D R A F T

A report prepared for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development/ CORE Initiative

Advocacy with and for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children: Findings from Qualitative Research in Uganda.

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FOREWORD

This is a report on a qualitative research on '*Findings to guide the development of a National Advocacy Strategy to support Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children*. It is the result of a collaborative effort of the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, and CORE Initiatives and has involved inputs from various individuals and institutions in and outside of Government. We extend special thanks to officials in the Ministries of Health, Education, and Local Government, as well as those from the District local Governments of Gulu, Luwero, Pallisa, Kampala and Kisoro.

Valuable contributions were made by UNAIDS, USAID, DFID, Civil society organisations Implementing OVC programs country wide, as well as other Non Government Organisations.

All other individuals and institutions who contributed to this research and who made suggestions during consultations are also acknowledged.

Author's Note: Official statement from the Minister will be included in the final draft.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Whenever MGLSD is mentioned, it is easy to associate it with women because this is where it started. However even up to now many people simply equate the two concepts of "gender" and "women". The confusion is not helped by adding to this labour and employment, youth, probation and welfare, community development, and social rehabilitation".

- Respondent, Mega FM – Gulu district

In spite of the frequent reference to OVC as a category that befits urgent attention and support by a cross-section of stakeholders, the evidence suggests that the priority which is accorded to this category of children in planning and budgeting is rather low. A number of reasons have been advanced to explain this low level of prioritization. One of these is the image which the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development under which OVC matters are considered portrays. In the following study we have identified key issues which will need to be addressed in order to raise the profile of OVC in particular and MGLSD in general.

For this effort to bear fruit, it needs to be taken beyond the technocratic to the political level – so that OVC issues become an essential part of the political commitments which local and national leaders make. Committed advocacy at national and local levels should help to address this concern.

The study concludes that ineffective leadership, organization and management for OVC programming on the part of both MGLSD and district leaders has led to further marginalization of OVC issues in planning and budgeting. At the central level the leadership challenge has been further complicated by the amorphous nature which MGLSD took on when it was created through a merger of three different ministries into one. Hence there is an urgent need to firmly establish the ministry's new identity and "selling point". On the other hand, at district and sub-county levels, the absence of an undisputed leader and champion on OVC matters has led to such issues being left on the margins of what lower level governments actually focus on.

We further observe that the main hindering factor is the rather lukewarm image (profile) which is portrayed by the parent ministry and the CBS department. This is further aggravated by the lack of information and data on OVC, and the absence of innovative alternative propositions on how to address the orphans' crisis.

One of the biggest assets with respect to OVC programming is the comprehensive policy and institutional framework on OVC. If appropriately supported, this policy and institutional framework can go a long way to persuade central and lower local governments to allocate resources for OVC programmes. However donor interest in supporting the social sector in general and OVC in particular is difficult to gauge at the moment. The current discussion on promoting social protection approaches and interventions is one possible way in which OVC matters can be brought back to the centre ground – as issues which the social protection objectives of MGLSD, and generally the Uganda Government, aim to focus on. Thus the need to highlight OVC issues in the on-going discussion on social protection and, through advocacy, is evident.

There exists in Uganda a rich array of potential partners and advocates for OVC advocacy and communication. The study established that both profile and funding for OVC can benefit considerably from collaborating with the private sector. Building on the now well-established model of public-private partnership, and through well structured relationships with the sector, MGLSD has an opportunity to both raise the profile of OVC while at the same time drawing on resources which are available in the private sector. Private sector partnerships could be established with such organizations and companies as CELTEL, Coca Cola, MTN, UTL, Mukwano, etc.

Child-focused NGOs and agencies remain key advocates for OVC. ANPCANN, UNICEF, SCF, World Vision, and a host of others are a case in point. However a lot of suspicion still exists between NGOs and between them and MGLSD on prioritization and methods of work. Thus while most are involved in considerable advocacy and would be suitable collaborators, their contribution can best be maximized if there is harmony in discussion and decision-making on key OVC issues, priorities and methodologies. As such, a strengthened network of child rights organizations, such as Uganda Child Rights NGO Network may be one way of addressing this challenge. Hence supporting the emergence of collective voice and action through more open discussion with all key stakeholders and more effective networking will be essential.

From the study the three key priorities for OVC advocacy which emerged from care givers are improved socio-economic security, better access to health and education services, and increased awareness on the rights and responsibilities of OVC. On the other hand community leaders emphasized the importance of better regulation of institutions which care for OVC in order to enhance child protection. They also highlighted increased funding for projects supporting OVC as an important area for advocacy. CSOs reflected a longer list of advocacy priority areas, arguing that this was a derivative of the various types of engagement which they had with communities and OVC themselves. The NGO list included provision of an essential services package for orphans, increased resource allocation to MGLSD, establishment of a national database for OVC, enhancement of socio-economic security, increased opportunities for psychosocial support for OVC, and child protection. Perhaps most importantly OVC themselves prioritized advocacy for education, against stigma, for care and support, for socio-economic security and for reintegration and resettlement as their advocacy issues.

We draw three main conclusions from the study. First, and not unexpectedly, different stakeholders present different advocacy priorities. In instances where the priorities do not overlap for the different stakeholders this has implications for which ones are taken up. Secondly, while OVC and care-givers mainly prioritized issues which have specific relevance to OVC' personal livelihoods, NGOs and others included (and often focused on) advocacy issues of an institutional nature. Thirdly, the range of priority issues suggest a need for a strategy which spans the three levels of: (a) family and community; (b) district and sub-county; and, (c) national.

The study recognizes that other line ministries such as education or health present a more visible and positive image than that of MGLSD and CBS. Institutional and organizational management challenges aside, this study concludes that the higher profile which is accorded to the other ministries is mainly due to the frequent reminders in official and non-official circles (including media, publications, manifestos, etc) about education and health being

among the most important interruptors of poverty. It is also directly related to these sectors' positioning in the national priority planning areas (PPAs).

Advocating for raising the profile of OVC issues at all levels of administration and having such issues included in the national priority planning areas will be of priority. In addition, there is a need to clearly articulate MGLSD's and CBS's goal and objectives and their relationship to OVC and to popularize these widely with a view to raising the conscience of the public on what the ministry and departments currently do and can do in the future.

On budgeting, although budget allocations for the sectors, including the social sector, are informed by the ceilings imposed by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) at national level and by the Local Government Budget Framework Paper (LGBFP), what actually gets allocated at the operational level is often the result of both technical and political processes, the latter tending to have greater influence. The coherence and the convincing nature of arguments will need to be improved in order to influence change.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACDA	Assistant Community Development Assistant
ACDO	Assistant Community Development Officers
AMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
CAO	Chief Administrative Officers
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CBS	Central Broadcasting Services
CCF	Christian Children's Fund
CDAs	Community development Assistants
CDOs	Community Development Officers
CORE	Community Response to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic
CORE	Communities Responding to HIV/AIDS Epidemic.
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CWD	Children With Disabilities
DDHS	District Director of Health Services
DDP	District Development Plan
DRT	Development Research and Training
FALP	Functional Adult Literacy Programme
FAWE	Foundation for African Women Educationalists
FBO	Faith Based Organisations
GOU	Government of Uganda
GUSCO	Gulu Support for Children Organisation
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGA	Income Generating Activities
KURET	Kenya Uganda Rwanda Ethiopia Together
LC	Local Council
LLG	Lower Level Government
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries
MFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOH	Ministry of Health
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NCC	National Council for Children
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NOP	National Orphans Policy
NPPA	National Poverty Priority Areas

NSPPI	National Strategic Programme Plan of Investment
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PEPFAR	Presidents Emergency Programme for AIDS Relief
PHC	Primary Health Care
PLA	Participatory Learning Approaches
PMA	Plan for Modernization of Agriculture
PMAU	Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit
PNO	Principal Nursing Officer
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SDIP	Social Development Investment Plan
UCRN	Uganda Child Rights Network
UMSC	Uganda Muslim Supreme Council
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDC	Uganda Society for Disabled Children
USMC	Uganda Muslim Supreme Council
UTL	Uganda Telecom Limited
UWESO	Uganda Women's Efforts to Save Orphans
WBS	Waava Broadcasting Services
WFP	World Food Programme

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SECTION: I: Background and context

1.0   Introduction

It is estimated that there are over 2 million orphaned children, 250,809 children with single or multiple disabilities, 4,190,200 children affected by conflict, and many more who are made vulnerable due to poverty, poor health, and limited access to services in Uganda. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) is mandated with the responsibility to lead and coordinate the national response for these marginalized groups, who are categorized as orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC).

The policy and strategic framework guiding support, care and protection services for these vulnerable children is defined in The National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy (November 2004) and The National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (November 2004). However, the broad-based dissemination and implementation of the policy and strategy for orphans and other vulnerable children has been limited by the following factors:

- Many partners and implementers of OVC programs are not familiar with the policy and the strategic plan or the rationale for them.

- Limited resources and attention are given to OVC programming.

- MGLSD is not widely recognized as the lead coordinating body for OVC programming.

Stakeholders outside the Ministry have noted that the absence of coordinated communication on the current crisis related to OVC, has greatly contributed to the lack of awareness and support for the national response, noting the absence of a clear and coordinated advocacy[1] effort on behalf of this marginalized group. It is envisioned that an advocacy strategy will support the MGLSD's efforts to mobilize and channel the appropriate services and support for OVC. With financial and technical support from USAID and UNICEF, the Ministry is developing an advocacy strategy with and for OVC to achieve the following four goals:

Advocacy Goal 1:   Raise the level of concern and attention paid to OVC and their special needs.

Advocacy Goal 2:   Alert policymakers/influencers to problems and concerns of OVC and their families.

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[1] Advocacy is an organized effort to influence decision-making by policy-makers, managers and other influentials to build support for an issue, increase allocation of resources, implement a policy and strategy.

Advocacy Goal 3:   Convince OVC stakeholders to implement the National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for OVC (NSPPI) and to increase resources allocated to OVC programming; and

Advocacy Goal 4:   Position the MGLSD as the lead coordinating body for OVC.

This qualitative study, which was commissioned by the Ministry, aims at contributing to the development of the advocacy goals listed above. It builds upon previous research on the subject, to better explore the strengths and limitations of the national response for OVC, and the overall image of the MGLSD in coordinating this country-wide effort.

1.1   Objectives of the study

The primary objectives of the research include understanding:

1. The hindering and facilitating factors that impact on national, district, and sub-county leadership's ability and willingness to implement and allocate resources for OVC programming;

2. Potential partners/advocates and competitors for OVC advocacy and communication;

3. Priority issues for OVC advocacy from the point of view of OVC caregivers, community leaders, program managers, and OVC stakeholders;

4. Factors that make other line ministries (e.g., health, education, agriculture etc.) better known and respected at the national, district, and sub-county level as leaders in their respective programmatic areas and even in OVC initiatives.

5. The national budgeting system, key gatekeepers/influencers of that system, and how to influence budgetary allocations.

6. Donor decision-making processes for allocation of funds, key gatekeepers/influencers, and how best to influence them.

7. The most effective and efficient mechanism(s) for advocacy and communication at the national, district, and sub-county levels.

8. Media coverage and positioning of OVC issues and the MGLSD.

1.2   Methodology

A three-phased process was adopted for the study. The first phase of the study involved consultative meetings with MGLSD and CORE Initiative[2] project staff to establish the parameters of the study, including district coverage, and the overall research process.   Meetings with selected national level stakeholders were also conducted to identify and to collect key reports, assessments and work plans related to the national OVC response. The research team[3] also facilitated group discussions with Community-based Services Staff from over 63 districts during the 2006 MGLSD Annual Staff Conference[4].   During this preparatory phase, the researchers also clarified the research questions, conducted a desk review of important literature, and developed the research tools for the second phase of the study - the district-level consultations.

Five districts[5] were selected for the study. At the district level, a wide range of participatory methods rooted in the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), and Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) tradition were used, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and community interviews using a semi-structured question guide as well as purposive observation. Further, consultations were held with a cross section of MGLSD and district officials, representatives from civil society organizations (CSO), the private sector, the police, and the media.

Documenting, compiling and analyzing the findings from the field level consultations involved a study team of nine researchers who reviewed, evaluated and summarized the data from the two earlier phases of the research to draft a preliminary report. These findings were presented to MGLSD for feedback and have been expanded and clarified in this final draft, which will be reviewed and finalized during a meeting of MGLSD stakeholders.

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[2] CORE Initiative is a four-year bilateral project led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development with funding from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief through the United States Agency for International Development.
[3] The Study team comprised of: Charles Lwanga-Ntale, Beatrice Mugambe, Marion Mbabazi, Andrew Kawooya, Jean Kemitare, Rebecca Ssanyu, Connie Kukundakwe, Betty Iyamulemye and Tina Turyagyenda
[4] The Annual Staff Conference was held at Pope Paul Memorial Centre 10th April 2006.
[5] The five districts included: Gulu, Kampala, Kisoro, Luwero, and Pallisa.

Section II: Study Findings, Analysis and Recommendations

2.0 Evidence from literature

In order to gain a better understanding of documented government and NGO responses to the OVC situation, a literature review was carried out. This examined a wide range of documents including the OVC Policy and NSPPI, the Capacity Assessment Report (2006), district development plans, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the Social Development Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP) and the Uganda Poverty Status Reports. A list of other documents which were reviewed for the study appears in the references list at the end of the report (see page 78).

Data on the plight of OVC is provided below, while a review of the various social development policies and strategies related to OVC is provided in the introduction section of the report.

The Situation of OVC in Uganda

In 2001, The Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) estimated that at least 800,000 people (an estimated 84,492 in 2000) had died of AIDS in Uganda since its onset in 1983, and that not less than 1.7 million children had been orphaned by the scourge (UAC, 2001). UNICEF's report on the situation of women and children in Uganda basing on the national sero-prevalence survey in 2005, also observed that 6.4% of Ugandans aged 15-59 years, an estimated 800,000 people, are currently living with HIV/AIDS. Thus HIV/AIDS has been noted to have contributed significantly to the increasing number of child-headed households, child labor, street children abandoned children, and rise in school drop-out rate. Indeed HIV/AIDS, armed and civil conflict in parts of the country, and poverty have been isolated as key factors that have largely contributed to the problem of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC)[6]. A key characteristic of the situation of OVC in the country is that of child poverty. Child poverty is a complex phenomenon, which contributes to children's vulnerability and vice versa.

It is evident from existing child and non child poverty studies that high levels of child vulnerability are linked with geographically fragile and poverty stricken environments, including conflict affected areas. Other vulnerability is evident among children from the constantly migrating communities of Eastern Uganda, or those in poor urban settlements who tend to face multiple vulnerabilities. According to a UNICEF report on the situation of women and children in Uganda, of the approximately 1.7 million people who were displaced from their homes in Northern Uganda and who now live in camps, almost 80% of these are women and children[7]. The conflict in northern and eastern Uganda has been a major contributor to the breakdown of family and traditional structures, loss of productive assets and

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[6] Government of Uganda – UNICEF Country Programme 2001-2005; Models for Care, Support and Protection of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Selected Districts of Uganda.
[7] Report on the situation of Children and Women in Uganda October 2005

livelihoods, and an increase in child-headed households with consequent disruption in the provision of basic social services. This highlights a precarious situation for OVC. As a result, many have migrated to urban areas and turned to the streets often becoming "delinquents". Others have been forced to become heads of households in their own localities, which deepens their vulnerability especially to economic abuse through exploitative child labour and to sexual exploitation. These in turn lead to several negative consequences, including unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortion, early marriage, and continuation of the HIV/AIDS cycle.

In spite of the compelling evidence which has been adduced about the difficult situation of OVC, including that from studies undertaken by MGLSD and CORE Initiative, OVC issues are not a priority for either the national or district and sub-county levels. As such, OVC programming at all these levels remains weak.

> '*We don't receive targeted funding for OVC work as a Community Based Department unlike health education and agriculture that receive conditional grants for [Program for Modernization of Agriculture] PMA, immunization and [Universal Primary Education] UPE. Most of our support is one-off donor funding by international agencies. They come for one year and go.*'

> *Probation and Welfare Officer, Bushenyi district, MGLSD Annual Staff Conference*

2.1   Findings from the Qualitative Study

2.1.1   Factors affecting the allocation of resources

A wide range of factors were observed by the study team to be influencing programming and the allocation of resources for OVC. These factors are linked to:
- The Historical Development of MGLSD
- Organization and Management
- The policy and institutional environment
- Image Building Practices within MGLSD
- Capacity Issues

The historical development of MGLSD: The historical evolution of MGLSD has had a negative influence on allocation of resources to the ministry. The ministry was originally established as "a loose conglomeration of directorates and departments". Until recently existed as separate Ministries in their own right or were part of separate ministries[8], though still with little clout. Prior to 1998, for example, "Labour" was a separate Ministry and so was "Culture and Community Development". Similarly, "Women in Development" was also a separate Ministry. All these were amalgamated and restructured in 1998 to operate as different departments of the same Ministry. According to a number of officials, the "original" ministries were however each supported by very small budgets prior to amalgamation and restructuring, a legacy the re-crafted departments seem to have carried with them to the new structure. This, in

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[8] See Ministerial Policy Statement for the Social Development Sector for the 2005/2006 Financial Year

addition to absence of a strong, well-articulated and unifying theme in the early days of the Ministry, resulted into it being considered an institution of secondary importance and, in the eyes of some, a ministry with disparate purposes and objectives.

The lack of financial resources at both central (MGLSD) and district levels was identified by several respondents as a critical factor which hinders the prioritization of OVC issues and activities. At the district and other lower local government levels the lack of finances prevented staff not only from carrying out fieldwork in the respective parishes and villages, but also from having access to basic tools and requirements, including office equipment and furniture, stationery, etc. Consequently this reduced the CBS departments' **status and image** and instead turned the institution into "peripheral players" in district development. The study team was informed, for example, that staff members of CBS often relied on other departments for transport and supplies. Said a CBS official in Gulu:

> *"If you wanted to carry out any CBS activities in the field, you would have to rely on other departments for transport. In the event that they have space and time for you, and that happens only once in a while, they would carry you along with them as they themselves go to visit communities. However, this is not always convenient as our objectives, agenda, and timing for going to the field are not always similar. Because of this constraint the CBS department is not as active as it should be in providing the relevant services to the community".*
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> *- CBS Officer, Gulu District*

According to the CBS Manager for Luwero District, for example, the District Health and Education Departments both have budget lines to support OVC to mitigate the impacts HIV/AIDS, although he hastened to add that the impact of such support was difficult to see[9]. Similarly, in situations where children are orphaned and the deceased parents have not left behind a clear legal will, the Ministry of Justice has responsibility for ensuring fair and equitable access to benefits from the estate of the deceased by eligible family members, including orphans. Likewise the Ministry of Internal Affairs, working in close collaboration with the Probation and welfare Department of the MGLSD has responsibility for children who are in conflict with the law. The level of effectiveness of these other sector institutions in addressing issues of OVC varied from one location to another, often depending on the extent to which the different sector institutions are themselves facilitated or resourced. An important challenge which the research team observed, however, was that while each of the sectors made definite attempts to play its part in supporting OVC, such support tended to be indirect and often in isolation of one another. This raises questions about how OVC issues addressed by the different institutions are coordinated, and how targeting is done. Intra-sector focus on specific issues of OVC, it was further observed, also tended to overlook opportunities for cross-sector collaboration and were blamed by some for the duplication which may occur in OVC interventions which span across many sectors.

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[9] Interview with the Community Based Services Manager, Luwero District.

At the national level, this is perhaps the single most important factor which is responsible for poor (or low) allocation of financial resources to the Social Development Sector which MGLSD oversees. In the same vein only paltry allocations have been made of resources for OVC programming, which is under the aegis of the Social Development Sector.

The different departments have recently begun to merge under a common set of social development goals, with the social protection objective increasingly underpinning the new programming.

Organisation and Management; Although OVC issues are mandated to MGLSD, they are perceived as cross-cutting and are therefore, in practice, handled under many different departments across sectors. For example, the Ministries of Education and Sports is responsible for ensuring access to education for OVC. Similarly the Ministry of Health has responsibility for ensuring access by OVC to their health services. Also, while at the national level the MGLSD is responsible for the development of relevant policies, standards and guidelines, supervision and monitoring, technical support and resource mobilization, at community levels the local governments are responsible for service delivery and for establishing local priorities with respect to the needs of OVC. More specifically at district level, primary responsibility for delivering on MGLSD objectives rests with the Community Based Services (CBS) department.

The study also established that the infrastructure which was available to MGLSD centrally on one hand and Community Based Services (CBS) and facilities on the other hand is often deficient, or in a poor state or it is simply non-existent. An example of poor facilities in all the five districts which the study team visited, were the remand homes and the prisons to which children who are in conflict with the law are referred in the respective districts. In all the districts, children were held in prisons which also had adult offenders in them. In Gulu, for example, a Police Officer informed the research team that not only did the children suffer molestation in such facilities (including sexual and physical abuse), but they also became exposed to hard-core criminals thereby increasing their vulnerability to adopting more anti-social behaviour.

Financial resources: The limited access to resources by CBS departments was in part blamed on the dwindling revenue base for district administrations. In turn the declined district revenue was itself blamed on the scrapping of graduated tax collections, as well as interference by Central Government political leaders in local administration revenue collection strategies. Yet, according to the PEAP (2004), "Local governments are entirely responsible for facilitating CBS departments". However, the matter cannot be reduced to simply that of "lower revenue", since by the same argument other sectors should be expected to equally feel the pinch – which they do not as much as does OVC programming. In other words, poor or non-allocation of resources for OVC activities still goes back to low awareness and low prioritization of the issues at national and other levels.

Another official at district level blamed the skewed allocation of resources to Central Government's adoption of Priority Planning Areas (PPAs) and argued that if OVC issues had been clearly reflected in the PPAs then they too would be easily eligible

for funding allocation using the Overall, limited financial capacity was evidenced by failure to realize the planned allocations at national, district and sub-county implementation level.

During the Annual Staff Conference which was held in April 2006, district-based CBS staff pointed out that their work was mostly supported by short term donor funds, and as soon as such funding expires the projects and issues they may be working on simply get dropped. They also cited incidents where they have outstanding unimplemented because they are under resourced.

> *"MGLSD is a big ministry, with poorly facilitated structures at the national and local government levels. This makes it hard for its staff to achieve the Ministry's set objectives."*
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> *Respondent, Gulu District*

Human resources: Low staff numbers in institutions which address issues of OVC were also blamed for the limited impact of such institutions (e.g. CBS departments) at the district and other lower government levels. In Kisoro District, for example, the department had only two members of staff who were not only overwhelmed by the scope, complexity and depth of OVC work but also did not have the necessary human resource flexibility to innovate and/or venture into communication or advocacy for OVC. Said one of the officers:

> *"I am the only one in the office at the moment. My only other colleague is on study leave. It means that I cannot effectively monitor or supervise activities in the different sub-counties.*
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> *- Community Development Officer, Kisoro District.[10]*

In addition, district CBS offices do not have standard designation. For example in Gulu, the head of CBS office is referred to as a manager, while in Kisoro he is referred to as a director and Luwero as a senior program Officer. Further still, several persons at the same level hold similar positions, making their role, responsibilities and information flow very confusing.

Local governments were given the mandate to restructure their human resource set-up using the district commissions, an activity that has caused confusion of roles and responsibilities. Some positions that were directly linked to the vulnerable children have in the process been removed. For instance, in Gulu District, gender and rehabilitation officers were scrapped.

> *"Sometimes information is meant for another officer is delivered to me, and on passing it on to the right officer it finds its way back to me!"*
>
> *CBS Manager, Gulu District.*

The policy and institutional environment: Uganda is signatory to a number of international human rights agreements on children. These include the Declaration on the Rights of Children (1923), the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child by the League of Nations in 1924, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

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[10] Similar sentiments were expressed in all the other districts of Pallisa, Gulu, Kampala, and Luwero.

Child (1990), Birth Registration Act, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The Government of Uganda also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in November 1990.

The Uganda Constitution: At the national level, the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995) is emphatic about the rights of children, particularly recognizing the rights to education, medical treatment, care and protection and other socioeconomic benefits. In order to "operationalise" these, numerous other instruments and programmes, as outlined in the following paragraphs, are in place.

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP): The PEAP is an over-arching framework which guides public action to eradicate poverty, and issues of OVC are central to this framework. According to the current PEAP, OVC constitute a large and growing share of Uganda's population, largely as result of HIV/AIDS and war related deaths of parents[11]. The document also observes that about 2 million Ugandan children have been orphaned by AIDS, and that a growing number of child-headed households as a result of AIDS-related orphanhood, are particularly vulnerable, some to labour exploitation and many to sexual abuse which itself increases their risk of contracting HIV[12]. The PEAP further reveals that children's transition to adulthood is characterized by reproductive health concerns including HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI), early marriages, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and low contraceptive use. Thus, while progress was reported to have been made in the pre- and post-1990s in increasing access to educational programmes on sexuality, responsible parenthood and reproductive health services, child health outcomes did not improve in the 1990s, and child nutrition, together with infant and maternal mortality indicators deteriorated between 1995 and 2000, with HIV/AIDS prevalence rates stagnating between 6% and 7%. This, in a nutshell, meant increased vulnerability for children.

Key National Development Priority areas in the PEAP

Key commitments of the PEAP[13]:	National development priorities:	Key PEAP CHALLENGES
Pillar 1. Economic Management	• Accelerating pro-poor growth • macro economic stability • fiscal consolidation • Boosting private sector investment.	• High unequal growth • Environmental degradation • Limited improvement in human development indicators in 1990s except achievements with HIV/AIDS
Pillar 2. Enhancement of Production, Competitiveness and incomes.	• Rural Roads • Modernization of Agriculture, through PMA and NAADs • Accountability and justice • Reservation of natural resources base	

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[11] See Republic of Uganda, Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (MFPED) 2005: Poverty Eradication Action Plan, 2004/5 – 2007/8

[12] As of the year 2002/03, 3.2 % of children aged less than 18 years had lost both parents while 8.4% and 2.2% had lost the father and mother respectively.

[13] Poverty Eradication Action Plan 2004/5-2007/8

	• Infrastructure development e.g roads.	campaign • Present insecurity causing changes in the regional patterns of poverty.
Pillar 3. **Security, Conflict-Resolution and Disaster Management**	• Restoring security and support for regions affected by conflict.	
Pillar 4 : **Good Governance**	• Democratizations, justice law and order	
Pillar 5: **Human Development**	• Universal Primary Education • Primary Health Care • Water supply • Social development	

The type of funding that MGLSD receives specifically targeting children, is under the vote: *Measures to Improve human development: Support to AIDS orphans and Children's Rehabilitation*, within the Poverty Action Fund. These funds are remitted to the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development under the 'Promotion of Children and Youth in Difficult Circumstances' (PCY) project which is operational in 19[14] of the current 80 districts of Uganda.

Social Development Investment Plan (SDIP): The MGLSD, developed a Social Development Investment Plan (SDIP) to, among other things, promote community-level actions to reduce poverty; care for vulnerable groups, including women, elderly persons and orphans and other vulnerable children, as well as mainstream gender and social protection throughout Government[15]. Among the priority actions for vulnerable groups is mobilizing and strengthening community-based response for better care of OVC. Regrettably, however, neither the PEAP nor the SDIP define specific actions for responding to the identified challenge of OVC.

The Children Statute: The legal framework for children's rights in Uganda is embedded in the Children Statute, 1996. This consolidates the law relating to children and provides for their care, protection and maintenance, covering parents' responsibilities, local authority support (including provision for a family and children's court) and the treatment of children charged with offences.

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[14] The 19 districts include; Arua, Busia, Bushyenyi, Gulu, Katakwi, Kiboga, Kumi, Mukono, Nebbi, Rukungiri, Soroti, Wakiso, Apac, Lira, Kibale, Mpigi, Sironko, Pader and Mbale.
[15] Poverty Eradication Action Plan 2004/5 – 2007/8.

Implementation of the Act commenced on August 1, 1997. However, District Councils have not fully embraced the Statute, largely due to the limited number of Probation and Social Welfare Officers (PWO) and Community Development Officers (CDO) who are needed for the proper functioning of community-based services at the district and lower levels. In addition, most districts have not yet identified suitable facilities to be used as children's facilities (such as remand homes) which has resulted in the continued incarceration of children in police cells and prisons with adults, contravening the Children's statute, and accentuating the affected children's vulnerability.

OVC Policy and Strategy: Key elements of Uganda's OVC policy are important ingredients of the SDIP which in turn provides a framework for responding to the concerns and needs of orphans and other vulnerable children. The overall goal of the policy is full development and realization of rights of orphans and other vulnerable children[16]. In addition to the priority areas, target groups, institutional framework, implementation strategies and M&E functions, the policy and strategy aim to ensure that:

- The legal, policy and institutional framework for child protection is developed and strengthened at all levels;

- Orphans, vulnerable children and their families access basic essential services package;

- Resources for interventions that benefit orphans and other vulnerable children are mobilized and efficiently utilized; and

- The capacity of duty bearers for orphans and other vulnerable children to provide essential services is enhanced.

In addition theme-specific issues of OVC are outlined in key sector policies and strategies, including those of education, health, agriculture and justice, and law and order. Similarly, the establishment (and functioning) of the National Council for Children (NCC), its operational challenges notwithstanding, in addition to implementation of the Registration of Births Act, and the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) policy all provide a supportive policy environment for OVC programming. Other policies and instruments which are in place and which have had mutuality with OVC policy include the National Gender Policy, the Sexual Offences Act, the Policy on Child Labour, the draft HIV/AIDS policy, the Food and Nutrition Policy, as well as the Policy on Disability. Currently, also, the MGLSD is leading a process of prioritizing the adoption of Social Protection approaches as one way in which vulnerable groups of the population, including OVC, could be targeted. However, the process of clarifying such policy is itself likely to take some time to bear fruit.

Despite the impressive array of supportive policies and instruments, however, effective implementation still remains a challenge. A case in point is the National Plan of Action for Children, with some of its core components not implemented.

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[16] National Orphans and other Vulnerable Children Policy:; 2004

Image Building Practices within MGLSD: The study established that MGLSD had to-date not been able to effectively built her image in the eyes of other stakeholders. As already outlined, part of the problem is historical, lying in the decision by Government during the 1990s to merge several ministries into one. Rather than evoke a common spirit, the merger simply brought the multiple identities of the former ministries under one common root, but without a common spirit or theme. Related to this, also, is the "failure by MGLSD to identify and effectively use a selling point for the ministry". Thus it was not clear what the ministry wanted to be known by. This image is now changing following development of the Social Development Sector Investment Plan (SDIP) and identification and promotion of Social Protection as an underlying objective for the ministry.

The concept of OVC: The study team found that the concept of OVC was generally well-known and understood, although different geographical and socio-economic contexts presented different particularities with respect to who is considered to be an orphan or other vulnerable child. Overall, this is consistent with the NOP/NSPPI which itself encourages stakeholders to consider the definitions that it provides for OVC, but leaves it open to the different communities to determine who is most vulnerable based on local understanding and context (and hence targeting of their initiatives).

The national policy document[17] defines orphans as "children below 18 years who have lost one or both parents", and most respondents consulted at national, district and community level defined orphans and other vulnerable children as:

> *"Children that have lost one or both parents, and vulnerable children being those that live in a hopeless situation prone to effects of war, diseases, particularly HIV / AIDS, and who are exposed to various forms of human rights abuse, such as sexual exploitation, yet such children are helpless to resist that situation"*

While the Ministry defines vulnerability as *"a state of being, where a person is likely to suffer significant physical, emotional or mental harm that may result in their human rights not being fulfilled"*. At community, sub-county and district levels vulnerability was seen as *"susceptibility, weakness, defenselessness or a situation of being helpless in the face of risks"* and as *"a situation which put a marginally poor person on the verge of falling into deeper poverty"*. Examples which were volunteered from field consultations included:

> *"Children who are disabled, orphaned and needy"*
>
> *Elderly woman, Gulu District.*

> *"Children from Batwa families who are very poor and who only survive on begging"*
>
> *Male respondent, Kisoro District.*

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[17] The National and Vulnerable Children Policy by Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, November 2004

However, the definition of "orphan" or even "other vulnerable child" based purely on a parental relationship was sometimes challenged as in some cases "orphanhood" tended to be linked to the absence of a social rather than a biological parent. In such instances, some argued, orphanhood referred to children who had been left destitute by the loss of both parents or those who had lost a care giver (not necessarily a biological parent).

Despite the fact that the term OVC was widely used in the study area, and that to a large extent the essence of this term was consistent with the meaning assigned to it by MGLSD, it was still noticeable that the concept OVC was imprecise to most respondents, including service providers. While a large proportion of the respondents were, for example, clear about the term "orphan" and what it connotes, they were a lot less clear about "vulnerable children". According to an official from the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit (PMAU):

> *"OVC is a recent concept unknown by many people including service providers which makes programming and budgeting for it difficult."*
> *Officer in the PMAU, MFPED*

The confusion seemed to stem from different interpretations of the concept "vulnerable children", where some groups identify vulnerable children as those who have a high possibility of falling into poverty and suffering, or those who are already suffering and poor, or those who reside in communities where the entire community is described as vulnerable.

The various nuisances in the concept of OVC are affecting the reach of interventions. For example, Head Teachers from Gulu, Luwero and Pallisa districts, respondents in the study, admitted that while their schools received financial and other resources to support children affected by HIV, the resources were used for the benefit of all children. They explained that the communities from which the children came were all affected by HIV, and that isolating a few children was expensive and would lead to stigmatization. Technocrats also explained that "a large majority of children are in any case vulnerable", hence specific targeting is neither realistic nor advantageous.

OVC issues are perceived as cross-cutting and are therefore handled under many different departments across sectors. As a result, districts and sub-counties do not see the need to specifically plan, fund and implement what they consider to be "separate" programs for OVC.

The intangible nature of goals related to OVC is yet another challenge in getting OVC issues appreciated and recognized. MGLSD activities which are aimed at supporting OVC themselves tend to focus on empowerment, protection of rights and issues of equity for peoples, especially that of vulnerable groups, which aspects are intangible and difficult to measure. On the other hand resource allocation, especially at district and sub-county levels, is biased towards capital developments: road infrastructure, school construction and water systems, etc. In Kisoro, for example, the departments of education and health were observed to be receiving a lion's share of the district budget and this was attributed to the fact that "they were easily able to show evidence of how they had implemented their projects – meaning schools (buildings), dispensaries, etc.

The sheer number of OVC who, it is estimated, exist in Uganda further complicates programming. According to the UNICEF report on "The Situation of Children and Women in the Republic of Uganda" (2005), the majority of the poor were children below the age of 18 years, a total of around 5.7 million children. Similarly, the MGLSD's SDIP (2003) states that

- Children (under 18 years) represent 62% of the poor, and child labourers are estimated at 3.3 million;

- There are an estimated 2.3 million orphans (8.7% of the population, of whom 41% of boy orphans and 36% of girl orphans fall below the poverty line;

The number of children which are involved are thus quite considerable, which makes the task of addressing their needs look unassailable.

Gaps in statistical data: Another hindering factor for OVC programming and budgeting was observed to be that of gaps in statistical data on OVC. While there are general indications of the magnitude of the problem at the national level, specifics relating to individual districts and other lower local governments are difficult to come by. Similarly, the data which was available to the public, it was claimed, was not fully interpreted to derive meaning and specific implications for resource allocation. This is particularly the case when it comes to "other vulnerable children".

> *"Policy makers and planners are mainly moved by statistical figures which neither OVC Secretariat nor MGLSD produce, making it very difficult for them to articulate the magnitude of the problem for increased resource allocation.*
>
> *Key Informant Interview with MFPED official.*

The Commissioner for Planning at the MGLSD maintained that the "much-complained-about-data-issue" was in reality a non-issue since such data was available in the 2002 Uganda national housing census and that it was shared with local government officials. He thus contested the "lack of data" as a reason for poor resource allocation. However a review of the 2002 census report by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics shows that only Children with disability, orphans, and child labourers, and to some extent child mothers are recorded in the statistical reports, which leaves other vulnerable children unaccounted for. For example no figures exist for street children, formerly abducted children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children living in poor households, children heading families and children under the care of poor and very elderly guardians. In addition, the data available is not adequately analyzed to communicate a message concerning the gravity of OVC issues. The lack of an effective management information system (MIS)[18] for OVC hinders evidence-based planning and performance measurement.

Some districts, such as Luwero and Gulu, are currently carrying out birth and death registration at the community level, aimed at providing data on the OVC situation. However such data still does not include all the vulnerable categories of OVC as the

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[18] MGLSD is preparing to pilot an OVC MIS, beginning in 2007.

data investigation structures used record only orphans and children with disability. Hence, even in these districts gaps still remain. MGLSD/CORE Initiative have in the meantime identified a number of sources where data on OVC are available. Collating this data and ensuring that MGLSD has access to it would be one way of contributing to the "data gap" on OVC which has been a recurrent problem. This has significant implication to policy makers who would wish to engage in evidence based advocacy with data to beef up on the nature of the problem and magnitude of the support/ interventions carried out.

Capacity issues; Field consultations and district capacity assessments[19] further revealed that the technical capacity of the district departments (CBS) to deliver on MGLSD objectives, though reasonable, is itself still limited. Central to this discussion is the place of OVC in the planning and budget allocation process. A number of factors explain this. First, due to lack of data the position of OVC is not reflected as a priority in the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), and yet among other stakeholders such as NGOs and agencies it is considered to be a priority. Secondly, at Lower Local Government (LLG) level, information on OVC is not fully disseminated and hence the issues are neither articulated nor considered in budget allocation. According to an internal capacity assessment study by MGLSD itself which was carried out under the aegis of the CORE Initiative in eight districts during the period 2005 November – January 2006 (MGLSD, 2006), district staff reported inadequate skills in advocacy and communication and hence were only able to achieve a "novice" score of 29% only[20]. The study further revealed that technical capacities in the districts in terms of knowledge and understanding OVC policy and the NSPPI, understanding the psycho-social support needs and options, and child counseling skills, were all limited. While the CSOs capacity assessment reveled that the advocacy and communication strategy was key in influencing the OVC policy, many worried that the MGSLD had not effectively taken a lead on this. Overall, therefore, it was evident that there were gaps in knowledge among service providers especially at local levels of key policies which relate to OVC – their origins, rationale, conceptualization, content and implications for local level planning and implementation.

This challenge notwithstanding CBS staff commitment to, and interest in addressing OVC issues proved to be a positive factor in OVC programming at district level.

The role of Civil society organizations (CSO) and groups

CSO[21] and groups provide a wide range of support in the form of financial assistance, skills development, and direct service delivery to OVC. Evidence adduced to the study team reveals that services which are provided by the NGOs include preventive services, support services, capacity building, poverty alleviation and social security. Preventive services were observed to be primarily focused on community mobilization related to HIV/AIDS issues as well as promotion of welfare through referrals for available services. Support services included both early intervention activities – including early identification of children and families affected by HIV,

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[19]

[20] See MGLSD and Districts Capacity Assessment Scores, 2006.
[21] Civil society organizations include community-based, faith-based, and national and international non-governmental organizations.

counseling, and identification of foster care alternatives for children. Most CSO were observed to be involved in capacity building activities - training of trainers, families, communities, care givers and professionals. In addition, a number of CSO were reported to have established micro-finance projects in communities to address the issue of poverty and its attendant negative influences on OVC.Public-private partnerships on the other hand involved multinational cooperation such as Coke Cola., banks such as Stanbic, Standard Chattered bank, Omo, Tele-Communication companies i.e Cetel, UTL, and MTN supported the initiative on creation of a 'yellow ribbon, under their social responsibility cooperate, carry out charitable activities and provide direct support to vulnerable members in communities including OVC.

Civil society groups[22] were also observed to be an important factor which had positively influenced (or facilitated) the implementation of OVC activities and programmes. Civil society groups were observed to provide services, resources and advocate for OVC issues and special needs. However, the level of support and participation was observed to be complex, varied and executed in different forms. In the research districts of Pallisa, Gulu, Kisoro, Luweero and Kampala, community support and participation included the provision of information, awareness raising, and mobilising communities on OVC issues through drama presentations, videos, songs and cultural dances.

Due to increased poverty, crumbling of family ties, loss of social values and occurrence of AIDS, care and support for orphans, widows or other vulnerable children was sometimes seen as bringing additional problems to the community. Not surprisingly, therefore, Factors which impacted on type and level of community support and participation ranged from poverty on one hand to incidence of HIV/AIDS-related illness and death as well as income earning opportunities among community members on the other hand.

Civil society groups have become indispensable in delivering services to OVC, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS.

2.1.2   Potential partners, advocates, competitors

There is a wide range of stakeholders carrying out OVC-related activities in various parts of the country, with whom MGLSD has already established collaborative links. The study team has elected to classify these current and potential partners, advocates, and competitors into the following categories:

- Children and youth, including OVC.
- Civil society actors.
- Development Partners/Donors.
- District Local Governments
- Line Ministries.

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[22] In this study the term "civil society group" was defined both as "a group of people in a defined geographical location", such as a village, parish or sub-county, and also as "a combination of family lineage and traditional clan structures".

- Local leaders.
- Media.
- Private-sector organizations.

Existing Ministry partners, tend to include stakeholders who provide financial and technical support in the development of policies, plans, and the delivery of quality services for OVC, namely development partners and donors such as USAID and UNICEF. Other partners include civil society organizations[23] funded by MGLSD to implement OVC programmes according to the essential services package in the NSPPI. Potential partners could also include organizations and individuals from the private sector, CSO, and the Probation and Welfare Officers and Community Development Officers/Assistants in the District Community Based Services Department. For instance, OMO has a campaign 'Let them Play', Coca-Cola has set aside profits at selected times of year to support orphans programming, and MTN has expressed interest in helping launch the 'yellow ribbon'. Meanwhile, many district CBS departments and CSO are providing vital services to OVC without any linkages to MGLSD.

Since the OVC landscape presents diverse issues, there is need to explore potential advocates to spearhead the OVC campaign country wide. Findings reveal that a number of advocates already exist or could be mobilized and supported to support the stated advocacy goals, including children, local activists (including Child Rights Activists, Women's Groups), caregivers, local leaders, CSO, politicians, teachers, LG, and Line Ministries. Advocates were observed to play a vital role in awareness raising, in the delivery of services and/or referral for services, and in community mobilization.

Overall there is need to develop strategy that links the different stakeholders of OVC initiatives to MGLSD and high light potential areas of collaboration, support and linkages in areas of funding, information and technical support. This will ensure a harmonized approach to OVC interventions from local to national level. Advocates are looking to MGLSD to lead policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, all geared to enhancing quality of life and address social issues of vulnerable groups. While MGLSD partners are looking to MGLSD to provide a leadership role in the ensuring regulation and quality control OVC country wide interventions and providing regular feedback on such measures.

Given the extensive array of stakeholders, the advocacy strategy should spell out different strategies for different categories and messages for different actors. The strategy should categorically define interests of the different stakeholders; for instance, some are involved in service delivery, others in policy engagement and analysis and while others are funding agencies. An inter-OVC arrangement is crucial for coordinating OVC efforts at national level and could be used to fundraise for OVC initiatives and raise awareness of the plight of OVC.[24]

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[23] The awarding of grants to CSO is part of a larger initiative within the Ministry to establish a public-private partnership, where MGLSD provides financial and technical support to guide the delivery of services, while CSO provide the services or referrals for services.

[24] MGLSD has established terms of reference for a National Implementation Unit to lead such

Stakeholders' understanding of the concept "competitors" was linked to funding with respondents. They noted that the **"better-resourced Ministries"** such as Health, Defense or Education as competitors of MGLSD[25]. For such ministries the funding which went to supporting

Interestingly, CSO who are involved in OVC work were sometimes also perceived by local government officials as competitors. This is based on a a comparison of the resources they attract with those which are available to MGLSD and CBS departments. CSO were also accused of poor accountability and transparency in their operations. Many do not share their project plans or budgets with the relevant staff in the district and their relationship with government (at all levels) is characterized by a lack of trust.

> *"There is no serious collaboration with CBS department at the district level. We also do not seek to collaborate with the department because all district departments are corrupt and not serious at development."*
>
> *Development worker, Luwero District.*

The MGLSD advocacy strategy should pave the way for winning over potential opponents and competitors by providing information on the plight of OVC in the country using both qualitative and quantitative evidence, the implementation of the national effort for OVC (NSPPI), technical guidelines, and promote opportunities for OVC stakeholders to share experiences, and highlight emerging needs/concerns.

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[25] Most respondents believed that the budget which was allocated to a given Government Ministry depended on the "gravity of the issue or issues which such Ministry was handling. The Ministry of Defence, for example, was singled as one which is able to take a large proportion of the national resource envelope due to the "grave situation of the war in Northern Uganda"

Table 1: Potential OVC Partners and OVC Advocates and Their Roles

MGLSD	ADVOCACY PARTNERS	ADVOCATES	COMPETITORS
Permanent Secretary Department of Gender, Culture & Community Development; Department of Youth & Children; Department of Poverty Eradication, Economic & Civic Rights; Department of Disability & Elderly;	Development Partners/Donors Civil Society Organizations Private Sector Organizations Community-based Services Department	Children and Youth, including OVC Local activists Caregivers/community Clan/Cultural/Religious Leaders Artists Private sector (Rotarians) Civil society/CBO leaders/activists Religious leaders "Connected" individuals Political leaders Teachers Local Government Line Ministries	Other advocacy organizations Departments of Health District Department of Education, District Department of Water Department of Production at District level Ministry of Defense Ministry of Public Service Ministry of Health and Education.
ADVOCACY ROLES	**ADVOCACY ROLES**	**ADVOCACY ROLES**	**ADVOCACY ROLES**
Policy formation and dissemination. Create opportunities for exchanges. Provide overall direction.	Disseminate information Financial Support Increase visibility of OVC needs/, concerns Document success stories, lessons learned Service delivery Technical Support	Provide testimonies Identify needs and solutions Lobby decision-makers Disseminate information Deliver services Provide links to key decision-makers Technical Support Mobilize individuals and groups Refer individuals for additional information	Lobby decision-makers. Financial Support. Mobilize individuals and groups. Formulate policies and plan.

2.1.3 Priority Issues for Advocacy

For any advocacy initiative to be meaningful, it requires the active involvement of the people most directly affected by the issue. These groups must play the primary role in identifying and prioritizing the issues that will form the basis of an organized advocacy effort. In order to deepen understanding of the priorities the study team examined priority issues for advocacy from the perspective of OVC, and OVC service providers. The identified priorities, listed below by stakeholder group, to facilitate the identification of common themes across each group.

Priority issues raised by the OVC

Over 200 OVC were consulted for their views on the most pressing issues that should form the basis of a national advocacy effort. The children and young people identified four interrelated issues, namely:
- Education
- Stigma reduction
- Care and support
- Socio-economic security
- Reintegration and resettlement

Education: Universal Primary Education (UPE) remains inaccessible to many children who cannot meet the cost of scholastic materials and other school requirements. Casual laboring was reported to be one of the key strategies used by children to get money that would enable them get scholastic requirements.

Stigma reduction:[26] All categories of OVC that were consulted in the study reported that they are stigmatized based on their "vulnerability status". Some were given derogatory names, while others were scoffed at by peers who made fun of the assistance that they (OVC) receive from development organizations.

Care and support and Socio-economic security: OVC signaled that they wanted to be in a position where they had access to regular household income support or in-kind assistance. They emphasized the inability of their guardians to provide for their basic needs and to contribute to school requirements. This rendered the children prone to taking on adult responsibilities in order to provide for their siblings.

Reintegration and resettlement: Fostering and care for children heading households, those on the streets, and in displaced people's camps was another key issue that was reported. Nearly all OVC explained that they wish to be reintegrated into a family setting.

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[26] Stigma reduction, though not one of the core programme areas (or components of the essential services package), is one of the 14 Guiding Principles in the NSPPI.

Priority issues raised by OVC Caregivers

Two specific issues were identified by OVC caregivers as priorities to include in advocacy for OVC, namely socio-economic security and the importance of emphasizing children's responsibilities. Both issues are described below in more detail:

Socio-economic security: Families taking care of OVC feel overburdened because in addition to their own biological children, they have to provide necessities for extra children who are under their care and support. This creates an additional cost for which they require assistance from the government and its development partners.

Although it was not one of the key study questions, it was established that many orphans and other vulnerable children that were interviewed are under the care of elderly relatives who are unable to shoulder the OVC burden. Many of the elderly guardians are either unable to engage in meaningful livelihoods or have unstable sources of income or none at all.

Awareness raising for OVC on children's responsibilities: Caregivers expressed the lack of understanding amongst many of OVC of their responsibilities as children, who have become unruly. In their view, the concept of child rights has been misused by law enforcers as well as the children who only refer to children rights without emphasizing child responsibilities.

> *"Parents and guardians lack knowledge about the rights of orphans and other vulnerable children; because many times such children miss basic rights especially the right to education and right to inherit property. Orphans are harassed - physically abused, not loved and generally not accepted by some members of the community."*
>
> *District Inspector of Schools, Pallisa District*

Priority issues raised by CSOs

The following issues were identified by CSO as priorities to include in advocacy for OVC; they are ranked in order of importance: The study findings interestingly shows that stakeholders involved in implementation of OVC programming had more priority issues identified compared by the people directly affected, i.e. OVC and OVC caregivers. This is attributed to the fact that they are directly involved in the policy implementation and face day to day challenges that have widely been documented and articulated at different policy foras. Unlike OVC and OVC caregivers who displaced a rather resignation state and unhidden potential in advocating for won selves. The other factor is that of social exclusion that these groups suffer with barely any platform to articulate their problems exacerbates the state of powerless to express them. The key priority needs identified included;

- Essential services package
- Resource allocation to MGLSD
- National database for OVC
- Socio-economic security

- Information, education and communication materials to implement advocacy activities
- Education
- Psychosocial support
- Child Protection
- Health

Essential services package: Field findings revealed that officials working on different programmes and interventions targeting OVC do recognize the broad socio-economic and political context within which OVC are located. As alluded to earlier, OVC need support that cuts across a range of needs. Thus the multi-dimensional nature of support that OVC require calls for a holistic approach in design, implementation and review of development interventions.

Resource allocation to MGLSD: Increased resource allocation to the MGLSD is an issue that cannot be over-emphasized. It emerged from all consultations that staff and the political leadership of MGLSD should get the requisite resources and skills to meet its objectives and to articulate the ministry's role and mandate to key government ministries as well as development partners and other stakeholders. It is envisaged that once the ministry has ample resources – financial, technical and physical it will enable the district and sub-county staff in the community Service Development department to fulfill their mandate. Local leaders decried the low funding that MGLSD receives, arguing that with more resources both MGLSD and the Community-Based Services department would be able to meet their mandated functions.

National OVC database: As mentioned earlier in the report, programme managers revealed that they experience difficulty in responding to the OVC challenge, because most of the information that they use especially on proportion of population for each category of OVC is not comprehensive and a data base on OVC needs to be created. Plans are underway to establish a Management Information System.

Socio-economic security: Although all categories of OVC are vulnerable, this vulnerability is not homogeneous, and specific groups call for special attention of stakeholders. It was specifically pointed out that child headed households need some form of financial support to enable them access the basic minimum needs. e.g. food, clothing, shelter and free health services. It was envisaged that with such support, there will be a reduction in the rate at which children are getting involved in various forms of child labor to earn a living or running to the streets hoping to receive money from well wishers. Also, children with disabilities were identified as needing special attention because they often require particular devices that sometimes have to be procured.

Local leaders observed that OVC plight is also embedded within the country's socio-economic and political environment. Their vulnerable situation is a component of the overall nature of vulnerability that many households in Uganda are faced with, which sometimes makes it difficult for targeting.

> *"Advocacy and support should be holistic because all vulnerability issues are linked, you cannot provide for education when the child has no food. The child will not go to school hungry!"*
>
> *District Planner, Pallisa District*

Further, awareness raising and community sensitization on all socio-economic issues concerning orphans and other vulnerable children and their caregivers emerged as another issue from all consultations. This they said would help in changing people's attitudes, behaviors and practices in respect of such children.

It was also observed that the current socio-economic situation in the region has made many children vulnerable because their parents cannot fulfill their responsibilities of providing basic needs.

> *"Children resort to risky survival means such as prostitution resulting to HIV/AIDS infections and early pregnancies. There is a lot of lawlessness for idle and poor children in the camps, a lot of petty theft and generally delinquency is very high as a result of this LRA war. This kind of behaviour among our children should be advocated against."*
>
> *Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Gulu District*

Education. Government's inadequate support to the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was found to be another issue for advocacy. Leaders pointed out that government contributes Ushs. 450 shillings per child per term, expected to cover tuition fees. This leaves the children to cover other school requirements – many are unable to do so.

> *"Many children are not in school. Although there is UPE, parents are not able to meet school requirements. The problem worsens when children complete P.7, because no parent can afford post-primary education."*
>
> *Parish Priest, Gulu District*

Psychosocial support: The findings from Gulu reveal that a number of children in internally displaced people's camps exhibit signs of gross indiscipline sometimes bordering on lawlessness. This was attributed to a breakdown of family and clan controls, as well as of traditional systems for raising children and for disciplining errant members of society. Local leaders called on Government and other stakeholders working with children to promote behavioral change among children living in camps of the internally displaced. Because the affected children were at the same time vulnerable children, the need for advocacy to address this problem was emphasized.

Child protection: The study findings also revealed that property grabbing cases are on the rise in all districts, but particularly in Kisoro, Pallisa, and Gulu, and that such cases warranted increased advocacy for protection of children's land rights.[27]

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[27]Government of Uganda – UNICEF Country Programme 2001-2005; Models for Care, Support and Protection of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Selected Districts of Uganda.

'*My father died and left us no land title, my mother died a month later and the neighbors took over the land , today my siblings and I rent a hut at 3000 shillings a month.*' (Child headed household Gulu)

Land wrangles are most frequently reported in Local Council Courts. However cases which involve children are rarely judiciously addressed. In some instances widows and children have been displaced, which negatively impacts on their livelihoods and social status.

Early marriage: There has been an evolution in the family structure given the context of conflict and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As result "children now exercise more freedom, do things on their own but are also struggling to meet their social and economic needs". Earlier studies by MGLSD also reveal that children especially those in conflict prone areas like Gulu and remote poor districts of Kisoro have been lured into early marriage which results into child motherhood and deeper poverty. In rural Pallisa, many children, particularly OVC, are literally exchanged for material gain under the guise of marriage. CSO consultations in Kampala in addition revealed that the urban poverty situation characterized by unemployment of family heads has forced children to indulge in child sex in exchange for money. Unfortunately few efforts have been made to bring the culprits to justice. Advocacy on this issue was thus also stressed.

Health: There was also a general outcry from caregivers, and other stakeholders that HIV/AIDS programmes had to-date mainly targeted the adult population and little or nothing has been done for youth and children in the area of provision of treatment and awareness creation.

In summary, OVC, OVC Caregivers, and CSO highlighted ten advocacy issues. The table below provides a summary of the advocacy issues, noting the ranking provided by each group. Clearly there is a wide range of issues that require attention.

Table 2: Priorities for Advocacy identified by key OVC stakeholders

Advocacy Issue	OVC	OVC Caregiver	CSO, Local Leaders
Education	1		6
Reduce stigma	2		
Care and support	3		
Socio-economic security	4	1	4
Reintegration and resettlement	5		
Child protection			8
Essential services package		3	1
Health			9
IEC materials for advocacy			5
National OVC database			3
Psychosocial support			7
Resource allocation to MGLSD			2
Use the human-rights approach		2	

* Cross cutting issues according to the core program areas of the NSPPI. Cross cutting issues according to the SDIP are indicated in parentheses.

Priority issues raised by OVC stakeholders – an overview

The issues mapped above give an indication about where the focus needs to be with respect to issues, areas and themes. The issues identified also provide a benchmark for MGLSD to develop targeted advocacy strategies. The multi-dimensional nature of issues as well as differences in levels (of issues to be addressed and hence advocacy strategies) imply that a multi-faceted but harmonised approach would need to be considered, perhaps using the existing partnership between MGLSD and other OVC stakeholders as a stepping stone towards building the strategy. Similarly, in rolling out the proposed advocacy strategy it would seem logical to adopt a phased approach.

MGLSD will in addition need to identify and learn from existing institutions (governmental and non-governmental) already working to address the issues raised, and to consider how advocacy initiatives for OVC complement or build upon the advocacy-related activities under the PEAP and SDIP, and other CSO efforts.

In addition, to implement an effective advocacy campaign, MGLSD may need to conduct additional research to provide adequate details will be required on some issues raised. In the advocacy strategy, it is important to highlight those issues that the MGLSD do not have sufficient information for instance, issues of stigma, coping strategies for children heading households, as well as implications for government and other stakeholders of providing social support to all poverty-stricken households fostering OVC.

The design of the strategy should be comprehensive to take into account the OVC sector specific issues on health, agriculture and education some of which are not necessarily under the mandate of MGLSD. Similarly, the range of stakeholders to involve in the process should be broadened to bring on board key private or corporate sector actors using the public-private partnership principle. Possible partners in this might include Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), Uganda Telecommunications Limited (UTL), CELTEL, MTN, Mukwano Industries, etc.

2.3.4 The profile of other ministries vis-à-vis MGLSD

The study explored reasons that explain why other ministries or departments are better known and respected than MGLSD. The findings showed that generally, there was little understanding of the overall mandate of the MGLSD both at national and local government levels.

MGLSD mandate: Unlike MGLSD, respondents perceived other ministries as having clear and easily understood mandates. In addition to being broad, MGLSD's mandate was perceived to be "confused". Some findings reveal a negative and predominantly male perception of MGLSD being a "women's ministry" and not one that addresses issues of social development.

> *"When MGLSD is mentioned, it is easy to associate it with women because it has tried to do some work for the women. Otherwise, it is overburdened with many departments of community development; probation and welfare; youth*

and children; social rehabilitation; gender and labor that are under facilitated." (Respondent, Mega FM – Gulu) *in light of the other ministries such education, and health that have a similar number of departments but are well facilitated.*

The mandate issue is further complicated by the multiplicity of objectives and functions which MGLSD oversees and supervises. The mandate appears quite big and complex, and it is neither supported by an appropriate structure and commensurate budget nor fully recognized as an independent sector in its own right. The result is "a very big and complex ministry with very limited resources".

Performance: At local and central government levels, the differences in perceptions about MGLSD vis-à-vis other ministries also tended to be hinged on "performance" of the different ministries. Performance of the ministries responsible for education and health or water was easy to gauge: classroom blocks; pupils in school and sitting for examinations; dispensaries; immunization activities; water points constructed, etc. It was however difficult to put a finger on the "products" or "outputs" of MGLSD and CBS departments, some of whose focus areas include empowerment, people's participation, attitude change, etc. By assessing performance based on such narrow (and often physical) criteria, MGLSD and CBS departments have in the eyes of the public "not been performing effectively".

Further still, the Ministry was criticized for developing policies and plans which are unrealistic and which subsequently do not get funded. Allegations were also made about what some respondents saw as poor past accountability, misuse of resources and what one respondent called "a lazy and laid back approach to doing work". The planning-budgeting-financing challenge is thus a catch 22:

> *'We make plans every financial year but we don't get implement the planned activities due to budgetary and time constraints.'*
>
> *CBS Manager, Gulu District*

> *"They work in a laissez-faire manner, things never move forward when working with MGLSD, for instance, there are several inter-ministerial committees where MGLSD is a member, but often their staff do not attend, when they try, they come late for meetings, other times when they come, they have no convincing arguments."*
>
> *Respondent from MFPED*

Link to National development priorities. The study further observed that there was more positive regard for the older ministries – those which were established along the lines of the conventional social service sectors of education, health and water. The interventions of these ministries were more closely linked to the national development priorities as identified by PAF. The MGLSD on the other hand is perceived by most to have been a new creation which arose out of a global campaign and trends in addressing issues of women and development, gender equity and social justice.

There are two key conclusions which we draw from the above analysis. First, historically the other sector ministries have long been established and officials and

non-officials alike take them as a given. Secondly, the national poverty priority areas reinforce the focus on the same sectors, which by not stating OVC among the priorities simply strengthens the argument against allocating resources to this area.

2.3.5 How does the budget process work in Uganda?

With regard to the budgeting system the study team specifically set out to examine the *national and district budgeting system, key gate keepers/ and influencers of budgetary allocations.* It also examined the extent to which national priorities influence budgetary allocations at lower levels. Overall, Uganda's national budget is informed by the priorities identified in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the country's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP). At a more practical level the Poverty Action Fund (PAF), a mechanism for strengthening the pro poor orientation of the budget, is used for focusing the budget on key "poverty-reducing interventions".

At the broader level, the budget provides an outline of national goals, and allocation of resources needed to achieve those goals. It is a medium term planning tool whose structure consists of activities the government intends to do and resources available to achieve their implementation; and is used by government to influence the social, economic and political life of the people.

In principle budget allocations are shifted in favour of those sectors that are deemed to make the strongest contributions towards tackling the core challenges of the PEAP; accelerating pro-poor growth, human development and restoring security and support for regions affected by conflict. National development priorities include: *Universal Primary Education*, *Primary Health Care*, *Rural Roads*, *Agriculture* (namely Plan for Modernization of Agriculture), *NAADS*, *Accountability* and *Justice*. As can be observed this prioritization is silent on the priority of OVC perhaps assuming that OVC issues are catered for under the other sectors (such as education and health). Herein lies the first area for advocacy – bringing OVC issues to the poverty priority areas table.

The national budget: Uganda's national budget is a detailed annual public expenditure and resource plan of the Government, expressed in primarily quantitative terms. It explains how resources are obtained and how it is planned they would be put to use for the planning period (a one year period) in order to deliver public goods and services. The budget process in Uganda is constitutionally defined and governed by the National Budget Act 2001 and other interlinked legal instruments such as the Finance and Accountability Act 2003, among others. The aforementioned instruments together determine the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders/actors that include Government (legislature, the executive and the civil service), the donor community, the private sector, the CSOs and the community at large.

In order to develop an appropriate advocacy strategy it is more important to focus on the process rather than on the budget figures which appear in the published budget. The figures are only an end product, and the process which determines these figures is what budget advocacy should focus attention on. It is a process of intensive negotiation and discussion, often with some space being created for (or even

demanded by) key stakeholders. Focusing on the process also means engaging in the budget process in its entirety.

The budget process: Over the years, the national budget process has undergone a number of reforms with increased efforts now being focused on poverty eradication through a process which is guided by priorities identified by the PEAP. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) is then used as a planning and budgeting tool both at the national and local level. Each identified sector then develops a sector investment plan (SIP) as a basis for program prioritization and resources allocation. The overall , Government adopting budget support as opposed to project support, as a preferred mode of financing Government programs.

At the national level, the budget process is encapsulated in three broad stages, namely, budget preparation, execution and evaluation. In the preparatory stages, an exercise is carried out to update the update the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) which determines expenditure ceilings for sectors. This is followed by a national budget conference during October or November of every year.

Table3: Stages in the national budget process

Stage	Key activity/Consultation	Comments	Opportunities & ideas for advocacy
1	National budget consultative workshop, which brings together all Government at Central and Local level, Donors, Civil Society, Research and Academic Institutions.	The focus here is to review the MTEF, discuss macroeconomic framework and kick start the work of sector working groups (SWG)	- Work with other institutions, in partnership & collaborate with others in raising critical issues of national importance - Articulate key messages on OVC - Use opportunity to engage a cross-section of OVC & other stakeholders
2	Consultation at Local Government levels, which result into Local Government Budget Framework Paper (LGBFP).	Issues identified here are reviewed and considered by Sector Working Groups (SWGs)	Use bottom-up advocacy to raise issues and concerns for OVC
3	SWGs identify, review and plan for key priorities within MTEF	Priority setting	Time for intensive lobbying and advocacy leading to prioritization.
4	Ministerial level consultations with MoFPED.	Consultations result into National Budget Framework Paper that is discussed and agreed upon by cabinet.	Identify and work with key contacts (MGLSD & MFPED) to know the issues being discussed and

			likely outcome • Support MGLSD to deal with complex arguments and issues
5	National Budget Paper agreed upon by cabinet.	is then sent to Parliament on or before 1ˢᵗ April for their input	• "Keep fire burning" with position papers or policy briefs – share with Cabinet
6	Reading of the budget	Has to be done on or before 15ᵗʰ June.	• Prepare to engage the different committees of Parliament

The primary argument behind use of the **Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)** is that there ought to be aggregate fiscal discipline; that resources are allocated in accordance with the strategic priorities; and that there is efficient and effective use of resources in implementation of the strategic priorities. MTEF gives sector-spending ceilings that are consistent with macro-economic stability and economic growth. All other spending patterns and levels of Government agencies thus have to be within the MTEF limits. An important point for budget advocates to consider here is the fact that macroeconomists will consider any suggestions for budget increase as "busting the ceiling" and potentially working to counter macroeconomic stability. Good economic arguments would thus need to be given suggesting the contrary.

Fiscal Decentralization and the Local Government Budget Process – Local government planning and budgeting is regulated by the Local Government Act (1995) and more specifically through the Local Government Sector Investment Plan (LGSIP), and the Joint Annual Review of Decentralization (JARD). The LGSIP reflects the shared vision of both the national and local governments and is consistent with the government budgeting and planning framework.

National priorities as elaborated in the PEAP greatly influence local government planning and budgeting priorities with the aim of realizing the key strategic results of the PEAP, namely: reduced income poverty and inequality; improved Human Development; and, increased growth of the Domestic National Product. This means therefore that allocation of resources at district level is more inclined towards sectors under which the national priorities are stated - primary education (UPE), Primary health care, rural roads, agricultural extension, water and sanitation.

Findings from Kisoro attest to the above view. In this district, in the 2005/06 financial year, PAF funds were allocated as follows:
- 8 % for Community Based Services (specifically for FAL)
- 18% for education
- 18% for health
- 16% for feeder roads;

- 25% for monitoring and accountability
- 15% all other directorates

This clearly illustrates the influence of national priority planning areas on district and lower level budget allocation.

Table 4: Illustration: Budgetary allocations to Kisoro and Pallisa district departments for FY 2006/2007

Code	Budget Allocation FY 2006/07 (U. Shs)	
	Kisoro	Pallisa
Administration	679,211,711	1,173,671,351
Finance	569,495,735	1,609,393,430
Statutory Bodies	330,012,837	268,403,991
Production	229,179,050	1,138,408,000
Health	2,122,657,509	3,723,267,757
Education	4,074,804,381	12,065,960,956
Works	1,005,556,789	1,995,140,033
Natural Resources	52,192,632	108,731,071
Community Based Services	115,561,650	215,646,897
Planning Unit	109,842,889	159,540,110
Internal Audit	41,603,596	49,426,924
Total	**9,330,128,779**	**22,507,590,738**

Source: Kisoro District Local Government Budget FY 2006/07, Pallisa District Local Government Budget and annual Work plan FY 2006/07

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Education	4,074,804,381	12,065,960,956
Works	1,005,556,789	1,995,140,033
Natural Resources	52,192,632	108,731,071
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Total	**9,330,128,779**	**22,507,590,738**

Source: Kisoro District Local Government Budget FY 2006/07, Pallisa District Local Government Budget and annual Work plan FY 2006/07

Resources in the CBS department are spread out to various sections, with no specific resources allocated to OVC. This is because as all the sections handle OVC issues. For example, the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) program emphasizes childcare and protection, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, and domestic violence. The Probation Department deals with child rights, guidance and counseling of abused children, as well as protection of abandoned children. The department of social rehabilitation Funds that cater for OVC is in different sectors should meet the OVC needs through making further effort to mainstream OVC issues in existing budgets and address their priority needs which include as earlier mentioned such as access to school and socio-economic security are their biggest concerns. We recognize that due to the cross cutting nature of the OVC issues and NSPPI that we need a multiplicity of stakeholders supporting the national effort.

In a recently published Chronic Poverty Policy Brief, it is suggested that income support be provided to poor households in the form of cash transfers, so that informal social protection systems-children supporting parents, older people adopting, orphans are reinforced[28].

Table 5: Illustration: spread of funding across sections in the community based services department for Pallisa, Kisoro and Luwero.

| Code | Budget Allocation FY 2006/07 (Ushs) | | |
	Kisoro	Pallisa	Luwero
Administrative Office	-	21,385,683	3,332,333
Probation and Social Welfare	9,259,297	31,850,531	750,000
Social Rehabilitation	207,000	-	-
Community Development	47,497,679	-	14,041,000

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[28] Does Chronic Poverty Matter? Policy Brief No.1/ 2006 Development Research and Training.

Code	Budget Allocation FY 2006/07 (Ushs)		
	Kisoro	Pallisa	Luwero
Gender	5,833,944	19,664,000	1,897,000
Children and Youth	7,012,273	41,884,421	6,418,000
Disability and Elderly	3,976,205	16,691,000	3,018,000
Labour	6,701,076	17,179,294	0
Culture		8,429,785	0
Women Councils	7,224,577	13,528,000	8,404,000
Functional Adult Literacy	27,849,599	45,034,183	16,031,000
Total	**115,561,650**	**215,646,897**	**53,891,333**

Source: district budgets.

Local Governments receive transfer in the form of conditional, unconditional and equalization grants. With the Poverty action Fund (PAF), there has been expansion of the conditional grants leading to substantial growth in transfers generally to ease the work of Local Government. In the budget process, the nature, timing and mode of transfers to Local Government is therefore very important to understand in the overall budget execution process.

The local Government budget is the detailed plan of how Local Government plan to spend funds in line with the objectives, needs and priorities identified in District Development Plans. Under the decentralized system councilors at the district and sub-county are mandated to formulate three year integrated development plans, budget framework papers and annual budgets. Laying strategies which are aimed at informing and influencing these councilors on OVC budget allocation could do a lot get funding for the sub-sector.

The Local Government budget process itself starts in September and runs to June 15th when the budget is read. During this process, there is participatory planning and budgeting by the various actors including communities, local councils and CSOs. The opportunity for either MGLSD officials or CSOs to "weigh in" as the process unfolds can pay significant dividends.

In principle the budget process at the district and sub-county level expected to be fully consultative, employing a bottom-up approach, capturing ideas from the village, parishes, sub-county up to the district level and engaging a cross-section of stakeholders. In reality, however, most communities do not participate in the process, either because they do not get to know about the meetings or they "have better things to do". As such Local Council officials tend to dominate discussions at that level. CSOs can use this gap to engage in influencing the budget at that level.

Local governance and *participation* are key principles for the decentralization policy. Annually all local governments sit to plan and review existing District plans. This process presents an opportunity for MGLSD, Community Based Managers and CSO in OVC programming to influence and lobby local governments planning and budgetary processes. A list of stakeholders is outlined below which MGLSD could target during the planning process depending on which OVC advocacy needs and issues need to be addressed. At the formal level, stakeholders in the local government planning and budget process include:

i)   The Technical Planning Committee this comprises of all heads of departments. This committee is chaired by the C.A.O and the secretary is the District Planner;

ii)   Sector committees, which have been put in place by the council;

iii)   The District/ sub-county executive committee, which checks the budgetary estimates before they are presented to the council;

iv)   The district/ sub-county councils which have the ultimate power to approve budgets;

v)   The finance committee/ budget desk which is a sub-committee of the technical planning committee and which is headed by the Chief Finance Officer and comprises selected heads of department; and,

vi)   Community development officers at all levels who are the planning focal persons.

Challenges

- LG are faced with the problem of resource constrains which lead to fragmentation of the available resources because of their ever-increased roles and responsibilities arising from their delegated or decentralized responsibilities;
- Guidelines for LG planning and budgeting are ever changing which creates a capacity gap among the Local Government staff and other stakeholders and thus requiring re-orientation of the technical planning committee and the key stakeholders at the beginning of each budget cycle in order for them to effectively participate in the discussions.
- LGs approve their budgets much later because they have to wait for final indicative planning figures from central Government before the approval of the National budget.
- Politics is a major challenge in the budgeting since it influences the process and the eventual outcomes.

Parliament and the budget process: Parliament has a mandate bestowed by the constitution to oversee the executive arm of Government throughout the entire process of budgeting. The purpose of this is to ensure proper expenditure, accountability and transparency. The involvement of Parliament in the process of budgeting is constitutional (see Chapter 9 of the Uganda Constitution). Similarly, the

Budget Act 2001 gives Parliament the mandate to effectively get involved in the budget process at an early stage and continuously. The Public Finance and Accountability Act 2003 (within the sections), gives mandate to Parliament to ensure accountability, while the Parliamentary rules and procedures allows them to determine their own method of work-providing it unlimited jurisdiction to conduct its business including the budget.

Parliament's involvement in the budget process presents several opportunities for CSOIs and other stakeholders (including Local Governments) to still influence allocation of resources. The specific activities of Parliament in the budget process are as follows

- At the budget conference, the Parliament through the budget committee and individual MPs, participate in the workshop and forward constituents' opinion.

- The Parliamentary budget committees together with sessional committees review the priorities and activities funded under Poverty Action Fund (PAF).

- During the Sector Working Groups (SWG) discussion/ meeting when their input is fed into the inter-ministerial consultations, many stakeholders including CSOs and the Parliamentary Commission participate.

- Sessional committees participate in the regional Local Government budget framework paper workshop which is a basis for the national budget framework paper (NBFP) and they give reports.

- Parliament receives preliminary estimates of revenue and expenditure for discussion. These estimates include economic assumptions and projections upon which the proposed budget will be realized. Individual MPs participate in the Consultative Group (CG) meetings.

- Others include giving comments on the preliminary budget proposals and macro economic plans, reviewing public expenditure and ministerial policy statements and monitoring budget implementation amongst others.

Guiding from the above, its worth noting that the Parliamentarians plays a crucial role in the budget process in this country, that if held responsible by those who voted them in power, they would influence this process and probably have a pro-poor budget. They could therefore be good allies with CSOs.

What role can MGLSD, CBS and their allies play in the Budget Process?

MGLSD, CBS departments and CSOs and other allies can play an important role in the budget process. This could happen at different levels and stages, ensuring first that OVC issues are prioritized and that resources are allocated and utilized – effectively and efficiently. The consultative nature of the budget process provides an opportunity to participate and influence the budget specifically through:

a) Participation in the policy formulation, like the PEAP and Sector Investment Plan (SIP)

b) Budget prioritization through participation in the budget process especially SWGs and LG budget process.

c) Monitoring of the budget at different levels to ensure better efficiency and effectiveness;

d) Empowering the communities to demand for services and also engage in local level budgeting;

One of the areas of critical importance to advocacy for an increased budget for OVC will be the issue of budget ceilings. A key consideration for determining ceilings is having sector policies that are output oriented and hence relate to output budgeting to (which outputs can be monitored and traced). According to one official:

> *"You ask the ministry if they were given an extra shilling what specific out put they would generate, or what they would use the money for –you get no convincing answer ."*   - MFPED Official

As already noted the ceilings in question are set by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and the factors which are normally considered in setting the ceilings are:

- Domestic resources of the Government of Uganda i.e. projected revenue collections (from tax and other collections by government entities);

- Projected foreign resources from development partners in terms of budget support[29] and direct project aid;

  Statutory expenditures e.g. salaries are then subtracted from the total revenue and the remaining income is then distributed to the different sectors considering the level of external donor support (e.g. the more donor aid that is provided to a sector, the less GOU revenue is awarded to that sector)

- Key expenditure drivers like UPE (construction of schools, teachers salaries), rural roads, Primary Health Care.

The MGLSD has not done well yet on demonstrating outputs. It has been suggested that one of the reasons for this is that MGLSD is responsible for responding to felt needs of the poor and vulnerable groups (including orphans and other vulnerable children), and promoting social protection and social transformation of communities. It does this by mobilizing, sensitizing and empowering the communities for modernization and social transformation. Outputs to these processes are difficult to measure. As a consequence low budget ceilings are allocated to the sector. While one

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[29] Development partners that contribute to Uganda's national budget include the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, African Development Bank, The European Union, DFID, SIDA (Sweden), CIDA (Canada), Netherlands, France, Germany, USAID.

of the challenges may be the limited or purely *economistic* purview of what MGLSD does by economic analysts particularly in MFPED, and which itself warrants increased advocacy, more could also be done by using process level indicators to demonstrate how MGLSD is contributing to national development and showing the importance of social development to economic development. A related challenge regarding MGLSD outputs is that a number of the services that are on offer by the ministry are new and sometimes perceived to be controversial, e.g. children and women's rights, civic rights, etc. This too is an important area for greater sensitization and advocacy.

> *The Ministry will need to invest massively in sensitization geared towards changing people's attitudes, and on the backlash effects of such sensitive matters as children's rights vis-à-vis children's responsibilities and discipline. We can learn quite a lot from the private sector (such as Coca-Cola, UTL and Celtel) who have used PR and marketing strategies to transform public opinion.*
>
> *Assistant Commissioner, MGLSD*

In addition, the Ministry's overhead costs were judged by some stakeholders to be too high if compared to the budget which goes into actual services. According to the MGLSD policy statement for the financial year 2006/07, the burden of rent is, for example, estimated at Ushs. 1.433 billion which deprives the ministry of technical and service delivery resources by as much money.[30]

> *"A substantial amount of the ministry's budget caters for the rent of their (MGLSD) offices. If this money were used on actual provision of services, the Ministry would go a long way to meeting its primary objectives – providing services."*
>
> *MFPED Official*

Key 'gatekeepers / influencers in the national budget process

In advocacy, the most commonly used term is 'influential', which is used to describe the people that you need to target with your advocacy efforts.

The web definition of 'gatekeepers' is someone who controls access to something. In this case 'gatekeepers' has been used to refer to people or institutions that control access to resources or to key decision makers in the national and local government budgetary systems. Influencers in this report refer to 'opinion-leaders' who can lead the judgment or view of key decision makers. For national and local government systems gatekeepers differ. It should be noted that even at national level there are different levels of gate keepers.

Stakeholders in the national budget process

Stakeholders in the national budget process fall into two broad categories, namely, statutory and non-statutory. Statutory stakeholders include

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[30]MGLSD Policy statement 2006/07.

- The Presidency: which has executive authority in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, to promote the welfare of citizens either directly or indirectly working through officers subordinate to the office;

- The Speaker of Parliament who determines the order of business in the house and who coordinates information between the President, ministers and Parliament and its committees.

- Ministers who are responsible for setting policies in their ministries in line with the national objectives and who cause estimates for their ministries to be incorporated in the national budget;

- The finance minister among whose roles is preparation and presentation of the budget and accountability (however within MFPED there are specific officials who are either key decision-makers or who are very influential in the decision-making process, especially if this is related to allocation of resources);

- The Budget Committee of Parliament which is charged with making recommendations on preliminary estimates which are laid before parliament. This committee comprises of Chairpersons of all other parliamentary committees and its Chairperson is particularly influential in determining priority expenditures.

- Session committees to parliament which are charged with looking after the interests of their respective sectors, the parliament budget office to deal with technical matters of the budget;

- Heads of Government departments (and Self Accounting Departments), Institutions, and Commissions, these prepare and submit preliminary budget estimates to the president and are charged with the responsibility of managing their respective budgets; and

Non-statutory stakeholders who are nonetheless recognized by the constitution and in current practice are a mixed category of formal and non-formal advocates, influencers, links and contacts. At the formal level donor representatives tend to play an important role in influencing decision-making, especially through sector working groups. However there are also individuals who have an ear for the key decision-makers. For example, the current Executive Director of the Uganda Investment Authority and the Chairperson of the Uganda Manufacturers' Association can be very influential in any policy decision process. At the informal level it was established that various social clubs and meeting places are key to policy advocacy. The Uganda Golf Club, Kampala Club and such associations as "Spouses' Associations" sometimes hold the key to unlocking policy gates. Similarly, Civil Society Organisations and Private Sector managers play an important part in the policy process.

The key gate keepers/ influencers:

These vary from local to national levels. At the national level key gate-keepers and influencers include:

(1) Respected religious leaders, especially those belonging to the dominant and traditional denominations;

(2) Personal friends of key decision-makers, especially school-time friends;

(3) Officials who prepare briefing papers in Government ministries and departments;

(4) Personal Assistants and secretaries of ministers and other key political leaders;

(5) Popular artistes and sports personalities;

(6) Key figures in the private sector: Senior bank executives; CEOs of Corporate entities; officials

(7) Media houses – these include selected radio talk show hosts, newspaper columnists, etc.

(8) Donor officials.

The MGLSD should target its efforts to both formal and informal institutions in her efforts to influence change. At the formal level key officials in MFPED, the Presidency and leaders in the private sector would be a good starting point. Institutionally the targeting should initially focus on the Minister of Finance Planning and Economic Development, Committees of Parliament, and more specifically the Budget Committee. All the above mentioned have an influence on decision makers with regard to the budgetary allocations although some officials especially from the MFPED have considerably more influence. It should be noted nonetheless that some gatekeepers/ influencers are also key decision makers, for example the budget committee of parliament.

Table 6: A Quick Guide to Planning in Uganda

Key process	Description of process	Researcher's comments
Vision 2025:	An overview of long term goals and aspirations by the year 2025	Outlined the country's vision about 10 years ago; an ideal reference to make a case for OVC; however without specific goals developed to operationalise it, it remains just a reference. Not particularly useful for advocacy. Currently being replaced by long-term perspectives planning – 2035 (still on the drawing board) which MGLSD should try to influence.
The PEAP:	The national planning framework on which to develop detailed sector strategies	An important framework which MGLSD and OVC partnerships should re-visit in preparation for the next revision (expected 2008). OVC issues could be more explicitly stated in the new PEAP.

Sector Planning:	Technical specifications of sector priorities, disciplined by hard budget constraints	The pertinent sector in which OVC issues fall is the Social Development Sector. A clearer articulation of OVC issues will be necessary here, including links to achievement of overall objective of poverty eradication. Efforts should also be made to incorporate OVC priorities in the other sectors and to link them back to objectives in the SDIP.
District Planning:	Implementation plans for sector strategies based on local priorities / needs	Greater investment will be needed here by MGLSD in influencing the district budget process.
MTEF:	Annual, rolling 3 year expenditure planning, setting out the medium term expenditure priorities and hard budget constraints against which sector plans can be developed and refined	Advocate for raising the ceiling for the Social Sector in order to be able to accommodate more resources in MGLSD. A greater understanding will be needed and documentation of social sector outputs and outcomes made, coupled with appropriate research on links between social investments and economic outcomes.
District MTEF:	Setting out the medium term expenditure priorities and hard budget constraints Against which district plans can be developed and refined	Same as above
Annual Budget & District Budgets:	Annual implementation of the three year planning framework	Invest in "knowing the budget cycle" and in collecting appropriate data to inform and "convince" budget allocation at this level.
Donor; NGO; private sector:	Participating and sharing information / ideas in developing sector plans and budgets	Establish partnership with these either with the objective of promoting public-private-partnership or using key "influencers" to open policy gates.
Participatory processes:	Bottom-up participation of districts in the planning and monitoring process, as well as participatory poverty assessments, providing essential feedback on progress towards poverty eradication goals	Identify and strategically align MGLSD and CBS departments to these processes. In part they help develop consensus and build political capital. They are also useful for networking.

Source: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

The key gate keepers/ influencers

The Technical Planning Committee is the key gatekeeper as plans and budget estimates drawn up by the technical team do not face significant scrutiny by the councils. Additional gatekeepers / influencers at district and sub-county level include:

- The Executive Committee;

- The District/ Sub-county council;

- Sector committees.

An example of influence of the committees was reported from Kisoro Dstrict where the Community-based Services Department, through their sector committee, was able to negotiate an increase in the budget allocated to the labor section from Shs.50,000/= in 2004/2005 to Shs.800,000/= in the financial year 2005/2006 and to Shs. 1,250,000/- in the financial year 2006/2007. The CBS department lobbied the community development sector committee through a report that specially illustrated the magnitude of the problem and the cost benefit analysis of increasing the budget lines, the sector committee had prepared briefs which they presented to the council and the council passed resolution to increase this budget.

At the sub-county level and lower levels, OVC issues are not directly resourced within the budgetary estimates for the Community-based Services Department.[31] At community level the lack of resources / programs to uplift the status of OVC was attributed to high poverty levels. LC II (parish) and LC I (village) administrative units have scanty resources (and in some cases none).

> *"The 25% Graduated tax money is not available so lower local governments have scanty revenue, but even when the money was available it was insufficient and OVC were not prioritized. Instead the money was used for collective items like plates, saucepans and tarpaulin used in burial ceremonies"*
>
> *LC Official, Pallisa District*

Advocacy intended to uplift the status of OVC should target more resource allocation to local government and lower administrative levels which have limited direct funding for OVC initiatives. While other departments (particularly health and education) indirectly target OVC, there is need for them to have specific plans and budgets for OVC related initiatives (for example, special programs for orphans with HIV/AIDS).

As national priorities take precedence during planning and budgeting, OVC advocacy should stress the link between OVC issues and poverty; and how dealing with them (OVC issues) directly contributes to poverty eradication. The significance of uplifting the status of OVC should be well articulated indicating its cost benefit analysis and impact on economic growth and poverty reduction in Uganda.

In addition the advocacy strategy should clearly spell out the outputs of the MGLSD and its district based departments and their link to national development and this could be done through harmonized planning meetings between the two.

2.3.6   Influencing donor decision-making

A donor in this context is an individual or organisation that give money or donations in kind. Different categories of donors include; local and foreign individuals, foundations, trusts, NGOs, private sector companies, governments and government agencies (wikpedia.org).

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[31] See appendix for sub-county allocations

The study specifically set out to establish the *Donor Decision-Making processes for allocation of funds, key gatekeepers, and how best to influence them.* Different donors have different decision making processes and priorities for allocation of funds, which need to be fully understood in order for OVC advocacy to have the right targets and consequently for OVC programming to benefit from them.

Existent donor organisations in Uganda include: multi lateral agencies (e.g. UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, ADB, UNAIDS, The World Bank), Bilateral agencies (e.g. USAID, DFID, DANIDA, SIDA). There are also a number of other agencies which have made resources available to Uganda for OVC related work notably the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the United States Government, through PEPFAR/USAID. UNICEF has also been playing a lead role on working on OVC issues with MGLSD.

Donations in Uganda are in 2 categories: i) funds donated to the Government of Uganda directly and ii) those donated to CSOs operating in Uganda. The funding modality to the government of Uganda includes:

i)   General Budget Support (PSCS);

ii)   Earmarked Poverty Action Fund whose funding expenditures are protected from any budget cuts within the financial year which may be due to revenue shortfalls or changes in budget allocation;

iii)   Basket funding and sector-wide approaches (SWAP) where donor funds are collectively used to finance key programmes (there are 5 well developed SWAPs namely; Education, Health, Roads, Water, and JLOS);

iv)   Stand alone projects whereby donor financing to projects is integrated into the national budget to ensure consistency with PEAP priorities.

In addition to the PEAP, multilateral funding agencies are guided by other global agreements like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Aid coordination in Uganda is through the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) which is chaired by the World Bank and meets regularly, for overall policy dialogue and aid coordination. In addition to this is Donor Sector Working Groups which meet once a month. In addition, the Uganda Joint Assistance Strategy (UJAS) was developed to harmonize and align donor practices towards achieving poverty eradication. By making its presence felt in these different processes and fora the MGLSD would achieve a significant amount of clout and influence which in turn could be converted to pro-OVC budget allocations.

With regard to direct support to projects, different donors have different interests with greater inclination of most donors towards advocacy and rights based approaches as opposed to service delivery. Donor priorities and interests are however greatly influenced by the magnitude of the problem and the impact of existing work in a given field. While some donors are interested in new areas that have not been oversubscribed by other development initiatives, other donor support is guided by what the local people view as priorities. This happens especially at the district level

where the usual list of priorities will tend to include: health, education, infrastructure, water, community services, environment, and natural resource management.

Funding processes are usually decentralized. In the case of bilateral agencies proposed projects / programs are screened by the country office and if deemed worthy of funding, approval is done at the Uganda country office or donor's head office, depending on the amounts involved.

Funding to local government level is decided through district or sub-county implementation teams, which include the technical planning teams. Within organizations, the projects or programs are assessed for adherence to the organization's mission statement and the implementing partner is also assessed for existence and efficiency of systems.

Key gatekeepers therefore vary from donor to donor but it is important to align proposed projects with donors' priorities and interests, and also understand and be able to convince the vetting process. The "tipping point" for most donors seems to be determined by **the magnitude of the problem to be addressed, evidence base and convincing arguments, and presentation and communication.** In addition the project / program must be seen to be in line with the PEAP, contribute to poverty eradication and demonstrate support of a critical mass of Ugandan stakeholders.

The National strategic Programme plan of interventions(NSPPI)for orphans and other Vulnerable children in Uganda attempts to define a comprehensive and coordinated approach to programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions aimed at mitigating the situation of orphans, , other vulnerable children, their caregivers and communities in Uganda, which fits within the Donor Core Support areas. The NSPPI further more defines the framework that guides Uganda's approach to assisting orphans and other vulnerable children. The plan is an integral part of the SDIP and the PEAP which encompasses the National Poverty Priority Areas. Its Core Programme already caters for health and education components. The Core programme areas include four building blocks.

Table 7: showing NSPPI core programme areas.

Key building blocks	Specific areas	Partners
Building Block A-Sustaining Livelihoods	1. Social Economic Security 2. Food security and nutrition 3. Care and support 4. Mitigation of the impact and conflict	INGOS NGOS CBOS FBOS Sectoral ministries –MAIF, Ministry of health Uganda Aids Commission, Academic institutions
Building Block B-Linking Essential Social Sector	1. Education 2. Psychology support 3. Health	INGOS NGOS CBOS FBOS Sectoral ministries –MAIF, Ministry of health Uganda Aids Commission, Ministry of Education , Academic

		institutions
Building Block C: Strengthening Legal and policy frameworks	1. child protection 2. Legal support	INGOS NGOS CBOS FBOS Sectoral ministries –MAIF ,Ministry of health Uganda Aids Commission, Academic institutions, Ministry if Justice, ministry of Local government
Building Block D. Enhancing the Capacity the to deliver	1. strengthening capacity and resource mobilization	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development.

2.3.7   Efficient and Effective mechanisms for advocacy

The OVC Secretariat is housed at MGLSD, whose main role is to disseminate OVC policy related information to the public. In the event of communicating to the different stakeholders, interacts with a number of stakeholders at international, national and local levels. This interaction is highly characterized by different forms of communications. They range from dialogues, conferences, telecommunications, inter-ministerial meetings to district and NGO educational seminars. The Ministry's also at national level in collaboration with international and local NGOs and   other actors at local government is directly responsible for advocating for issues of orphans and other vulnerable children.

The study team consulted a wide range of stakeholders at national district, sub-county and community level, in order to further understand the concept of advocacy and communication, ascertain existing advocacy and communication channels for OVC issues. In addition assess their efficiency and effectiveness of these channels.

The respondents defined ***advocacy*** as
> *"The creation of public awareness on a given situation"*

> *"Highlighting the plight of the invisible or those who cannot speak for themselves"*

While they understood ***Communication*** to mean

> *"Exchange / sharing of information among people"*
> *"Putting ideas across to others"*
> *"Sending of information and receiving feed back".*

Existing mechanisms of advocacy and communication

Field findings show that a number of advocacy and communication channels are in operational at *national, district, sub-county, parish, and community level.* These include

1. **Meetings:** at national and district level, the ministry holds inter-departmental and inter –sectoral meetings geared to communicate salient issues regarding policy development and sharing current interventions imitated by CSOS and other development agencies. At the district level, it was evident that regular consultative meetings in the form of workshops, and seminars are done to communicate OVC issues and enhance staff capacity skills to deliver on OVC. Field findings however revealed that Ministry has limited contact with the district. *"We are de- linked from the Mother Ministry and feel abandoned we at times spend a year without having a meeting with the ministry officials.* (District based CBS official Gulu)

2. **Use of child rights advocates trained by the Ministry and NGOs.** The MGLSD through the CBS department at the district trained child rights advocates at parish level whose duties are to identify and refer cases of child abuse in the communities to police, District Probation Welfare and build linkages with agencies that deal with child abuse and violation of children's rights.

3. **Child to Child models:** Groups of children who have benefited from OVC programs and practices are facilitated to share their experiences articulate the ministry's best practices. "*Having been exposed to undesirable life circumstances on the street (beaten and arrested by the police, slept out in the cold) we are the best voice to articulate the needs of street and other vulnerable children, hoping that government and organizations will come to their rescue."*(A former street kid under rehabilitation at KOINONIA Ministries)

4. **Tele- email modern communication facilities** are used for the day to date running of the duties between the Ministry and district level. *, The MGLSD has their own web domain, www.mglsd.go.ug, but few of the staff have e-mail addresses on that domain, they are mostly yahoo.co.uk accounts* . The ministry has already the technology. There is need hence to consider the need for regular access and equip district staff with *IT skills.*

5. **Use of letter and circulars.** This was mentioned as an often a direct channel of communication between the ministry and NGOS, and districts. Although the delivery mechanism was reported slow and at times did not serve the intended purpose.

6. **NGO networks:** The Ministry in partnership with formal or informal networks - *NGOs / CBOs*, carries out awareness campaigns and advocacy on various issues for marginalized groups including those concerning OVC.

7. **Print materials:** These include policy documents, strategic papers, and, research and other publications as well as letters and circulars. Mainly disseminated by the Ministry and NGOs in OVC work in the district through. postage *and drivers. The materials are sent once in a year.*

8. **Media:** MGLSD's involvement with media was found to be limited to business when the ministry has to pay for supplements in the news papers and airtime of electronic media i.e Radios, Television when to discuss various

issues concerning marginalized groups on special days such as the Disability day, Day of the African child, National Youth Day, or Women's day. There is also need to contributing to strengthening media networks by ensuring we have newsworthy events.

9. **Music Dance Drama (MDD)**: CSOs engage communities and schools in passing on advocacy messages through MDD whose visual messages can easily be understood by children and the illiterate. Common messages embedded in the drama shows include that on HIV/AIDs, domestic violence, child abuse, gender roles and general communication behavioral change.

10. **Film shows:** The study also revealed that film shows is another mechanism used to attract children and communities. These are usually organized by CSOS and churches, targeting community members and schools. The films depict HIVAIDS epidemic, consequences of prostitution, domestic violence, child abuse and civic education.

In an attempt to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the existing mechanism. The stakeholders consulted rated the above channels using the following ranks. i.e. based on Very high utilized, High, Average and low rating.

The rank list below is according to popularity, efficiency, effectiveness. The rural communities valued the importance of community meetings as the best mode of communicating OVC information. Although studies show that the most vulnerable never attend community meetings, home visits might be made. Or a combination of approaches may be done through visual presentation, drama and religion or social spaces for social functions and funeral mediums may be explored in order to reach the marginalized. Radios featured the second best advocacy channel for disseminating information on progress of ongoing intervention and upcoming information for both rural and urban communities. While child to child channels were recommended by NGO Child organizations for effective advocacy and targeting fellow peers and communities sharing real life experiences.

Table 8: Advocacy mechanisms

Advocacy and Communication Channel	Ratings based on the current utilization of the existing channels.	Situating the Communication channels used at different levels	Information or data material required for advocacy	Remarks
Meetings:	Very High	• Community, district and sub county level	• IEC/Visual materials, drama	• Traditional and formal mode of communication and advocacy • Community Meetings were recommending the best to disseminate OVC based information in

Advocacy and Communication Channel	Ratings based on the current utilization of the existing channels.	Situating the Communication channels used at different levels	Information or data material required for advocacy	Remarks
				rural l communities.
Use of child rights advocates trained by the Ministry and NGOs	High	• CSOs	• Popular versions,/booklets/abridged versions	• A community based approach intended to equip local communities with skills of advocacy and communication on behalf of OVC. • An approach the Ministry embraces and uses to disseminate policies and specific programmatic information.
Child to child.(Peer education)	High	• District • CBOs • National level.	• Visual materials/poems /case studies and IEC materials	• A common channel promoted by NGO and CBO interventions aimed at OVC actively participating in highlighting their plight and rights.
Tele- email modern communication facilities	Average	• National , some districts/ sub-counties and CSOs	• Share entire policy document through email and announcements sent for dissemination meeting using telephones	• Commonly enjoyed by urbanites and peri-Urbanites. Although the onset of village phones now creates an opportunity for local communities to use them.
Use of letter and circulars.	High	• Ministerial, district and sub-county level.	• Making Invitations, passing rules and codes of conduct	• Formal channels commonly used by the Ministry to district, NGOs, and Sub - county officials on upcoming events or programme directed.
NGO networks	High	• Strong at national level	• Reports, policy briefs ,IEC materials	• Doing a lot of child advocacy, and reported reach the communities. Although information sharing at district level limited.
Media	High	• Strong at national and district level rather growing at community	• Popular versions, news paper features, recorded material for radio and TVs,	• The district reported using Radio as medium was good but expensive to pay air time –costs 600000/= per talk show. As such

Advocacy and Communication Channel	Ratings based on the current utilization of the existing channels.	Situating the Communication channels used at different levels	Information or data material required for advocacy	Remarks
		level with district based Community radios.	policy brief and talk shows	occasionally used it when invited by NGOs. • Radio was the most preferred form of media channel for both urban and rural communities especially community radios. The elite preferred radio new papers, and TV.
Music Dance Drama	Medium	Community level	Scripted materials need by local artists.	• Preferred at community level, tools often used by the NGOs.
Film shows:	Medium	Community level	Energy facilities in non – electricity targeted communities, district/sub counties facilitated with screens	• Preferred at community level, tools often used by the NGOs

Constraints to communication

Dissemination of information
The respondents interviewed acknowledged that the ministry has been successful at formulating policies, but inadequate at disseminating these policy documents to its partners. District officials expressed exasperation at mother ministry for not regularly informing them of new policies until it is almost too late to use them for planning.

Cultural beliefs and ignorance:
The study findings also revealed that often times, the MGLSD's advocacy initiatives have faced resistance particularly from rural communities and among the conservative population because it seeks to change deeply embedded social and cultural beliefs, prejudices and practices. For instance issues on disability.

> "*Some parents because of the negative attitudes don't believe that CWDS are useful and should be allowed to attend school!*"…*assistant education officer Gulu*

Limited funding to facilitate CBS department:
Given the limited funding for CBS department, the staff reported they don't have enough funds invest in advocacy and communication channels which it described as

commercially oriented and profit driven. Investing in advocacy will require retraining staff or recruiting advocacy district officers.

> *"We are under-staffed with only two community development officers for the whole district. One is on sick leave and the other one is on study leave for three years. And we are not well facilitated to mobilize and sensitize the people".*   District official, CBS department, Kisoro)

Recommendations by stakeholders interviewed at national district and sub-county levels

- The ministry should *re-introduce cinema shows* because visual tools greatly articulate the message and are easily understood.

- There is need to create grass root advocacy mechanism by training and facilitating community based advocates to assist the CBS officials at the lower levels in sensitizing the public to appreciate OVC issues.

Overall, the Ministry should build on the existing different channels of communication necessary to reach out to the diverse audiences based on geographical coverage, social-cultural norms, differences in language and education, and economic status the well being –access and ability to purchase a newspaper or radio or TV. All the above characteristics determine efficiency and effectiveness of the advocacy and communication channels.

2.3.8   Media Coverage and Positioning of MGLSD

As the MGLSD develops her strategy for advocacy and communication, it is important to understand the media landscape, especially given the influence which media has on policy making.   At the very outset it needs to be recognized that the media landscape has been changing very fast in the last two decades, but more so since the liberalization of airwaves in the mid-1990s. This transformation has had implications on what gets aired or published and consequently on the opinions that shape policy and practice.

Uganda has five daily newspapers and more than ten weekly papers. There is one public radio station with booster stations all over the country and one public television station. There are over 140 operational private radio stations and more than eight private television stations – and more still being licensed. Several media houses have also started providing internet-based online services.

Field findings revealed that what gets published or aired on all these media varies depending on such factors as ownership of the media outfit, reasons for being in the industry, target audience and available resources to do different stories. There are also issues of individual journalists' interests.

Media understanding of OVC

Conclusions about media understanding of OVC issues were arrived at following consultations with different media houses and with other stakeholders from Kampala and from the districts of Gulu, Kabale, Kisoro, Pallisa and Luwero This understanding was found to be rather limited. Journalists and editors tend to report and publish stories on children "as they occur". Such reporting focuses on "incidents" an "accidents". As such media professionals do not deliberately look out for stories on "OVC".

Level of interest in OVC reporting

The study also showed that OVC stories are usually covered only in so far as they are perceived to be 'newsworthy'. This was a veiled reference to sensational stories. According to respondents editors have a primary interest in stories where ***"something tragic"*** may have happened, such as "a child burned by a step-mother", a child born with multiple disabilities, etc. According to the editor of one of the leading English dailies:.

> *"... The Daily Monitor is a profit oriented paper and will only publish stories that will bring ready market... However this does not mean that we do not take on our social responsibility of reporting on developmental and social issues that affect people as well as children..."*
>
> *(Editor, Daily Monitor)*

Table 9: showing frequency of reporting on OVC stories in the New Vision in the months of April 2005-Apirl-2006.

OVC category	Frequency	Percentage
Orphans	2	0.02
Children in armed conflict	4	0.04
Children in need	4	0.04
Children in hard reach areas	0	0
Children Abused and neglected	3	0.03
Children in conflict with Law	1	0.01
Children with disabilities	0	0
Children on streets	0	0
Child labour	1	0.01

Children with HIV/AIDS	3	0.03
Others	10	0.10

Media ethics with particular reference to handling OVC / MGLSD issues

Evidenced adduced from consultations with media houses showed that journalism ethics have been undermined by a misrepresentation of the concept of "free media", personal views of media owners, competition, commercialization and journalists' biases. Important stories are relegated to news briefs because they do not sell, journalists ask for bribes to cover news and there is exploitation of people in the news to make the stories more sensational.

Although journalistic activity which touches on the lives and welfare of children should always be carried out with appreciation of the vulnerable situation of children, this has often not been the case.

The International Federation of Journalists' handbook on The Media and Children's Rights[32] clearly states the principles for reporting on issues involving children:

"Media organizations should regard violation of the rights of children and issues related to children's safety, privacy, security, their education, health and social welfare and all forms of exploitation as questions for investigation and debate..."

"Media should not consider and report the conditions of children only as events, but should continuously report the process likely to lead or leading to the occurrence of these events..."

"A good way of testing the value of changes in the law or fiscal policy is to consider the extent to which children will benefit or suffer as a consequence..."

"Journalists should put to critical examination the reports submitted and claims made [by governments and NGOs] to help prevent exploitation of children..."

Coverage of OVC / MGLSD's issues in the media

Looking specifically at the period from April 2005 to April 2006, the following five major newspapers were reviewed:

- The New Vision: State-owned daily that covers all aspects of society to different degrees;

- Daily Monitor: Independent-daily that covers all aspects of society to different degrees

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[32] Handbook is available online at http://www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC20933

- Bukedde: Only local daily, targets mostly communities;

- The East African: Weekly, regional paper that aspires to answer the big picture and draw a connection between political policies and how they affect economic decisions;

- The Weekly Observer: Primarily a political paper. Also investigates controversial stories.

Quality, content and prominence of stories on OVC

On average, all the news papers reviewed carried over 30 pages which are allocated to hard news, national news, regional, foreign, business and sports news. This implies that there is always limited space for all stories that have been written. None of the five papers had space specially reserved for OVC.

> *"There is not enough space to cover half the issues that affect children generally, let alone OVC and practically speaking, newspapers cannot afford to avail more space."*
>
> *Children's Editor of one of the dailies*

Yet the papers cover OVC to varying degrees. The following is a summary of issues emerging from the different papers on OVC stories in the review period.

The New Vision and *Daily Monitor* had similar characteristics in their coverage of OVC. Both of them run stories on OVC or OVC-related issues several times a week. Most of the stories depicted the issue of 'vulnerability'. The stories ran covered areas on defilement, child abuse, domestic violence, categories of children often abandoned. Although the quality of reporting was generally poor, especially where the stories were written in brief and were insufficiently covered.

The "bigger" a story is perceived to be, the "bigger" the page it gets onto. The first three pages of any paper are considered its most important. In these two papers, OVC is run mostly on page 4 and later pages. Not once, in the period reviewed, was there a story on OVC on the front page, except by mention in another issue.

Other sub-editing issues may miss the layman's eye, but even in these later pages described above, stories may be made prominent say by giving a big headline, putting the story in a box and adding a picture. Only on a few occasions were stories on OVC given this type of treatment. What is more common is OVC issues run as briefs – which do not have details pertaining to the OVC.

Bukedde ran stories and opinions on children every single day. The more startling stories are even run on page one. Even in a period of other "important issues" such as elections, *Bukedde* will prominently ran a story on an abused child if it so merits it. However, the paper will many times run stories with names and even pictures of children that are in total disregard of the principles of reporting on children. As long as it's alarming, it sells. *Bukedde*, more than any other of the above papers has follow-ups to stories. *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* run a few follow-ups but

usually when a story has got the readers' attention and they have reacted to it. They therefore follow up mostly for the increased selling value.

The East African had the least coverage of OVC-specific issues and even when these ran, they were usually individuals' opinions. Some of the stories are also carried from the foreign press; sometimes on stories not all related to Uganda. While the stories are, when they run, fairly prominent, it is probably more to do with the general editing policy of the paper which runs most stories if they merit appearance in their paper.

The Weekly Observer, intended primarily for politics and the news behind the news, does a few stories on OVC, but mostly as opinions. Most stories on OVC are about society and values and how children are being affected. However, the politics and investigations are hardly ever related to OVC, even where OVC might deserve attention in the story.

Analysis:

Frequency of different categories' appearance. Child abuse and neglect were the most reported issues. These are usually run as short news stories – features are much fewer. Other OVC categories reported on are children in need, children with disease / HIV & AIDS, children with disabilities, children in conflict with the law, child labor, children in war stricken areas, street children and orphans. The articles are largely communicating, i.e. how children have been abandoned, parading vulnerable children to the public without respect for their privacy, calling upon the public to help children, or simply highlighting how various children are receiving support.)

Children in far to reach areas such as Kisoro and Pallisa were never reported on, except in passing reference on issues that may be affecting the entire community. Most stories are from Kampala, followed by Fort Portal, Masaka and Kayunga. This does not necessarily mean that those areas which are not covered as frequently have lower magnitude of the OVC problem. It is yet another indicator of the way the media work. The study findings revealed that more reporters from these papers are based in the respective urban locations where they report from. This is also where most of the reading public is located - not some remote place.

Although the media had a few interviews with the OVC themselves, most stories were got from other actors like the police, NGOs, Embassies, banks, LCs, court cases and kingdom foundations (like Buganda). In many of these instances, the stories will tend to dwell more on these actors rather than on the subjects of the discussion – OVC themselves.

Periods of gaps in OVC reporting. In periods of other "big news', OVC prominence decreases, sometimes even totally disappears from the papers. For instance during the time when the "third term debate" was raging debate on in the critical political months in Uganda as they span through the death of former president Obote, the return of Retired Colonel Dr. Kizza Besigye and the elections, OVC was blatantly ignored. While *Bukedde* may have had some prominent stories on OVC during such that time, the story had to be alarming and so, a "best-seller".

Why is there poor coverage of OVC issues in the media? In the following section we give the results of some of the interviews which were conducted with editors and journalists from the wider media (beyond the papers discussed above). They explain the reasons for the lukewarm nature of the current reporting on OVC: the quotes below demonstrate opportunities, challenges and recommendations for MGLSD and her partners:

> *"There are few journalists that have specialized in child journalism. Almost ¾ of media concentrate on politics and business stories that are said to be selling... Programme Manager Akabozi Kubbiri FM.*
>
> *WBS is profit motivated and although it is interested in children's programs, such as Teens Club, it does not put emphasis of OVC in the program."* (WBS PRO)
>
> *"CBS is a community radio... has a children's show sponsored by ANPPCAN. Children are brought in the studio to air out their views on how parents, teachers, housemaids; school matrons treat them."* (Programming Manager, CBS FM)
>
> *"If we have not covered OVC, it was an unintended shortcoming. However, we do try to look at the macro picture, for instance covering the war in the north which adversely affects children."* (Uganda Bureau Chief, The East African)

When it was put to the East African Bureau Chief that even in stories which may be on the bigger picture, such as the LRA war, children will not be mentioned in the stories but their pictures are used prominently, he said:

> *"The pictures are used mainly to illustrate the stories. If children are not specifically mentioned in the story, it is probably because it is assumed that our readers, usually up market and educated people, know that OVC are a direct consequence of the war. Yes, the nature of reporting accorded to OVC is lukewarm. Two, the organizations working with OVC have effectively failed to sell their stories to the media. Three, the media is obsessed with stories on politics, sex, business, scandal and pays only scant attention to the boring yet important topics like OVC. There are also institutional and resource constraints within the media."*

MGLSD in the media

Perception of MGLSD by the media. The media were asked: "What is your perception of the MGLSD?" One editor replied: "It is a dead ministry". Quite similar sentiments were expressed by other media people who were interviewed, as the following quotes illustrate:

> *"This is the ministry that is much closed to itself... Most of us just know it as a women's thing and we are not aware of exactly what they do. We do*

> *not know the contact person. Ugandans know Bakoko Bakoru and that is all."*

> *"We never ask them for comments because we are not sure what it is they do beyond mishandling our money in NSSF."*

> *"That is one ministry that needs to be clearer. I did not even know it was related to OVC. The Ministry itself has not been seen to follow up on some of these stories."*

> *"A ministry with a long name, so much to do and doing nothing. Its impact is not felt by the public."*

> *"MGLSD? Bloated. Ineffective. Irrelevant."*

As can be seen the sentiments which were expressed were not only generally negative but also expressed in strong terms. A possible explanation for this perception can be comparison with other ministries. Those that the media report on frequently include Health, Education and Sports, Defense, Ethics and Integrity, and Information. This can be for several reasons:

    i)   Scandals – Many ministries come into the limelight when rocked by scandal such as ghost soldiers or global fund or even for MGLSD, the NSSF saga;

    ii)   ***Covering OVC in relation to MGLSD in the media.*** Large projects: Issues like UPE or releasing of results have put the Ministry of Education and Sports in the limelight;

Relationship between MGLSD and Media. MGLSD has not put in a lot of effort in keeping in touch with the media. The media only writes about it when there is a scandal or when there is a big day for them and they therefore want to run for them paid supplements. The relationship is highly commercialized.

> *"The MGLSD hasn't had enough funds due to a small budget that is allocated to them."* (AG. Permanent Secretary / Commissioner for Labor)

Not surprisingly, then, while all the papers carried stories on vulnerable children, there was hardly ever a time when these were run with a comment sought from the MGLSD. Journalists don't seem to be aware that the ministry is responsible for the OVC. However, one such time stood out when it did happen.

In the Daily Monitor of October 4, 2005, there were two stories on page 5, each about 1/6 of a page. One story, "UN tells Uganda to stop child sacrifice", made no mention of the MGLSD, but ran a picture of then MGLSD minister Zoë Bakoko Bakoru. The second story titled, "Minister of Gender to construct a library" had no picture of her and yet the entire story was about the ministry securing funds to construct a public library. In this case the headline turned out to be incorrect, but no-one seems to have picked this up and corrected the information. Thus what comes out as poor journalism

on MGLSD passes for a fact given the absence of counteracting arguments and the failure by media to corroborate stories.

It may not in anyway be conclusive, but here was an admission from some people in the media that they are aware of MGLSD's involvement in the OVC issues. However, it is also important to note that the picture, which draws more attention to a story, came up in a negative story, while the positive story didn't draw as much attention.

Analysis: The media survey finings have revealed that media institutions have no set policy for their reporting and coverage of children in difficult circumstances. What they do is to offer a blanket reporting and coverage. OVC are recognized when something big or scandalous happens. Neither the MGLSD nor child-focused organizations directly engage media on issues of OVC.

There are some shortcomings in the way that the media covers the OVC stories, but the first important step is that it covers OVC at all. Clearly, the media publishes all newsworthy stories as long as they get in touch with it. Media can therefore give space to MGLSD and also relate stories of OVC and all other issues that the MGLSD handles. However, MGLSD has to do more than be in touch with the media more often than on just "Women's Day", as the recommendations below propose. Journalists will not have all the information – and correctly – unless the ministry gives it to them, not just when there is a crisis but on a progressive and long-term basis. .

Opportunities: It is clear that the media already cover issues of vulnerable children. How best can this be worked upon to have OVC covered better and with the MGLSD as a key partner? MGLSD must be more proactive. It must get the media to be involved in their activities, which are not limited to big announcements, but even the "smaller" issues like seminars on OVC and all the other issues that the Ministry covers. This will make the Ministry's role more clear to the media and with this association, they can become the first stop for any questions on OVC, gender, labour and all aspects of social development.

Challenges: The different media houses have different reasons for existence, different ways of looking at the same story and different methods of work. It is a challenge to learn them all, but one must, if they are to have the desired media coverage.

It is the duty of the ministry to step in when the media do the wrong thing, such as violation of OVC rights. An example here is the wrongness of media exposing identity of cases of child violations such as rape, defilement with the selfish reasons of selling their papers. The ministry must be able to get the media to behave ethically in this aspect, while at the same time maintaining good relations with the media houses.

Children's issues are not well articulated by the children's activists. Some organizations collect children and fail to sustain their support to OVC. Some local organizations use children to attract both local and international funds. Authorities also have relaxed and as a result children are not helped. Some OVC tell lies and

therefore may cause more problems in the relationship between the media and the MGLSD.

Recommendations from media houses to the Ministry.

- Have contact persons for the media within the ministry on several issues so that the media do not have to go through a bureaucracy to find answers.

- Identify the best media for the different stories which need to be shared out and create a media resource inventory that has contacts for all media houses showing specific names and contacts of the best person to deal with on each issue.

- The ministry must have a more proactive approach. They should not wait for the media to get a story and then think of how to react.

- Focus on reviewing the legal framework for protecting children from child abuse to make more effective and expeditious court proceedings.

- Government must articulate the role of the ministries especially those that have cross cutting mandates.

Media Recommendations to MGLSD in order to enhance its media coverage of OVC and relationships

- On coverage of OVC, there is need to identify journalists to cover it as a special beat. That way, it will be possible to investigate and report cases which go unreported.

- MGLSD needs to tell the media what it is doing. It should continuously provide information about its activities, projects and programs to the media.

- Understand the media and build partnerships, generate interest in the ministry's work and find a specialist to help with improving media visibility.

- Use other media channels for OVC advocacy such as community radios in remote areas, as well as Music Dance and Drama.

- Train journalists on how to deal with OVC issues when reporting about them.

- Encourage journalists to use the Public Relations Office of MGLSD and also make use of District Information Offices to access reports on budgets, programs and projects that the ministry has.

- Involve the media at design and implementation of programs through press briefings so that they do not wait to publish only stories they don't have a broad perspective of.

- The ministry should also partner with development agencies such as UNICEF, which have good media relations.

- When the ministry is speaking on OVC issues, bring children to the papers and studios so that people know these are not "ghost OVC".

SECTION III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. General conclusions and recommendations

The foregoing study reveals a number of things which relate to OVC and the place of MGLSD. These have implications on the prioritization of the issues in plans and budgets and consequently on implementation. In the following section we give our general conclusions and recommendations by using the Terms of Reference for the study as a guide.

Concern about orphans and other vulnerable children: In spite of the frequent reference to OVC as a category that befits urgent attention and support by a cross-section of stakeholders, the study found that the actual level of attention which is paid to them (OVC) by policy-makers is low. This is true at both central and local levels. One of the reasons which have been advanced to explain this low level of prioritization is "the recent nature of the OVC problem". While in the past the number of orphans was relatively small, and these were quickly absorbed into the family and community fabric, the onset of HIV and AIDS has in recent times multiplied the problem several times over – this at a time when the family as the primary social institution is threatened with collapse. The magnitude and unconventional nature of the problem seem to have led key decision makers to worry.

Recommendation: There is an urgent need to raise the profile of both OVC and the institutions which support them (MGLSD and CBS). For this effort to bear fruit, it needs to be taken beyond the technocratic to the political level – so that OVC issues become an essential part of the political commitments which local and national leaders make. Committed advocacy at national and local levels should help to address this concern.

Leadership, organization and management: The study concludes that ineffective leadership, organization and management for OVC programming on the part of both MGLSD and district leaders has led to further marginalization of OVC issues in planning and budgeting. At the central level the leadership challenge has been further complicated by the amorphous nature which MGLSD took on when it was created through a merger of three different ministries into one. Here there is an urgent need to firmly establish the Ministry's new identity and "selling point". On the other hand, at district and sub-county levels, the absence of an undisputed leader and champion on OVC matters has led to such issues being left on the margins of what LLGs actually focus on.

Hindering factors that impact on national, district and sub-county leadership's ability and willingness to implement and allocate resources: We conclude that the main hindering factor is the rather lukewarm image (profile) which is portrayed by the parent ministry and the CBS department. This is further aggravated by the lack of information and data on OVC, and the absence of innovative alternative propositions on how to address the orphans' crisis.

Facilitating factors that impact on national, district, and sub-county leadership's ability and willingness to implement and allocate resources for OVC programming: One of the biggest assets with respect to OVC programming is the comprehensive policy and institutional framework on OVC. If appropriately supported, this policy and institutional framework would go a long way to persuade central and lower local governments to allocate resources for OVC. Programmes. However an important factor remains donor interest in supporting the social sector in general and OVC in particular. The current discussion on promoting social protection approaches and interventions is one possible way in which OVC matters can be brought back to the centre ground – as issues which the social protection objectives of MGLSD, and generally the Uganda Government, aim to focus on.

Recommendation: Highlight OVC issues in the on-going discussion on social protection and, through advocacy, explore opportunities for incorporating OVC issues in the social protection policy and framework which will be proposed.

Potential partners/advocates and competitors for OVC advocacy and communication: Uganda has a rich array of potential partners and advocates for OVC advocacy and communication. The study established that both profile and funding for OVC can benefit considerably from collaborating with the private sector. Building on the now well-established model of public-private partnership, and through well structured relationships with the sector MGLSD has an opportunity to both raise the profile of OVC while at the same time drawing on resources which are available in the private sector. Private sector partnerships could be established with such organizations and companies as CELTEL, Coca Cola, MTN, UTL, Mukwano, etc.

Child-focused NGOs and agencies remain key advocates for OVC. ANPCANN, UNICEF, SCF, World Vision, and a host of others are a case in point. However a lot of suspicion still exists between NGOs and between them and MGLSD on prioritization and methods of work. Thus while most are involved in considerable advocacy and would be suitable collaborators, their contribution can best be maximized if there is harmony in discussion and decision-making on key OVC issues, priorities and methodologies. As such a strengthened network of child rights organizations, such as Uganda Child Rights NGO Network may be one way of addressing this challenge.

Recommendation: Support the emergence of collective voice and action through more open discussion with all key stakeholders and more effective networking.

Priority issues for OVC advocacy: From the study the three key priorities for OVC advocacy which emerged from care givers are improved socio-economic security, better access to health and education services, and increased awareness on the rights and responsibilities of OVC. On the other hand community leaders emphasized the importance of better regulation of institutions which care for OVC in order to enhance child protection. They also highlighted increased funding for projects supporting OVC as an important area for advocacy. CSOs reflected a longer list of advocacy priority areas, arguing that this was a derivative of the various types of engagement which they had with communities and OVC themselves. The NGO list

included provision of an essential services package for orphans, increased resource allocation to MGLSD, establishment of a national database for OVC, enhancement of socio-economic security, increased opportunities for psychosocial support for OVC, and child protection. Perhaps most importantly OVC themselves prioritized advocacy for education, against stigma, for care and support, for socio-economic security and for reintegration and resettlement as their advocacy issues.

We draw three main conclusions from the above analysis. First, and not unexpectedly, different stakeholders present different advocacy priorities. In instances where the priorities do not overlap for the different stakeholders this has implications for which ones are taken up. Secondly, while OVC and care-givers mainly prioritized issues which have specific relevance to OVC' personal livelihoods, NGOs and others included (and often focused on) advocacy issues of an institutional nature. Thirdly, the range of priority issues suggest a need for a strategy which spans the three levels of: (a) family and community; (b) district and sub-county; and, (c) national.

Recommendation: When developing an advocacy strategy serious consideration should be given to defining which advocacy issues would be addressed at the different levels.

The image of other line ministries vis-à-vis that of MGLSD: As pointed out in the foregoing discussion, and if compared with other line ministries such as education or health, the image of MGLSD and CBS remains low. Institutional and organizational management challenges aside, this study concludes that the higher profile which is accorded to the other ministries is mainly due to the frequent reminders in official and non-official circles (including media, publications, manifestos, etc) about education and health being among the most important interruptors of poverty. It is also directly related to these sectors' positioning in the national priority planning areas (PPAs).

Recommendation: Advocate for raising the profile of OVC issues at all levels of administration and have such issues included in the national priority planning areas. In addition, there is a need to clearly articulate MGLSD's and CBS's goal and objectives and their relationship to OVC and to popularize these widely with a view to raising the conscience of the public on what the ministry and departments currently do and can do in the future. In order to achieve this the targeting of public officials (for awareness raising and advocacy) at different levels of administration will need to be done.

The national budgeting system, key gatekeepers and influencers: Although budget allocations for the sectors, including the social sector, are informed by the ceilings imposed by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) at national level and by the Local Government Budget Framework Paper (LGBFP), what actually gets allocated at the operational level is often the result of both technical and political processes, the latter tending to have greater influence. The technocratic process is much influenced by the planning departments at both national and district levels. Here coherence and the convincing nature of arguments were found to be vital, yet often missing. This study concludes that technical analysis of OVC issues based on sound data and grounded in good research and evidence should underpin all the technical work of MGLSD and CBS. The political process on the other hand is mostly informed by key gate-keepers who need to be identified and used in order to influence decision-making on budget allocations. Some of these are political leaders,

others are religious leaders, but the study also found individuals who are "simply respected by the political decision-makers".

Recommendation: Strengthen advocacy for better quality evidence based research and OVC advocacy. In addition, promote the identification and deliberate collaboration with the identified gate-keepers and influencers at local and national levels.

Donor decision-making processes: Different donors tend to focus on different sets of priorities, usually arrived at on the basis of both the analysis of "preferred" sectors and consideration of home government priorities. Similarly different donors have differing funding processes and mechanisms. Overall, for example, DFID supports the implementation of Government priorities through the budget support modality, while USAID on the other hand does her funding via the project financing modality. Other donors, such as DANIDA, contribute to both the budget support option and also invest in specific projects.

Three key conclusions emerge from the foregoing study. First while donor funding of the social sector (including education and health) is considerable, specific funding for OVC priorities is on one hand comparatively low and on the other both intermittent and unreliable. Hence a number of donors also do not prioritise OVC issues. Secondly, donor coordination on currently supported OVC activities is weak, which results into duplication and/or omission. Thirdly, because donor perspectives are often rooted in solid research and analysis, and also because of the clout which donors carry by virtue of holding the purse, their opinions on key development issues are often listened to or even fully taken up by their government colleagues. In this way, donors can exert considerable amounts of influence.

Recommendation: It is recommended that targeted advocacy should be undertaken for increased, longer-term and more reliable funding to OVC priorities, and specifically focused on key donors. For those donor agencies that presently do not prioritise OVC, the first objective needs to be advocating for the incorporation of OVC issues in their respective country strategies. Similarly, by ensuring inclusion of OVC in the PPAs more donors will be persuaded to invest in an area that is both pertinent and which is considered of importance to the government of Uganda.

It is further recommended that donor coordination on OVC issues be promoted, and that MGLSD should work with specific individuals in the donor community as their point of reference and/or gate-keepers or influencers when it comes to prioritizing OVC policy.

Mechanisms for advocacy and communication: As expected, the study established that different mechanisms for advocacy and communication exist at national, district and Sub County levels. At the national level, communication with partners both at the ministry level, and at the districts and NGOs level is done via regular consultative meetings, inter-ministerial committee meetings, as well as via sector committees. Various modes are used to communicate: conferences, meetings, workshops, seminars, as well as the print and electronic media (i.e. letters, circulars), policy documents, reports, etc. On the other hand, at district and sub-county levels, communication and advocacy follows both formal and informal channels. Formal channels include council meetings, the annual planning and budgeting workshop,

networking meetings for NGOs, and departmental meetings. However, informally, religious and traditional leaders as well as political leaders who operate at national level but hail from the respective districts are among the most influential people when it comes to policy advocacy at local levels. Similarly, FM radio stations, especially the popular discussion programmes which debate and discuss a wide range of subjects are another important communication mechanism. Increasingly too the mobile phone was found to be an important tool of communication. In the last few years, at community level, the boda-boda cyclists have strongly established themselves as purveyors of information.

The key conclusion we draw on advocacy and communication is that certain forms of advocacy are better suited to particular levels of engagement than others. Identifying and using a medium which is both appropriate and appreciated is as important as communicating the message itself.

Recommendation: Advocacy and communication strategies should be developed bearing in mind the different levels at which the advocacy is pitched. Similarly, appropriate tools must be identified for the different targets of advocacy.

Media coverage and positioning of OVC issues and the MGLSD: The study concluded that media coverage of OVC issues remains sporadic, tending to be heightened on particular dates when international or national days, such as the Day of the African child, are marked. Even in such instances most media sell space or time on their channels or papers which is paid for by interested organizations. Other media reports on OVC tend to be sensational in nature and to be based on superficial research. As such most of the media was perceived not to have long-term development perspectives with respect to OVC in particular and children in general.

It was further concluded that the coverage of MGLSD in most media is lukewarm, in part due to what journalists referred to as "lack of a selling point" or an absence of a "unique feature" about the ministry. In addition, the Ministry was blamed for not routinely inviting media so as to feed them with appropriate stories. These challenges notwithstanding particular journalists in the media were observed on occasion to lean towards publishing on children's issues.

Recommendation: In consistency with an earlier objective of increased visibility, MGLSD should identify its niche and selling point and use this with all media. On a routine and sustained basis the ministry needs to interest media houses with topical storylines or to give journalists regular updates of what may be happening with OVC in particular and MGLSD in general. On a practical note, MGLSD should identify those journalists who have expressed and demonstrated interest in reporting on children's issues to incorporate OVC issues in their reporting and analysis. In so doing, care should be taken to keep varying the reports so that they are not perceived by the audience as being stale messages.

3.2. Other conclusions

More and more stakeholders including, government and civil society organisations recognise that OVC are a sizeable vulnerable group, and that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a major threat to them. To develop a more pro-child approach and in

order to involve children more in the solution of the problems they face, these actors need to advocate for prioritisation of this category of children and hence budgeting for their needs. An increase of resources available for HIV/AIDS may happen, however there is a strong need for key actors to ensure that these resources benefit children in general and OVC in particular.

In order to cope with the gigantic problem of OVC and to do justice to the plight of the affected children, OVC stakeholders should help to strengthen the structures, both at national and local levels and to ensure that progress is monitored. Only if we can prove that our policies and programmes are effective, would the rest of the country support OVC. Therefore evidence, monitoring and evaluation have to be promoted and improved.

3.3. Specific recommendations

Partnerships: There is need to develop a strategy that links the different stakeholders of OVC initiatives to MGLSD and to highlight potential areas of collaboration, support and linkages in areas of funding, information and technical support. Given the many players, it is important to deal with the unique and diverse issues that emerge from a web of partnerships.

Similarly, it is recommended that inter-ministerial OVC interventions that provide opportunities for collaboration with MGLSD both technically and financially be identified and promoted.

The ministry should in particular explore collaborating with others in the private sector basing on the principle of private-public- partnership. Such partnerships could bring on board such players as mobile telecommunication companies (CELTEL, UTL and MTN), commercial banks (such as Barclays, DFCU, Standard Chattered Bank, Nile bank, and Stanbic),COCA COLA, PEPSI, OMO, etc.

Priority issues: In the advocacy strategy, it is important to highlight those issues that the MGLSD do not have sufficient information on, for instance issues of stigma, coping strategies for children heading households, as well as implications for government and other stakeholders of providing social support to all poverty-stricken households fostering OVC. Research on these issues should be commissioned and the findings should be fed into the ministry's advocacy strategy.

Link to national development priorities; The advocacy strategy for OVC should be developed in such a way that it is able to highlight OVC issues and related actionable areas for other ministries. At the practical level it will be necessary for MGLSD to prioritize its contacts and get other departments within the Ministry to link with the other stakeholders.

Perception of the MGLD compared to other ministries: Various reasons were advanced to explain why other ministries or departments are better known and respected than MGLSD. Generally, there is little understanding of the overall mandate of the MGLSD both at national and local government level. As such, it is recommended that OVC issues be linked to the national development priorities alongside PHC, education, water and sanitation, roads and agricultural extension. OVC issues should specifically be

interwoven into the framework of poverty priority issues. This, it is expected, will be an important area for advocacy.

National Budgetary systems: Understanding how the budget process works will be an important starting point for all categories of people and institutions that are involved in OVC advocacy. This is particularly true for those who operate at district and lower levels. Investment would need to be made in greater sensitization and awareness raising on the OVC programme, skills building in lobbying and advocacy, as well as communication.

MGLSD and CBS departments should in addition identify and engage key gatekeepers and influencers at all levels, including district and sub-county levels.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Uganda's Budget Cycle

Period	Activity
July – August	MFPED finalizes monitoring preceding year's fund releases against expected outputs
Early October	MFPED Top managers retreat to discuss PEAP priorities, fiscal issues that need to be resolved
Mid October	National Budget consultative workshop
November	Local Government budget framework workshops
January	Local government and Sector BFPs submitted
Jan- Feb	Inter-ministerial consultations
By march 15	Cabinet approves BFP and budget proposals
By April 1st	National BFP and draft MTEF presented to parliament for scrutiny
By 15th May	MFPED finalizes budget allocations and the MTEF
May	MFPED, line ministries and other spending agencies prepare detailed budget estimates and submits to cabinet for approval
By June	MFPED prepares and presents the budget speech to parliament on behalf of His Excellency the President
15th June	Parliament passes the vote on account
16th June to October	Parliament discusses and approves the budget
October to June 30	Budget implementation monitoring and reporting
June 30	Closing of the financial year
July 1	Beginning of a new financial year

Source: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Appendix 2: Process of Local government planning/ budgeting	
Timing	**Steps**
July	Review Technical Planning Committee (TPC) Functionality
August	Dissemination of Planning Information for Parishes/ Wards
September	Support to village/ Parish level planning
October	Situation analysis at Lower Local Government Level
October	Discussion and prioritization of Lower Local Government challenges/ obstacles and strength/ opportunities (LLG SWOT analysis)
November	Identification of LLG investment priorities
November	Budget Conference
December	Forwarding projects for District/ Municipal consideration
January	Development of project profiles
January/ February	Review of project profiles by standing Committees
February	Compilation of the draft Comprehensive Development Plan
March	Review of the Draft Comprehensive plan by the Executive
March	Refinement of the Draft Comprehensive plan by the TPC
April	Discussion and approval of the comprehensive plan by the council
April	Submit the Approved Comprehensive Development Plan to the HLG

Appendix 2: Process of Local government planning/ budgeting	
Timing	**Steps**
May/ June	Final feedback to the LLCs (parish/ wards and villages/cells/zones)

Source: Harmonized Participatory Planning Guide for Lower Local Governments, Ministry of Local Government, June 2004

Appendix 3: Fiscal releases, budget estimates and budget projections from central government to local government from financial year 2002/03-2007/08

Sector	Financial Year (Ushs in Billions)					
	2002/03 (budget releases)	2003/04 (Approved estimates)	2004/05 (approved budget)	2005/06 (approved budget)	2006/07 (budget projections)	2007/08 (budget projections)
NAADS (Districts)	9.32	17.62	16.02	27.45	38.66	41.93
District agricultural extension	5.66	4.58	5.98	5.99	7.04	7.11
District road maintenance			18.01	18.01	18.31	18.31
District Primary Education inc SFG	283.18	78.26	316.90	338.59	391.74	339.43
District Secondary Education	68.65	68.98	83.86	82.82	120.53	133.73
District Tertiary Institutions	9.40	15.18	14.95	23.96	25.35	27.31
District Health Training Schools	1.89	1.89	5.52	4.23	4.33	4.59
District Primary health care	66.96	67.11	98.16	102.01	103.63	105.58
District hospitals	8.64	8.87	10.38	10.61	10.61	15.11
District referral hospitals	12.35	17.88	24.40	24.29	24.79	23.51
District Water conditional grant	25.74	144.43	31.05	31.17	42.16	44.16
Local government development (excl roads)	40.66	40.86	41.98	30.29	76.29	
Unconditional grant district (public sector management)	72.09	77.68	81.68	104.49	103.50	103.89
District functional adult literacy grant	1.37	-	1.62	1.60	1.60	1.60

Sector	Financial Year (Ushs in Billions)					
	2002/03 (budget releases)	2003/04 (Approved estimates)	2004/05 (approved budget)	2005/06 (approved budget)	2006/07 (budget projections)	2007/08 (budget projections)
District equalization grant	4.20	5.71	3.53	3.49	3.49	3.49
District women youth and disability councils grants	-	-	1.91	1.36	1.36	2.00
District natural resource conditional grant	-	-	0.89	1.05	0.54	0.50
Local government development programme	39.99	-	85.25	64.30	64.31	64.31

Source: Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, Budget and Evaluation Department (figures in billions)

Appendix 4: An illustration of sub-county expenditure estimates for the financial year of 2006/07

BUTUNTUMULA SUB-COUNTY- LUWERO DISTRICT			PALLISA SUB-COUNTY-PALLISA DISTRICT			NYAKABANDE SUB-COUNTY- KISORO DISTRICT		
Sector	Budget	Source of funding	Sector	Budget	Source of Funding	Sector	Budget	Source of funding
Management	500,000	SLC ???	Management	13,262,389	Local revenue and central government	Administration	5,209,000	Local revenue
Finance and Planning	6,620,000	SLC and Central Government	Finance and Planning	1,378,324	Local Revenue	Finance and Planning	4,318,277	Local revenue and Central government
Council	2,000,000	Local Revenue SLC??	Council Committees and Boards	4,326,322	Local revenue	Council and Committees	4,116,000	Local Revenue
Works	25,306,100	Central Government	Works	7,000,000	Central government (biggest proportion) and Local revenue	Production	2,953,500	Central government and local revenue
Health	71,100,000	Central government and some local revenue	Health	5,075,312	Central government (biggest proportion) and Local revenue	Health	1,733,000	Local Revenue
Gender and Community development Balanced services delivery-for improved standards of the youth women and PWDs Participatory planning	3,025,011	Central government and local revenue	Gender and Community development Facilitate activities of women, youth and PWDs Purchase of stationery	300,000	Local revenue	Community Based services To revitalize FAL programme Outreach to farmers	889,000	Local Revenue and donor NGO

BUTUNTUMULA SUB-COUNTY- LUWERO DISTRICT			PALLISA SUB-COUNTY-PALLISA DISTRICT			NYAKABANDE SUB-COUNTY- KISORO DISTRICT		
Sector	Budget	Source of funding	Sector	Budget	Source of Funding	Sector	Budget	Source of funding
Gender mainstreaming								
Education	150,000	Local revenue	Natural Resources and Environment	100,000	Central Government (PMA)	Education and Sports	165,000	Local Revenue
Production	17,683,036	Central government	Production and Marketing	3,479,162	Central government			
NAADS/SFG	55,867,000	Central Government						

Appendix 5: Examples of the Current Partners involved in supporting or doing OVC work

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
CSOs / CBOs / International Development Agencies		
UNICEF	UNICEF is an international agency and its major support is funding CSO OVC initiatives both at national and Local government levels. It is perceived as a development actor / partner by MGLSD – one that is championing the development and implementation of OVC policy and programs. It has facilitated the formulation of Sub-county based Child Protection Committees in Northern Uganda to help identify vulnerable children using an assessment process which links OVC to ongoing social and economic initiatives by local partners. UNICEF also supports local NGO / CBOs institutions to provide services to OVC and advocacy activities. In addition it funds HIV/AIDS programs which target OVC, promotes the targeting of the girl child in education programs country wide, and provides practical and logistical support to collaborating partners. .	MGLSD works closely with UNICEF to implement the OVC policy and programs, and plans together with the districts. Thus UNICEF has significant influence at national and district levels in policy areas which support inclusion of OVC issues in poverty eradication interventions. UNICEF is pivotal in providing financial support to many child based CSOs. Overall the, technical staff feel that OVC programming at district level is more on capacity building of technical personnel than actual rolling of the programme to the targeted beneficiaries. Support to OVC channeled through partners and mainly food relief efforts. *Note: UNICEF also provides support to the OVC Secretariat.*
WFP	Together with the District Disaster Preparedness Committee in the northern region, which is the districts' coordinating body for humanitarian efforts for IDPs, WFP plays an important role in providing food relief items to affected populations. Other roles played by the District Disaster Preparedness Committee include ensuring physical security of IDPs, planning, re, re-integration of IDPs into their communities, family reunification and safety and dignity of the IDPs, as well as protection and provision of needs assistance to the IDPs.	The war in Northern Uganda is continually responsible for low food production levels with people still confined in camps. WFP and disaster management committees at district level are very important stakeholders in addressing food security issues for displaced children and their families
Local NGO OVC INITAITIVES		

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
World Vision, USDC, Plan Uganda, Save the Children, Compassion International, Christian Children Fund-Kampala, AMFREF, CCF, Caritas, Compassion International, UWESO, Plan Uganda. , PACODETI and FADEPU-EU projects in Pallisa District. *(Can we distinguish between those CSO that*	Key activities carried out by service delivery based NGOs in favour of OVC include: School support: Scholastic materials, special needs learning tools (for example Braille's material)[33], vocational tools[34] capacity building of school management teams, training of teachers in special needs education like sign language[35], monitoring of school performance among beneficiaries[36], school feeding[37] Infrastructure development: Community water sources, school and home sanitary facilities[38] Livelihoods support: Small businesses, IGAs, credit, seedlings and extension services[39] Health and Well-being initiatives: Construction of shelter for vulnerable children*)* children[40], provision of beddings, medication and health education, rehabilitation[41], home-based feeding, HIV/AIDS initiatives, birth and death registration,[42] reproductive health[43]	Evidence emerging from field consultations shows that a number of service delivery NGOs are responding to the OVC plight by addressing the socio-economic, spiritual and psychosocial needs. Their support has been both direct and indirectly through CBOs. These NGOs have also directly enhanced the capacity of stakeholders at the district, sub-county, as well as that of community based child advocates, OVC and their families. Their technical, financial and moral support is critical for OVC programming. Given the fact that most operate at the tangible nature of their outputs, their propensity to attract huge amounts of funding and political will, NGOs / CBOs' level of influence is high and greatly felt at community level. The district officials consulted in Luwero, Gulu, Kisoro, Kampala and Pallisa recommend that there is a need to link CBO / NGO interventions to district based OVC interventions for purposes of coordination, harmonization, management and accountability.

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[33] USDC is child based organisation for children with Disabilities, its main aim is to see children with disabilities included in main stream education and development programmes. In addition provides scholastic support to CWD.

[34] A number of NGO partners reported they are involved in supporting OVC through education sponsorship and scholastic material support these include UWESO , CCF, Save the Children, World Vision, and Caritas.

[35] USDC initiative in Luwero

[36] Evident in almost all the projects visited done for purposes of learning and ensuring effective implementation of ongoing projects

[37] Caritas, World Vision, and Compassion International offer nutritional supplements to OVC in form of food relief.

[38] Plan Uganda, AMREF, Save the Children, World Vision have invested a lot in capital development interventions were physical infrastructure in form of school construction, bore holes, are evident in the communities in Luwero, and Gulu district.

[39] AMREF, CCF, PACODETI, FADEPU-EU projects (through school gardens and agriculture clubs in Sironko, Jinja,Busia district) and UWESO are directly engaged in improving household incomes and nutrition of OVC and their affected families.

[40] Compassion International and AMFREF in their of operation has aided vulnerable orphans through putting up decent permanent shelter. e.g Kisoro and Luwero

[41] Caritas and USDC

[42] Plan Uganda is facilitating the Birth and registration process in Luwero district.

[43] Plan Uganda through its education support programme its promoting child to child reproductive health education so is Caritas Uganda.

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
are funded by MGLSD grants and those who have other sources of funding?)	Capacity Building: Using children to create HIV awareness[44], other stakeholders to implement OVC initiatives[45] *Please consider using the CPA of the NSPPI, i.e. care and support, health, strengthening capacity to deliver services etc.*	The NGOs on the other hand however recommend that the MGLSD should be seen leading and providing technical back stop and regular feedback. *(Feedback on what?)* Advocacy based institutions too have put a spirited fight in lobbying for inclusion of OVC issues into current policies
NUDIPU USDC, FAWE, AMPPCAN, Uganda Child Rights Network(UCRN),Raising Voices	Policy Advocacy based NGOs, help raise awareness on OVC issues, advocate for rights of children in special circumstances, such as children with disabilities, those with no access to justice, and children who are victims of sexual abuse. These NGOs also address issues of children who are affected by violence, property rights issues, and rights to education.	The 20 year old armed conflict that has ravaged the North has left a lot children traumatized due to loss of parents, as child soldiers, children affected by land mines, refugees, orphans and child mothers. This is exacerbated by HIV/AIDS and poverty. These complexities have left children with new roles, fears, desperation, powerlessness, and (nec?) scars, both physical and psychological. This kind of language is highly emotive and seems to give the impression that the children cannot be helped – they are doomed. Hence the need for psychosocial support geared to restore the affected children's hope, dignity and successful reintegration in other projects and community.
GUSCO and World Vision, Caritas AMREF – Gulu district, CCF, Koinonia ministries and Bucodo –Kisoro,	Identifies vulnerable children and links them to other actors for support Provides rehabilitation at the reception center (through drama and sports)[46] Reunited children with their families where possible Tries to socialize and integrate the children with others and the communities Provide psychosocial support to formerly abducted children, night commuters, Child mothers generally to all children in the northern conflict affected areas[47].	

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[44] Plan Uganda Intervention.

[45] Credit goes to all NGOs consulted in Kampala, Pallisa, Luwero, Kisoro and Gulu in one way or the other were facilitating a training of community based facilitators to implement their projects and enhancing their knowledge base in areas of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, child participation as a child rights, livelihoods, and peace building

[46] World Vision, Save the Children and GUSCO have a strong presence in the North given the 20 year armed conflict and have night commuters and reception centers to receive children formerly abducted but also children running for safety in the night(night commuters)

[47] CCF, has Community based psychosocial care targeting orphans in HIV/AIDS affected households, World Vision, GUSCO have trauma rehabilitation shelters for formerly abducted children to LRA rebels.

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
CHILD BASED INSTITUTIONS		
Child Welfare and Adoption Society – Nsambya Babies Home. Kampala Arch-Diocese, Sanyu Babies home Namirembe Diocese and Naguru Remand Home,	Child institutions such as Nsambya and Sanyu Babies' Homes play a critical role in nurturing formerly abandoned, abused and neglected children. They do this by providing spiritual, social, moral and physical support. The institutions also advocate for the rights of children and promote care of vulnerable children so that they are able to grow into responsible adults.	Child based institutions consulted by the study felt that OVC have been given limited attention, although they recognize government support to promotion of child rights and child care institutions. These mainly depend on local and international donations. Child based institutions report that local governments in the areas of jurisdiction don't extend support or any form of assistance. Naguru Remand Home receives direct support from MGLSD, which provide meals and technical guidance while CORE-INITIATIVE has extended support in vocational education. *(I'm not aware that CORE Initiative is supporting Nuguru Remand Home)* Other donors include Give me a Chance, religious groups, Youth Outreach, Defense for Children.
MEDIA INDUSTRY		
Media-Radio station- Radio king, Radio Mega Fm in Gulu, Voice of Kigezi and local FM Stations in Luwero district	The media houses consulted say occasionally they receive officials from MGLSD and CBS department discussing policy related issues on women and Children. They also report on child abuse related cases at their disposal.	The media has a critical role to play in blowing the whistle for resource mobilization and as key advocacy ally for OVC work and enhancement of the Ministries image and successes stories. The media fraternity recommended that MGLSD and other actors impart in them skills of OVC reporting. There is also need to harness the opportunities that other electronic media versions provide such as newspapers, and televisions.
PRIVATE SECTOR		
Banks, Rotarians and private business firms and other corporate organizations, including, for example, the Telecommunication industry	These support OVC initiatives through response to social needs. Key examples is where USDC through its has fundraising boxes in Stanbic bank branches country wide aimed at soliciting money for children with Disability. UTL in Gulu has extended relief support through local NGO initiatives to children affected by the conflict. In Luwero district some child based NGOs had received support from private businesses.	Consultations reveal that private sector has big role to play in OVC interventions. The MGLD should explore fundraising potential that the private sector posses.
FAITH BASED INSTITUTIONS		
Kampala Diocese,	Faith Based Organization's support includes both service delivery and	Traditionally, Faith Based institutions have been at the center of helping

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
Muhabura Diocese, Namirembe Cathedral, KPC , Miracle Center Children's Ministries and UMSC	advocacy for OVC. Services delivered include shelter, health, education sponsorship programs, food relief and income generating activities. They also meet the social needs of OVC which include emotional and spiritual needs. They work through partners within the CSO fraternity, local and central Governments, and receive donations from abroad and locally.	OVC and their affected families, although their approach has been institution-based. There is a great shift now to community based initiatives and provide a locus for ownership of projects. FBOs are current and potential advocates for OVC given the clout and space of engagement they hold. The FBOs attract a wide range of stakeholders including politicians, local leaders, communities , and other NGO/CBO actors and hence are a good conduit for disseminating OVC policies and raising awareness of children's issues and concerns
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS		
CBS department	The department is responsible for categories of people who are described as vulnerable. These include youths, children on probation, women, and elderly and disabled persons. Specific responsibilities for the department include advocating for the rights of vulnerable persons. Mobilizing communities for social and economic development, disseminating OVC policy, and coordinating child focused NGOs. The department also handles issues of the juvenile and the justice systems for children in conflict with the law. provides counseling to children and families with severe social problems, connects OVC to community development opportunities and to other sector support opportunities, and sensitizes the public on the rights of children (especially those living under difficult circumstances)	The CBS department is recognized for its role in community mobilization of vulnerable people to rally behind development interventions from other sectors. It is a pinnacle of OVC policy, and tries to ensure that OVC interventions are reflected in the district plans Overall has low influence at the district level given the low funding support compared to other departments such as health and education that attract a lot of support due to their presence and visible outputs at the community level. The CBS department would like to see the MGLSD play a mentoring role and clearly ear mark funds for OVC work in the districts. *(Is it really up to MGLSD? Don't these funds need to be allocated at the district level.)*
Probation office	Identify children without known parents/guardians and places them in babies' homes. Provide legal services to juvenile children (ensure that juveniles access fair judgment under the law) Trace and resettle children to legal, fostering and / or adoptive parents Sensitize and create awareness of children's rights Policy relations- OVC policy and the Children's Act	Sub-county officials and communities felt the have to trek long distances to visit the probation office. As a structure it is perceived to be far from its intended beneficiaries. A cross section of CSOs working in Kampala and at district level felt some PWO are not competent. *'If I had powers to sack the PWOs I would do so within 30 days, because I don't see what they are doing apart from sitting in their offices,'* CSO *participant. Kampala*
The District Planning	Responsible for coordinating the development of the district	The planning unit as a hub of plans for different sectors is seemingly

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
Unit	development plan (DDP). Collects data and sector plans from all the departments including the Community Based Services and leads the process of consolidating it into the district plan Prepares a Budget framework paper Coordinates local government central grants (LGDP) Collects/ processes and disseminates information to other departments and actors. Currently, the department is leading the BDR information collection.	playing a silent role as regards the OVC interventions. But for it to be significant there is real need for OVC data bases that clearly categorize OVC with basic variables. Otherwise it is difficult to have targeted interventions for OVC
Department of Education and Sports in Kisoro, Pallisa, Gulu	This department is responsible for primary education (UPE), Secondary and Tertiary Education. UPE addresses the needy children commonly known as the Orphans and other vulnerable children. Currently the districts are operating a bursary scheme for secondary school children per sub-county. Emphasizes a program of special needs education for children with disability who initially had no chance to attain education service (Children with hearing, sight, physical impairment and the dumb). With respect to the afore mentioned, the role of the department is to: • Identify CWD • Place them with other service providers (NGOs) • Educate their carers • Provide specialized teacher for them in their respective schools • Provide materials and equipments (brails, wheel chairs- donations from other actors and ministry of education)	The Department is unique with a specific OVC intervention emphasizing children with Disabilities. However, it has not done much in assisting other vulnerable categories; where efforts have been put, advantaged children have benefited on behalf of OVC. This is attributed to poor mechanism of overseeing and selecting vulnerable children.
Children and Family Protection Unit , Police	The unit intervenes in family disputes / conflict Creates awareness and ensures that the rights of children are observed (right to food, education, clothing, medical care and shelter) The unit handles the juvenile and missing children (provide temporary shelter and feeding and connects them to their respective relatives) Handles issues of child abuse and mistreatment	Overall the police have a lot of influence, given its mandate in ensuring order and peace for all and could be targeted for advocacy. The police together with local leaders at Community level are appreciated by communities for their role in intervening in child abuse and family conflict. The police family unit should now shift its role to enforcing legislation in place to stop child abuse.
Partners at the Ministerial level and their current levels of engagement in OVC work		
Department of Special	The ultimate aim is to remove barriers to learning for the disabled	The inter-ministerial OVC interventions provide an opportunity for

Level or type of partners	Support to OVC initiatives	Remarks on the level of importance and Influence at district and national level and what needs to be done strengthen the partnership.
Needs Ministry of Education and Sports	children (blind, deaf, mental health problems, street children, war and HIV/AIDS affected children) to live a normal life by providing opportunities to education through assistive devises (Braille, and mobility equipment.	collaboration with MGLSD both technically and financially. An inter-OVC arrangement may be made for coordinating OVC efforts at national level and fundraise for OVC initiatives.
Department of child health (Ministry of Health)	Addresses health issues of child health through: integrated management of illnesses, nutritional program, school based programs and venereal disease control. Vulnerable children are cared for under school health programs e.g. the disabled, HIV/AIDS positive/ orphans and nutritionally (malnourished or under-nourished)children	MGLSD could use this arrangement to ride on Ministry of Health and Educations already established image/influence.
Uganda Parliament; Budget office	Advises government and parliament on budgets and the economy (helps in analyzing and justifying particular budget proposals from the ministries and other government departments; such advice may be specific to OVC programming submitted by MGLSD	The parliament has a Social Service Committee, a Gender and Social Development Committee and Children's parliamentary forums advocating for the increased funding to the MGLSD and children-specific interventions. The upcoming advocacy strategy presents an opportunity for further engagements within parliament and interesting them to put OVC on the national agenda.