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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MULTIDIMENSIONAL CHILD POVERTY IN UGANDA-2024

Volume 1 Key Summary Report

1. ABOUT MULTIDIMENSIONAL CHILD POVERTY

This document is an extract from *'Multidimensional Child Poverty in Uganda Volume 1: The Extent and Nature of Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation - 2024'*. The report details monetary and multidimensional child poverty based on 2016/17 and 2019/20 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS). The UNHS 2019/20 was conducted in the months before and during the first year of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020. The report utilizes an innovative poverty methodology called Small Area Estimation, combining the data from the UNHS 2019/20 and the 2014 Population and Housing Census, to estimate child poverty at sub-national level (i.e. up to sub-counties) in Uganda. Additionally, this child poverty report used 'consensual' multidimensional child poverty methodology in which the important necessities for the child were determined by interviewees themselves, with specific questions nested in the 2019/20 UNHS.

While the report is titled multidimensional child poverty, it also has data on monetary child poverty at national and sub-regional levels for 2016/17 and 2019/20. The report considers children living in households with very low incomes, and those suffering multiple deprivations, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the way poor children are living in Uganda today. For they are the weakest link which, if fixed, should help accelerate the improvement of the entire nation's wellbeing. The full report, including the appendices that provide technical details about research methods, can be accessed at www.ubos.org and www.unicef.org/uganda.

2. CHILD POVERTY IN UGANDA

2.1 Key Definitions

Multidimensional (MD) Child Poverty: A state of lack and deprivation for children living in households whose equivalent household expenditure is less than UGX 152,065 per month and who also suffer from seven or more deprivations due to a lack of money.

Monetary Child Poverty: A state of lack and deprivation in which children live in households with income below the national poverty line.

Deprivation: An enforced lack, due to not being able to afford important socially perceived necessities for children such as three meals a day, own bed, two sets of clothing etc.

2.2 Child Poverty by Socio-Economic Characteristics

The report presents child poverty results for 2016/17 and 2019/20 by socio-economic characteristics (Table 1) and some key highlights are as follows;

44%
MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

NEARLY HALF of children in Uganda are suffering from MD poverty with rates reaching **57 per cent for some households** with three or more children.

23%
MONETARY POVERTY

NEARLY 1IN4 were living monetary poor in 2019/20, with **higher poverty rates for households with three or more children.**

TABLE 1:
Multidimensional & Monetary Child Poverty in Uganda in 2016/17 and 2019/20

		2019/20		2016/17	
		MULTIDI-MENSIONAL POVERTY %	MONETARY POVERTY %	MULTIDI-MENSIONAL POVERTY %	MONETARY POVERTY %
UGANDA	**NATIONAL ESTIMATE**	**44**	**23**	**56**	**23**
Sex	Male	45	24	57	24
	Female	44	22	56	23
Age Group	0-5	37	22	54	23
	6-8	48	24	60	25
	9-14	49	24	58	24
	15-18	46	21	54	21
Household Type	1 adult, 1 child	30	9	29	6
	1 adult, 2 children	39	11	48	11
	1 adult, 3+ children	57	27	65	29
	2 adults, 1 child	26	12	35	12
	2 adults, 2 children	32	15	47	14
	2 adults, 3+ children	48	26	62	27
	3+ adults, 1 child	31	15	34	9
	3+ adults, 2 children	32	13	38	11
	3+ adults, 3+ children	43	22	54	23
Orphan Status	No	43	22	56	23
	Yes	54	26	63	26
Child's Living Arrangements	Living with both parents	43	24	NA	NA
	Living with mother only	51	24	NA	NA
	Living with father only	41	19	NA	NA
	Living with neither parent	44	19	NA	NA

2.3   The Geography of Child Poverty in Uganda:
Locating the worst-hit places

Using the small area estimation methodology, the report combined findings from the UNHS 2019/20 covering about 15,000 households in 15 sub regions, and the Uganda National Population Census 2014, to obtain estimates of the geographic occurrence/distribution of child poverty at sub county level. The details are in table 2 and figures 1 and 2 while the key highlights are;

- Children in urban areas have almost half (14 per cent) the national rate of monetary poverty (23 per cent) compared with their rural peers, where rates are higher (26 per cent).

- The lowest rates of monetary child poverty are found in Kampala (2 per cent), and seven subregions have monetary poverty rates above the national average: Acholi (72 per cent), Karamoja (68 per cent), Bukedi (37 per cent), Busoga (33 per cent), Kigezi (30 per cent), Lango (26 per cent) and Teso (24 per cent).

- There are pockets of high MD child poverty in subregions with lower regional MD child poverty e.g. Toro, Buganda North and Ankole.

- Multidimensional child poverty is clustered (high and low poverty rates tend to concentrate in certain areas).

- The areas most severely affected by long years of conflict (1986-2007) in north and north eastern Uganda have the highest monetary (58 percent) and MD (71 percent) child poverty rates, respectively. By contrast, the areas of Uganda which suffered few effects of the conflict have the lowest child poverty rates.

- Generally, very high MD child poverty is recorded in districts located in poor subregions with the highest in Acholi (Pader - 91.2 per cent, Agago - 90.9 per cent, Amuru - 90.7 per cent, Lamwo - 90 per cent) and Karamoja (Napak - 85.4 per cent, Kaabong - 83.6 per cent, Nakapiripirit - 80.1 per cent).

- Sub counties with higher levels of child poverty generally have;

  – higher rates of household head illiteracy and a smaller percentage of household heads engaged in paid work.

  – children in households who travel further away to reach public health facilities and primary schools i.e. the areas with the greatest health and educational needs are also those with the worst health services availability.

TABLE 2

The Geography of Child Poverty in Uganda in 2016/17 and 2019/20

		2019/20		2016/17	
		MULTIDI-MENSIONAL POVERTY %	MONETARY POVERTY %	MULTIDI-MENSIONAL POVERTY %	MONETARY POVERTY %
UGANDA	NATIONAL ESTIMATE	44	23	56	23
Place of residence	Rural	50	26	63	27
	Urban	27	14	32	10
Sub-Region	Kampala	8	2	15	3
	Buganda South	20	8	34	10
	Elgon	30	15	80	37
	Bunyoro	30	11	51	19
	Toro	39	14	48	12
	Ankole	40	14	37	7
	Buganda North	41	16	45	11
	West Nile	41	19	81	39
	Busoga	51	33	75	40
	Lango	53	26	47	16
	Kigezi	56	30	57	12
	Teso	66	24	58	27
	Bukedi	68	37	83	46
	Karamoja	77	68	84	60
	Acholi	84	72	76	35
PRDP areas (conflict affected)	Severely affected	71	58	NA	NA
	Sporadically affected	46	21	NA	NA
	Spill overs	53	25	NA	NA
	Rest of Uganda	38	18	NA	NA

Multidimensional Child Poverty by Subregion in 2016/17 and 2019/20

2016/17

2019/20

8% - 15% 9% - 16% 17% - 20% 21% -30% 31% - 40% 41% - 50% 51% - 60% 61% - 70% 71% - 80% 81% - 84%

Monetary Child Poverty by Subregion in 2016/17 and 2019/20

2016/17

2019/20

26% -30%	31% - 35%	36% - 45%	46% - 55%	56% - 60%	61% - 70%	71% - 75%
2% - 3%	3% - 5%	6% - 10%	11% - 12%	13% - 15%	16% - 20%	21% - 25%
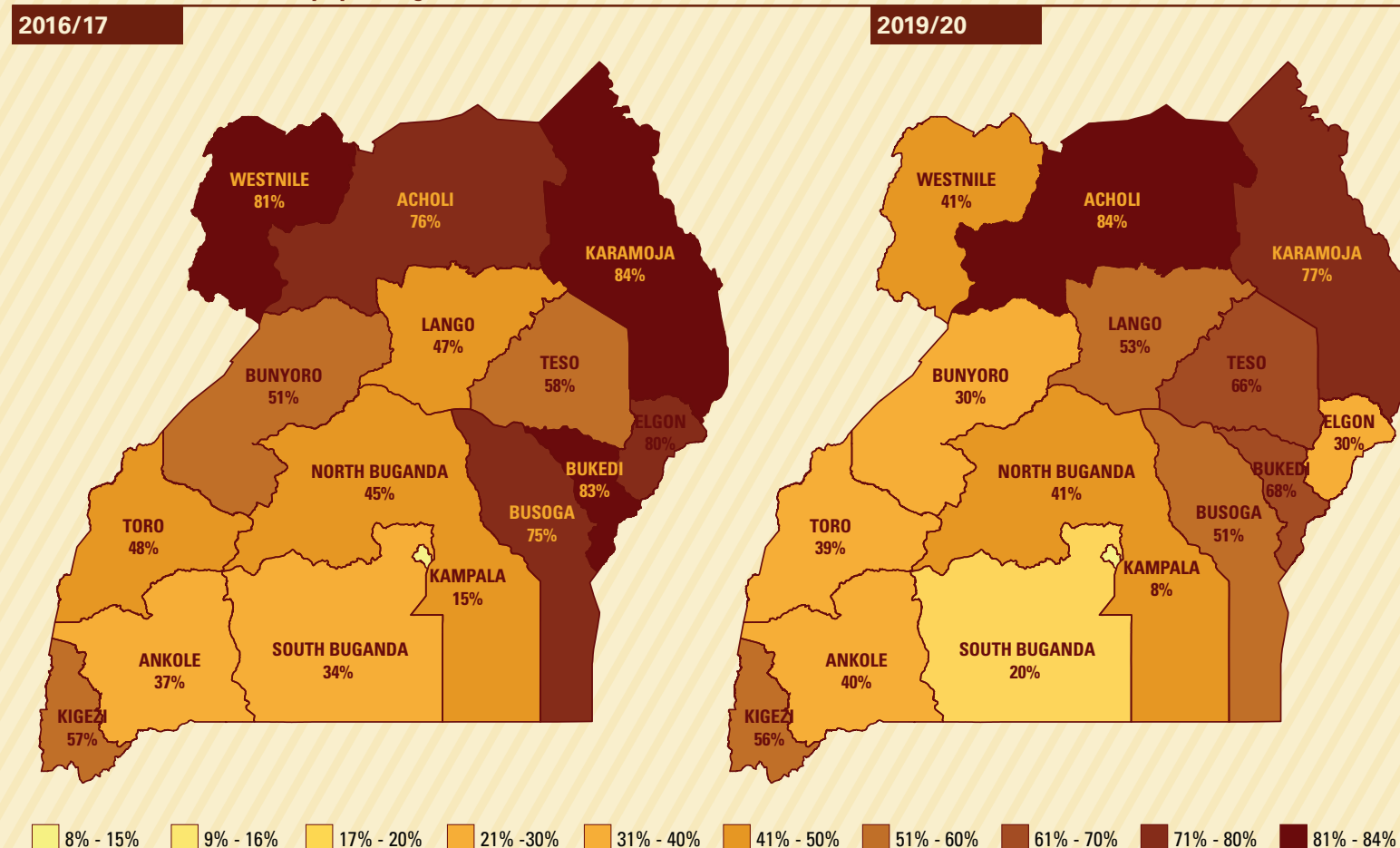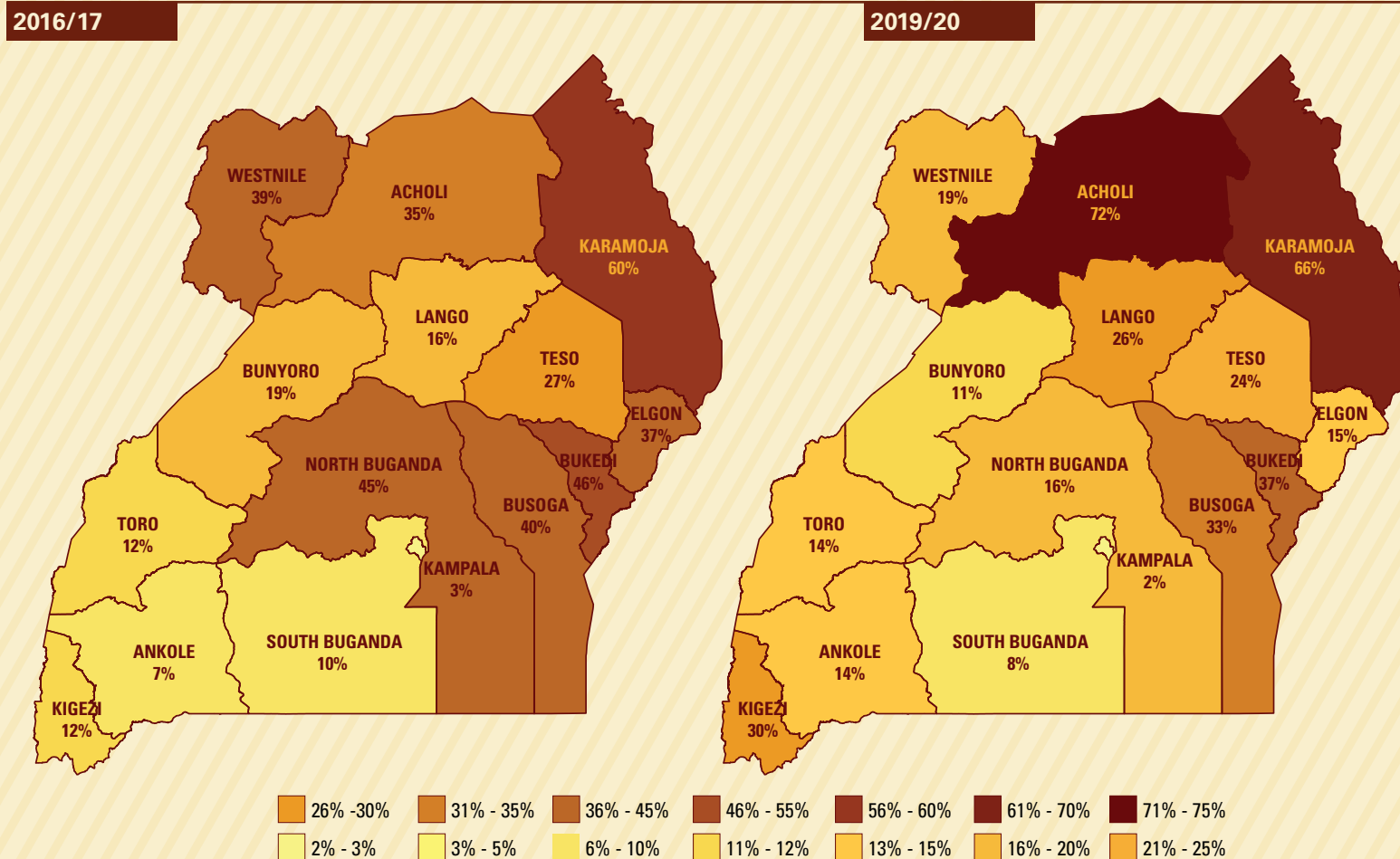
3. THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CHILD POVERTY IN UGANDA

The UNHS 2019/20 was conducted in two phases namely before the pandemic (September 2019-February 2020) and during the first year of the pandemic (July – November 2020) and thus enabled assessment of the initial impact of COVID-19 on children and their families.

UNICEF/UN08838/Ose

3.1 Impact on Food Security

OVER 4 IN 10
households reported having a restricted diet in terms of food variety.

ABOUT 20%
of households experienced episodes of hunger and running out of food. However, there was a reduction in this proportion in the next two months.

3.2 Impact Upon Income Sources

- The pandemic had economic strain in Ugandan households; in June 2020, nearly half of households reported a reduction or total loss of their wage employment and significant income losses across all different sources including crop and livestock farming and fishing.

- Monetary poverty increased almost 7 per cent, to 33 per cent during the pandemic and MD child poverty by 5 per cent, to 46 per cent.

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Using planning to alleviate child hunger and poverty to improve health and learning

Implement School Meal Programmes: Providing school meals, such as breakfast and/or lunch, can significantly enhance school attendance, educational attainment, and the health of disadvantaged children. Drawing from successful implementations in various countries, this relatively low-cost and highly effective policy measure can combat hunger and malnutrition among Ugandan children.

Improve Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Facilities in Schools: Ensuring access to adequate and safe WASH facilities in schools has been proven to enhance both the health and educational outcomes of children. By investing in initiatives such as toilets, soap provision, and hygiene education, Uganda can address health-related barriers to education and contribute to improved overall well-being among students.

Implement Area-Based Anti-Poverty Programmes: Recognizing the heightened levels of deprivation in specific subregions, particularly in Northern Uganda, targeted anti-poverty programmes tailored to these areas can complement individual-level interventions. By addressing localized challenges, such initiatives can effectively alleviate poverty and its associated impacts on children and families.

Increase Investment in Social Protection Measures: The Government of Uganda must prioritize the expansion of social protection measures aimed at assisting impoverished adults and children. By allocating greater resources to pro-poor spending, especially during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Uganda can mitigate the rapid escalation of child poverty and safeguard vulnerable populations from economic hardships.

Enhance Poverty Measurement and Monitoring: Accurate and reliable poverty measures are essential for targeting resources effectively and evaluating the impact of anti-poverty policies. To ensure the success of poverty alleviation efforts, Uganda should invest in robust measurement frameworks that facilitate evidence-based decision-making and accountability in poverty reduction initiatives.

Align Strategies with Uganda Vision 2040: Recognizing the pivotal role of poverty reduction in achieving Uganda's Vision 2040 goal of transitioning to a modern and prosperous society, concerted efforts must be made to rapidly reduce and ultimately eradicate child poverty. By prioritizing poverty eradication within the broader developmental agenda, Uganda can harness the potential of its youth population and lay the foundation for sustainable economic growth and societal advancement.

Support parents in low-income families to access employment and improve their skills, while facilitating young people's transition into the workforce.

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KEY SUMMARY REPORT

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