of events, they are championing participatory budget planning and audit processes, aiming to drive transparency and economic justice within the nation. This engagement is essential, as understanding and participating in how the government generates, allocates, and utilises public resources is critical for demanding accountability from leaders.



'After receiving the training in July 2024, I immediately set out to monitor Kalyamenyu Primary School. The head teacher shared with me that they were struggling due to a shortage of classroom blocks. The school, with an enrolment of 346 pupils, had just one block. I took photos and uploaded them onto the CFP to raise awareness of the issue.'

However, when I returned to the school in August 2024, I found sand, bricks, and aggregate stones had been delivered, and construction was underway. I am glad my monitoring efforts helped trigger this action. I will continue to follow up and ensure the work is fully completed so that the children have a safe and conducive environment for learning.'

Annet Nuwasasira,
Participatory Budget Club Member, Lyantonde District

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) have been instrumental in providing platforms for youth to scrutinise and influence government policies, ensuring equitable public service delivery. Over the years, CSBAG has mobilised young people, enhancing their capacities to advocate for inclusive public service delivery and accountability. By monitoring service delivery and engaging in planning processes, youth can ensure that their most pressing needs are prioritised by local governments.

In collaboration with the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), CUSP has partnered with CSBAG to increase citizen participation in accountability issues through the Citizen Feedback Platform (CFP). Currently, CSBAG is working with 495 citizens, of whom 378 (75.9%) are youth actively providing valuable information to the OAG.

The youth generate evidence on the state of service delivery within their communities, which they use to advocate for improvements in budget allocations and service delivery. Through dialogue, they then engage with both technical and political leaders at higher and lower levels of local government to provide feedback and secure commitments to address service delivery deficiencies, financing gaps, and instances of public fund misuse where detected.

Since January 2024, the youth have monitored service delivery in their local areas and submitted a total of 726 reports from 20 local governments through the CFP. The reports include 120 cases of poor road and bridge maintenance, the highest number, followed by 106 reports of a lack of functional household and institutional safe water sources. Additionally, there were 75 issues related to dilapidated school and healthcare infrastructure, and 64 cases of mismanagement and abandonment of public construction works, among others.



'We were not fully aware of the many challenges our communities face until we began monitoring service delivery. Now, we see the importance of this work, and soon, we will start seeing the results.'

The CFP is an excellent tool that every sub-county should be using. It would be beneficial to scale it up across all sub-counties as it allows citizens to directly report issues, which is a great step, especially when sending concerns directly to the Auditor General.'

Mulakusi Remick,
Participatory Budget Club Member, Isingiro



'The CFP has been a valuable tool for us, and we have learned a great deal from using it. However, one suggestion I have is to introduce a chat feature, so that when we encounter challenges, we can quickly reach out for support. Continuous training on how to effectively monitor service delivery will also help us better serve our communities.'

The platform has great potential, and with ongoing support, it will continue to strengthen accountability and improve service delivery in our district.'

Aisha Phibi,
Participatory Budget Club Member, Lyantonde District



'I learned about the Citizen Feedback Platform through a training organised by the OAG and CSBAG in July 2024, and since then, I have successfully reported issues, such as the poor structures at Kadama Primary School. We can now openly discuss these issues because the duty bearers know us.'

The platform has greatly enhanced my communication skills, especially when interacting with local government officials. Duty bearers are now more cautious in their work, as they see us almost like auditors.'

Gonansa Emmanuel,
Participatory Budget Club Member, Budaka District



'When first starting to work with the CFP, we encountered a challenge when health workers required a letter of authorisation for us to access health facilities, but thanks to a letter from the Chief Administrative Officer of Kibuku District, we were eventually granted access to the Health Centre.'

I was able to upload critical issues, such as the sharing of maternity beds, inadequate supplies of malaria medication for pregnant mothers, and the lack of a changing room for girls. This shows that the CFP is an efficient tool, allowing us to report issues directly to the relevant offices.'

Musenero Deborah,
Participatory Budget Club Member, Kibuku District



All photos in this article: © CSBAG
By Elsie Kahunde, Programme Associate, CSBAG

Growing roots for resilience and sustainability with Help Disabled Children Excel

Help Disabled Children Excel (HEDCHE), an indigenous civil society organisation in Nebbi District, has transformed into a recognised NGO dedicated to improving the welfare of children and youth with disabilities. With support from CUSP, HEDCHE established the HEVOT vocational training centre, which opened in July 2024, offering essential skills training to empower young people with disabilities and marginalised groups.



Children and youth with disability enrol at HEVOT vocational training centre, July 2024. © Oyrwoth Harrison/ HEDCHE

Help Disabled Children Excel (HEDCHE) is an indigenous civil society organisation based in Nyaravur Town Council, Nebbi District, within the West Nile Sub-region of Uganda. Originally a community-based organisation, HEDCHE has evolved into a recognised non-governmental organisation focused on enhancing the welfare of children and youth living with disabilities.

Since its partnership with CUSP began in 2019, HEDCHE has undergone significant organisational capacity-building efforts, resulting in the development of a strategic plan that includes the establishment of a vocational training centre. This initiative aims to improve the livelihoods of young people with disabilities and is supported

by a comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy and business plan.

The HEVOT vocational training centre officially opened its doors on 1 July 2024, providing vital skills training in five key areas:

- tailoring and garment cutting,
- sweater knitting,
- salon and hairdressing,
- information technology and digital services,
- as well as motorcycle mechanics and repair.



Youth learn how to tailor with HEVOT © HEDCHE

The centre not only focuses on vocational training but also supplies assistive devices to empower persons with disabilities (PWDs) and other marginalised individuals, equipping them with the skills to secure jobs and create opportunities for themselves and others.

Recognition of HEDCHE's work:

HEDCHE's efforts have garnered recognition from various stakeholders, including local government, educational institutions, and the community. Contributions have included funding from the Nebbi District Local Government, which provided Ug. shs. 4,500,000 from the National Special Grant, as well as support from the Nyaravur Catholic Church council, which offered a four-classroom block and facilities such as a latrine and playground space. Additionally, regulatory authorities, including the Directorate of Industrial Training, Uganda Revenue Authority, and Uganda Registration Services Bureau have provided valuable input and guidance on the curriculum, human resource needs, and compliance.

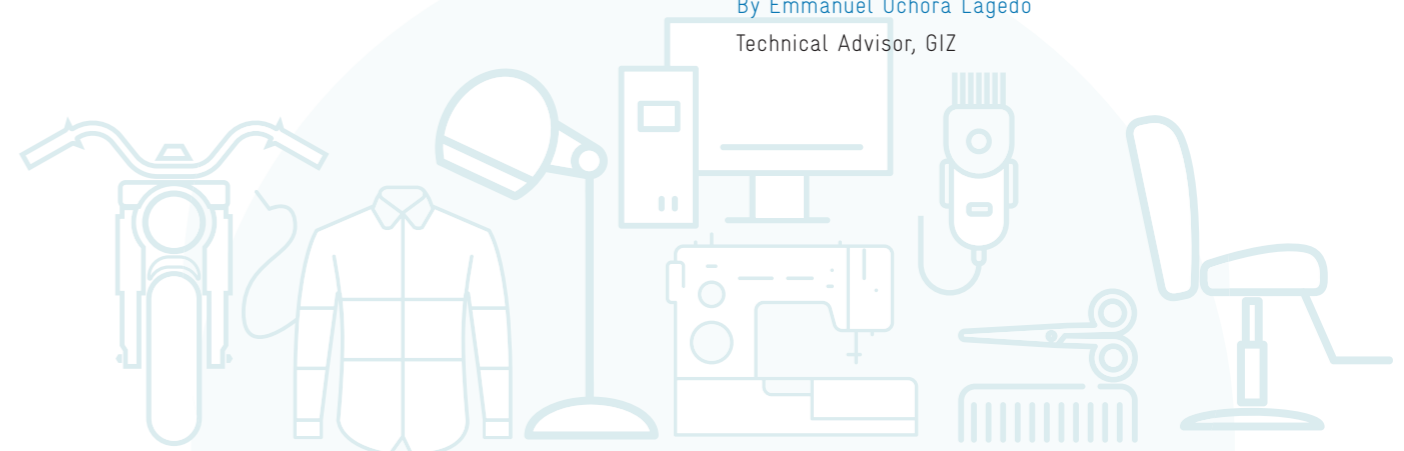
Walking towards the vision:

With a vision to become a leading centre of excellence for inclusive vocational training for self-reliance of young people with disabilities and other vulnerable youth in West Nile, HEVOT has increased its enrolment from 15 students to 50 in just a short period. The centre has successfully trained 29 young individuals, including PWDs, orphans, and other vulnerable children, with six of these trainees being persons with disabilities.

Nancy Akumu, a beneficiary of HEVOT's tailoring course, remarks, HEVOT accommodates and addresses the needs of people with different disabilities. They have trained one person with visual impairment and four with hearing impairment in hairdressing and braiding.

The HEVOT centre has significantly enhanced access to education and information for young people with disabilities. With aspirations to acquire additional facilities such as dormitory blocks and training equipment, the centre aims to expand its reach, enabling even more young individuals to gain valuable knowledge and skills, ultimately fostering entrepreneurship and job creation in the community.

By Emmanuel Ochora Lagedo
Technical Advisor, GIZ



YES Busia makes girls score goals

The Youth Environment Service (YES) Busia has successfully launched the Goals for Girls project, reaching over 4,000 children across 40 schools in the Busia district. The project uses sport to empower adolescent girls and boys to understand their health rights and promote inclusion in development processes.



Children as well as local government leaders playing a ball game highlighting inclusion © GIZ / Veronique Sprenger

Reaching thousands of girls and boys at 40 different schools within the Busia district sounds like a very ambitious project. But that did not stop Youth Environment Service (YES) Busia from achieving this exact goal. YES found the perfect vehicle to make this a reality and reached over 4,000 children - through sport. On 14 May 2024, YES Busia launched their Goals for Girls project with CUSP's support. The event attracted local government officials from the Busia district, including the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Local Council V chairperson, as well as head teachers from potentially participating schools and representatives from the organisation. The aim of the project is to empower adolescent girls and boys in schools and communities using sport and games to overcome the effects of inadequate information on health rights, freedom of participation, and inclusion in development processes.



Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Ms Alupo Scolia giving the opening speech at the launch event © GIZ / Veronique Sprenger.

To reflect the participatory aspect of the project and to ensure a deeper understanding of Sport for Development, local government leaders and other attendees took part in a Sport for Development exercise during the launch of the project. The exercise was a mini football game with teams

of six, but with a twist. Each team had one player standing outside the field, and all they could do was run along with the ball along the sides. After the first round, there was a short reflection on the fact that one player was confined to the sides and how that made them feel. The game showed participants how exclusion feels, highlighting the importance of inclusion for the wellbeing of all players. It also touched on the topics of leadership and communication. During the reflection, all players, both children and politicians, mentioned enjoying the aspect of learning while playing.

The game broke down hierarchies between the officials and the children, creating an elated and happy atmosphere among the participants. This demonstrated how sports can break down barriers on sensitive topics. The Goals for Girls project uses sport and games to empower girls to speak up for themselves, especially regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights. The importance of this is emphasised to both the learners and the leaders. The project introduces playful methods for girls and boys to learn about Menstrual Health Management (MHM), for example, through a rope skipping game where they need to stop jumping if a statement about menstruation is false and continue if it is true. The project is based on the premise that boys and girls need to feel empowered and safe to learn to speak up about challenges they encounter in life. The project's goal is to first create a safe space where children feel free to speak up, ask questions, but also pause and opt out if a topic is sensitive to them. In the second step, it aims to mediate knowledge about health rights, participation, and inclusion. The project hopes to lay the foundation for young adults who know their rights and feel confident to step up and demand their needs to be met.

By Veronique Sprenger
Development Advisor, GIZ

Giving youth a seat at the table: The European Union's Youth Sounding Board Uganda

Meet Howard Mwesigwa, a 26-year-old lawyer in professional training from Fort Portal, Kabarole District. The young professional focuses his work on energy, environment, and natural resources law, but these topics take up a big part of his free time as well. He is not only the chairperson of the European Union (EU) Youth Sounding Board Uganda (YSBU) – this article's focus – but also the speaker of the National Environment Parliament¹, a platform connecting organisations and individuals with an interest in environmental issues, and team leader at the Climate Action Leadership Incubator², a programme to prepare the next generation of climate action leadership in Uganda.



Howard Mwesigwa during an online conversation with Vivian Vollmann Tinoco from GIZ about his work © GIZ / Vivian Vollmann Tinoco

This sheer, endless amount of energy comes from an intrinsic passion to bring about positive change, to make the world a better place.

'It was this realisation that Uganda is stricken with environmental disasters from east to west: the floods, the landslides. [Editor's note: At the time this interview was recorded, only four days had passed since the Bulambuli landslide³, which left 750 people displaced, 125 homes destroyed, and more than 20 people dead.] On the other

hand, a place you knew as wetlands, you will now find shops, settlements, and even factories.'

Going through law school, Howard's interest in national and international environmental law, combined with local needs for stronger environmental policies, drove his involvement in climate justice. Unlike most volunteering, his path did not start at the grassroots but at the international level with the Official Children and Youth Constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC) ([YOUNGO](#)⁴) and the [Children and Youth Major Group of the United Nations Environment Programme](#)⁵ (UNEP). Working on international climate frameworks, he saw the need to amplify young voices locally, as many Ugandan communities are on the climate crisis frontline.

In 2023, Howard, already a youth champion, applied to join Uganda's EU Youth Sounding Board. This initiative started [globally in 2021](#)⁶, with national boards being established worldwide. As the first in East Africa, Uganda's EU Delegation adopted this framework in 2023, calling for applications through their partner's, Faraja Africa Foundation's, network from Ugandans aged 18 to 30 with an interest in sustainable development. Howard was selected and became the chairperson of the [gender-balanced board](#)⁷.

The YSB advises the Ugandan EU Delegation on youth needs and aspirations in areas like environment, education, jobs, human rights, gender, and culture. The 20 board members come from all Ugandan regions and diverse backgrounds, including doctors, teachers, and female entrepreneurs among others – all experts and focal points on the topics close to their hearts. Since its establishment on 31 August 2023, the Board has held quarterly meetings and provided ad hoc advice to ensure the Delegation's work meets young Ugandans' needs. The YSB's work has gained recognition and started engaging with embassies and development organisations like GIZ.

Tassilo von Droste, Manager of the Germany and EU co-funded Strengthening Governance and Civil Society Programme (GCSP) as implemented by GIZ, highlights the fruitful collaboration with the YSB:

'Working together with the Board has opened the door to a direct exchange with Uganda's youth. These selected and very vibrant young people representing civil society have clear opinions and guidance to share on what development efforts should look like to benefit their peers – over 70%⁸ of Uganda's population.'

The first phase of the YSB came to an end in December 2024, paving the way for a second batch of young activists to join the next EU Youth Sounding Board Uganda, which will advise the EU in 2025.

'So, my plea fundamentally is for young people to respond to that call when it is made and be part of the mainstreaming of the youth voice, our desires and aspirations in the EU-Ugandan Development Cooperation.

But I also wish to direct my call to the embassies, delegations, development agencies, and non-state partners and ask them to be alive to the true needs and aspirations of the young people in Uganda. We make up over 70% of the population and the population growth rate of about 3.5%⁹ indicates that this is going to be the status quo for a very long time.

And so, my invitation to development partners is to truly mainstream the meaningful participation and engagement of young people in their operations at all levels. Actually, I would advise them to put in place structures that allow direct engagement with young Ugandans - in the planning, execution, and also the monitoring and evaluation of development projects. Because even though we are the majority, we are often marginalised and underrepresented in many scenarios.'

Find more information on the EU Youth Sounding Board Uganda here: [Uganda launches EU Youth Sounding Board | EEAS](#)

Or follow their work on X: [@EU_YSBUG](#)

Or on LinkedIn: [EU Youth Sounding Board Uganda](#)

[Vivian Vollmann Tinoco](#)

Communications and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, GIZ

Endnotes

1 <https://epuganda.org/>

2 <https://cali.org.ug/>

3 [Death toll in Uganda landslides rises to 20 as search for more casualties presses on | AP News](#)

4 <https://youngclimate.org/>

5 <https://www.cymgenv.net/>

6 https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/youth/youth-participation_en

7 https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uganda/uganda-launches-eu-youth-sounding-board_en?s=127

8 [70% of Ugandans under 30: Census highlights urgent need for youth investment](#)

9 [70% of Ugandans under 30: Census highlights urgent need for youth investment](#)