

NUWODU'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda (NUWODU) is an indigenous organisation that was formed in 1999 with the overall purpose of bringing together all categories of girls and women with disabilities including the physically, sensory and mentally impaired women, as their umbrella organisation. NUWODU provides a strong voice for a common cause, particularly to defend, protect and promote the rights and advocate for equal opportunities for women and girls with disabilities. NUWODU's programmes are grounded on the following: advocacy, capacity building, research and documentation, resource mobilization, gender mainstreaming, networking, partnership and economic empowerment.

NUWODU developed a Strategic Plan for the period 2010-2014. As the Plan period came to an end, it was essential to develop a new forward-looking and aspirational roadmap in order to build on the achievements so far, also taking into account the changing environment within which NUWODU is operating. At the same time, the changing operating environment and the growing stakeholders' expectations require NUWODU to redefine its role and increase its effectiveness. NUWODU also needs to generate sufficient financial resources to sustain its operating expenses and development initiatives. In this background, NUWODU commissioned the development of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019. Future Options Consulting Ltd was engaged as an external consultant to lead the process.

The major purpose of the Strategic Plan for 2015-2019 is provide strategic direction to the organization's activities over the five-year period, and also serve as the key tool both for mobilizing needed financial and other resources, as well as spearheading the necessary collaborations and partnerships in support of NUWODU's work.

The Strategic Plan 2015-2019 was developed using a consultative approach through which inputs were obtained from NUWODU's member associations and other stakeholders. Four workshops were conducted in the central, western, eastern and northern regions of Uganda and four project sites were visited to assess the performance of NUWODU's projects, and to gain inputs directly from the members, beneficiaries, staff and other stakeholders at the grassroots. Several meetings were held with members of the NUWODU Board, management, donors, peer organisations and government ministries, in order to gain their views on the organisation's performance of the last

strategic plan, as well as their expectations of the new strategic plan for 2015-2019. An organizational capacity assessment was also carried out in which the membership structure, governance, programmes, finance, human resources management, and NUWODU's ability to mobilize funds were assessed.

A contextual analysis of NUWODU's wider environment and a SWOT analysis were also carried out. The foundation factors of NUWODU's, the findings of the OCA, the lessons learnt from the implementation of the last Strategic Plan (2010-2014), and the finding of the SWOT analysis were considered in the process of developing the Strategic Plan 2015-2019.

The Strategic Plan 2015-2019 was also developed within the wider context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an international framework that strongly recognizes the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights on matters of equality of all members of the human family (article 5), and the inalienable rights of each member as the foundation for freedom, justice and peace. The CRPD primarily focuses on the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment of all human rights without discrimination, including their right to full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. It also evokes the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and particularly focusing on the rights of Girls and Women with disabilities (article 6 and 7), and others. The CRPD emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of relevant strategies of sustainable development.

Another important consideration was the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2015 that provides even a much wider context to NUWODU's overall objectives. In particular, Goal 1 of the SDG targets to end extreme poverty; Goal 2 purposes to promote economic growth, and to realize sexual and reproductive health and rights for all; Goal 3 purposes to ensure effective learning for all children and youth; Goal 4 purposes to achieve gender equality, social inclusion and human rights; and Goal 5 purposes to achieve health and wellbeing for all ages. The Uganda National Development Plan 2015/2016 (once available) also ought to be considered.

From the above process, the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 was developed with the theme *mainstreaming girls and women with disabilities in the development process*. Five strategic focal areas were identified, under which realting strategic objectives were defined. The strategic focal areas of the Strategic Plan and the objectives are summarised here below:

- (i) Gender and Women Empowerment:** Gender mainstreaming and advocacy will remain NUWODU's central approaches, through which the organization will continue to advocate for the rights of GWWDs and to further promote their livelihoods by building their leadership and entrepreneurship capacities, and in starting micro businesses. NUWODU also plans to put more emphasis on control and access to resources by women with disabilities especially land as an essential resource. This strategic focal area specifically draws from article 6 of CRPD that recognizes girls and women with disabilities to be subjects of multiple-discrimination, and thus promotes the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and freedoms. The article strongly calls on governments to ensure appropriate measures that guarantee the development and empowerment of GWWDs to allow them exercise and enjoy all human rights, including that of participation in development processes.
- (ii) Health:** NUWODU plans to promote the right to inclusive healthcare for GWWDs by state and non-state actors, thereby promoting quality health care for GWWDs mainly focusing on the areas of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. This will be achieved mainly through health education and advocacy, as well as sensitization programmes and enhancement of access to quality medical services and rehabilitation for GWWDs.
- (iii) Education:** NUWODU plans to promote the inclusion of GWWDs in formal and non-formal education in order to enhance their access to employment and participation in civic and economic processes.
- (iv) Research and Documentation:** NUWODU plans to lead research, documentation and dissemination of information in the areas of gender and disability in Uganda, particularly focusing on GWWDs issues. The acquired information is intended to be used to promote evidence-based advocacy, and to influence policy development in relation to GWWDs.
- (v) Organizational Development:** NUWODU plans to strengthen its own institutional capacity, as well as that of its members to effectively fulfill its mission and objectives, and to enable its members to support girls and women with disabilities at the grassroots.

In terms of sustainability, NUWODU plans to do the following: Develop and implement a fund development policy, establish a fundraising function in the organisational structure with a plan, strengthen its brand as a prerequisite for fundraising, and explore different fundraising opportunities and hold fundraising events.

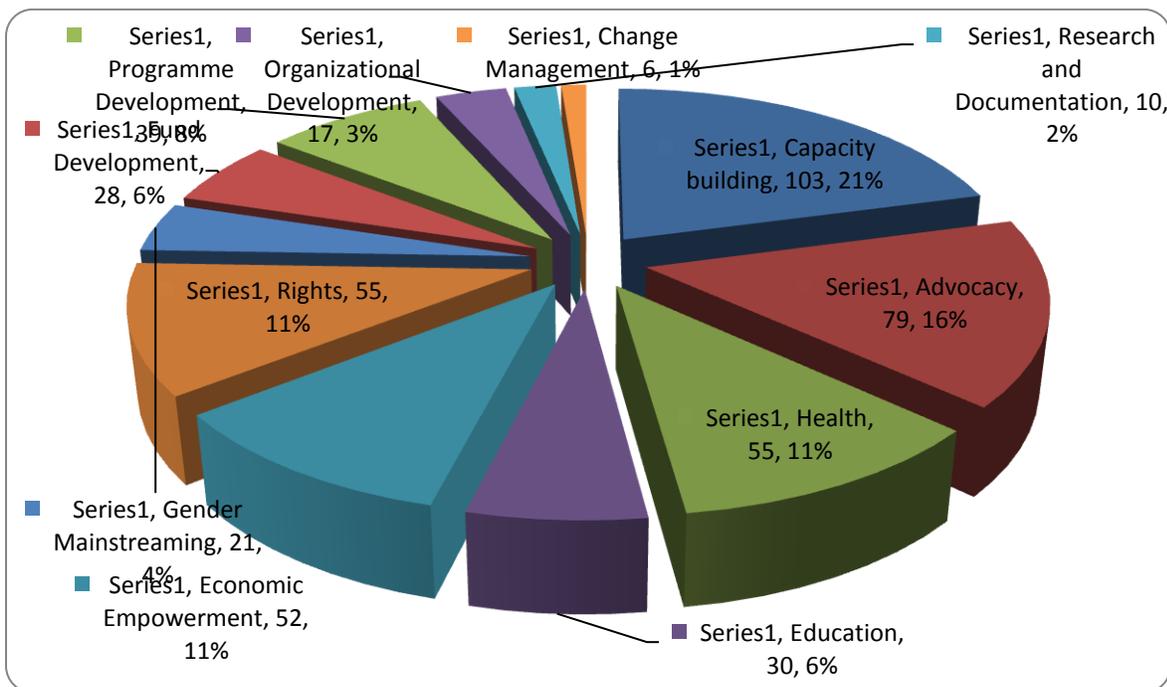
The Board of Directors, responsible to the supreme body of the General Assembly, will be take responsibility for the implementation of the new plan in conjunction with the Secretariat. The BOD will ensure that the annual plans are prepared within the framework of the Strategic Plan and meticulously implemented, and make progress reports to the General Assembly.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR 2015-2019

This chapter covers the five strategic focal areas and the underlying thematic areas that were determined, upon which strategic objectives for the period 2015-2019 were developed. The strategic focal areas and thematic areas were identified taking into account the fundamental factors, stakeholder expectations and findings of the SWOT analysis. In much the same way, the new strategic plan is built upon NUWODU’s achievements from the preceding strategic plan, also taking into account the vital lessons learnt.

From the Strategic Plan development processes a number of priorities were identified as indicated in the chart below.

Figure 1: Priority Areas of the new Strategic Plan



The above pie chart clearly reflects the programme and capacity priorities that were identified from the consultative process, which then provide strong leads that point to given strategic areas that are in principle central to NUWODU's mandate. The groupings below elaborate this as follows:

Programmes: (Overall 48%) comprising *Rights, Advocacy* and *Gender mainstreaming* that are central to NUWODU's program, including other non-core program areas of *Health, Education* and *Economic empowerment*.

Capacities: (overall 39%) Organizational development, capacity building, change management, fund development, and organizational development and program development.

It is therefore clear from the above that the following program areas stand out:

Programs: Gender, empowerment, health and education.

Organizational capacities: capacity development of the organization and its members.

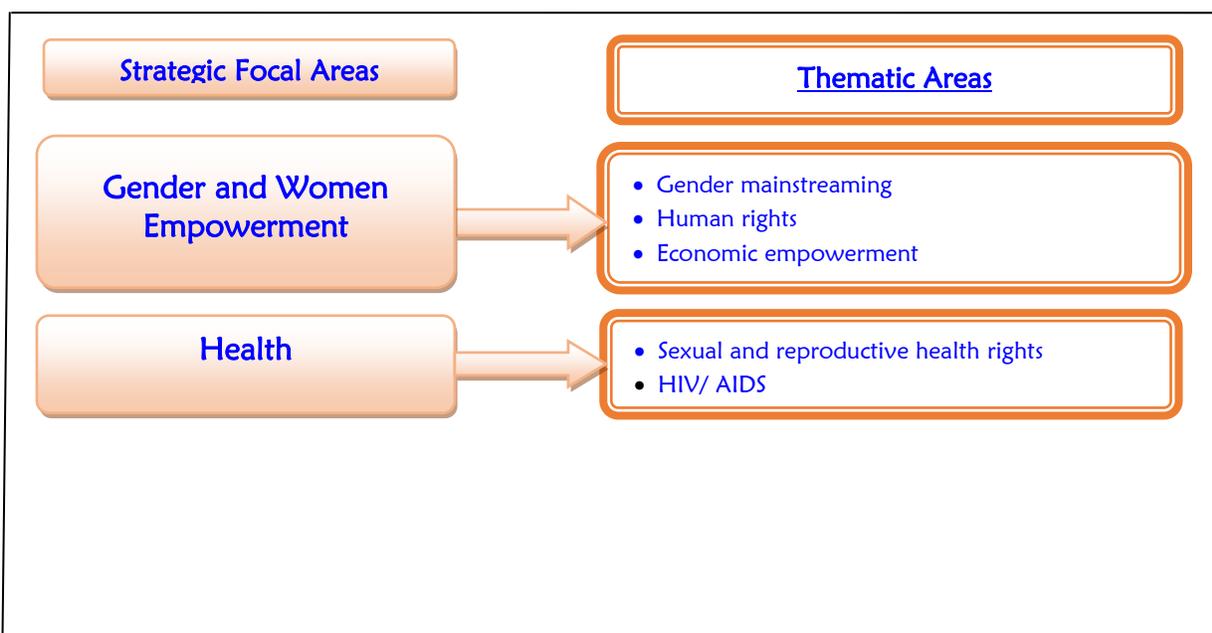
Support areas: Research.

From the above, leads to the strategic areas were formed, bridging the previous strategic plan (2010-2014) and the stakeholder inputs. The resultant strategic plan serves not only to provide direction to the organization over the next five years, but also serves as a major tool for mobilizing needed financial and other resources to support the activities under the strategy, and for establishing the necessary collaborations and partnerships to support the programs.

5.1 Strategic Focal Areas

The focal areas of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 and the respective thematic areas are as follows:

Figure 2: Strategic Focal Areas and Thematic Areas





5.2 Rationale for the Strategic Focal Areas

Below is the rationale for each focal area, mainly premised on the stakeholder consultations:

- i. **Gender and Women Empowerment** : The approach to NUWODU's programme is principally founded on advocacy, gender mainstreaming and empowerment of girls and women with disabilities also significantly premised on article 6 of the UN CRPD which recognises girls and women with disabilities to be highly susceptible to multiple-discrimination and various forms of violence. The Convention therefore advocates for the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by GWWDs, thus justifying the NUWODU's mandate not only to create a strong voice for the rights of girls and women with disabilities, but also to empower them with the knowledge and life skills that they need, including G&WWDs in humanitarian crisis situations. The themes under this focal area are therefore, bound to have a profound impact on the entire strategy.
- ii. **Health**: Stakeholder consultations revealed the dire situation of girls and women with disabilities in the area of health, particularly in areas of sexual and reproductive health, and rights owing to discrimination and stigma, inappropriate facilities at medical centres, and the absence of relevant information in the areas of sexual and reproductive health rights and services, and HIV/ AIDS among GWWDs. Accordingly, the World Health Organisation Report (2011) reveals *"that People with Disabilities are more than two-times as likely to have health care providers with skills that are inadequate to meet their needs"*. The purpose here, therefore, is to make a stronger case for the rights of GWWDs to access quality health services.

- iii. **Education:** Higher levels of illiteracy are more prevalent among girls and women with disabilities than among those without disabilities due to stigmatization. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Report (2010) argues that, “ *disability is one of the least visible but most potent factors in educational marginalization. Beyond the immediate health-related effects, physical and mental impairment carries a stigma that is often a basis for exclusion from society and school*”. This focal area is not only intended to uplift basic literacy among GWWDs, but also to enhance their admission, retention and completion of educational programs. It is intended to enhance opportunities in the world of work.
- iv. **Research and Documentation:** NUWODU has over the years developed a small but valuable research and documentation resource centre with basic research works and other informative materials on the disability sector and on girls and women with disability in general. Despite the past efforts by NUWODU, there is still a general lack of data and evidence-based research and information on disability in Uganda as a whole. In particular, very limited information is available on girls and women with disabilities in the national population census, and household survey reports, and other national documents. It is therefore, incumbent on disability organizations like NUWODU to lead research in this area. Acquisition and application of such information will inform key areas for a wide range of stakeholders.
- v. **Organizational Development:** NUWODU has institutional capacity gaps as were identified in the organizational capacity assessment, including: absence of a membership charter for directing all matters of membership; absence of key functions like Communications, Human Resource management, M&E and Fundraising; absence of a Child Protection policy and others. In order to implement the program effectively, it is essential that NUWODU builds its own internal capacity that includes the development of new structures and policies, as well as enhancing the functions of the Board of Directors, management and staff; and the capacities of its member associations.

While NUWODU principally intends to achieve its strategy of 2015-2019 largely in collaboration with its member associations, there was an overwhelming expression of lack of institutional capacity at the association level. It therefore makes a strong case for NUWODU to strive to build the capacities of its members during the same period, particularly focusing on the associations’ institutional abilities in the areas of leadership, financial management and resource mobilisation, to enable them make a strong impact on their members at the grass-root level.

It should be noted that advocacy shall remain the key, overall programme approach of NUWODU as it is also a crosscutting theme in the entire Strategic Plan 2015-2019.