Integrated Country Strategy

UGANDA

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

After two decades of violent internal conflict, Uganda has experienced 36 years of relative stability and growth, fostered initially by political reforms and sound macroeconomic policies, along with a focus on peace and security, which turned Uganda into a key U.S. security partner and a reliable player in the stability and integration of eastern and central Africa. Uganda continues to contribute the largest and most effective national contingent – the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) – to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), playing a critical role in countering al-Shabaab. Uganda wields considerable influence over the government of South Sudan to effect constitutional reform, election planning, and security sector integration. The UPDF is also on the ground in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in coordination with DRC counterparts to pursue elements of the U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization ISIS-DRC. Uganda has begun to mend fences with Rwanda allowing some cross-border trade to resume after a three-year cessation. Despite Uganda's support for stability abroad, its domestic stability faces a number of challenges, including the closing of democratic space, stagnation of economic growth, transitioning energy use to a lower carbon footprint, and providing better education and health systems for its burgeoning and youthful population.

Over the next five years, we expect the continued suppression of political competition and absence of transparent governance to reduce opportunities for much-needed political reform. The government continues to rely to an ever-greater extent on force rather than discourse to stifle opposition. The economy is emerging from almost two years of COVID-19 related restrictions, the effects of which include countless business closures, a sharp increase in unemployment and poverty, and massive losses in income. COVID-19 associated income losses are likely to increase the number of Ugandans living below the poverty line by 7.5% (about 3.1 million people). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Uganda realized GDP growth averaging 5.3% from FY2013/2014 to 2018/2019. Due to the economic impact of COVID-19 restrictions, Uganda's economy grew by just 3.3% in FY2020/2021. The two-year school closure has resulted in increased teenage pregnancies and girls abandoning their formal education, a rising

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incidence of child labor, and an education system already suffering from limited resources challenged by the loss of teachers who departed the profession for other opportunities. The government is concerned that the West's focus on climate change could lead to enforced emissions reductions that stifle Uganda's economic growth. The limited capacity of Uganda's health sector will continue to increase its vulnerability to emerging disease threats.

President Yoweri Museveni and the Ugandan government have continued to restrict democratic space for political and civic discourse. The changing of the constitution to remove presidential term and age limits, in 2005 and 2017 respectively, has enabled President Museveni to continue running for re-election, recently winning the 2021 election with 58.6% of the vote - his lowest margin in more than a decade - following an election marred by widespread fraud, voting irregularities, and state security intimidation and violence. Six months after the 2021 elections, the government suspended 54 non-governmental organizations, specifically those focused on governance and human rights, accusing them of foreign-sponsored interference in Uganda's internal politics, and proposed measures to exercise control of donor funding for democracy and human rights. These actions erode the independence of government institutions and civil society and call into question the government's commitment to rule of law and democratic governance, as well as the protection of basic liberties.

Uganda's previous double-digit economic growth had stagnated even before the government locked down large parts of the economy and the entire education system for most of 2020 and 2021 as a COVID countermeasure; meanwhile, at 3.3%, Uganda's population growth rate remains one of the highest in the world. Promoting mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment is a key USG goal, with FY 2019/2020 U.S.-Uganda bilateral trade totaling approximately $194.4 million, including $141.2 million in U.S. exports to Uganda and $53.2 million in Ugandan exports to the United States. Uganda's exports under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) contribute only about $1-2 million annually toward that total. U.S. Mission Uganda builds and sustains Uganda's capacity to utilize programs such as Prosper Africa and AGOA to boost economic competitiveness, strengthen supply-chain resilience, create jobs, and drive innovation. Uganda's emerging oil sector is an important opportunity to enhance

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economic growth. With an estimated 1.4 billion barrels of recoverable oil, this sector is expected to boost the economy once first oil begins flowing in 2025. A U.S.-led consortium won the right to develop a planned $3.5 billion oil refinery, and a second U.S.-China consortium received a $2 billion award to develop 31 well beds and a central processing facility. Although the government of Uganda has expressed some hesitancy to join the international community to tackle the climate crisis, successful completion of the oil project could help to reduce domestic carbon emissions as Ugandan households shift from charcoal to more efficient gas-based products for heating and cooking; and a shift from imported to domestically refined oil products for use in industries and transportation will significantly lower carbon emissions in the near to medium term and help to battle deforestation, before alternative renewable energy sources become more viable for use here.

Uganda also sits on virtually unexploited reserves of base metals used in batteries and electrical circuitry such as copper and nickel, and other reserves such as cobalt, lithium, and rare earth minerals. U.S. assistance in Uganda's health sector is the most popular element of the bilateral relationship and benefits the United States by strengthening the ability of local health systems to eradicate emerging zoonotic disease threats and build capacity and resiliency in Uganda's health sector to prevent, detect, and respond to current and future disease threats, including COVID-19, HIV, malaria, TB, and other infectious diseases to accelerate reductions in preventable deaths.

As articulated in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, we will look to partner with Uganda to strengthen democratic institutions, advance peace and security, promote prosperity, and enhance health systems. Our programming and diplomatic engagement aims to make Uganda's public institutions, including security services, stronger, inclusive, and accountable; empower Ugandans to advocate for fundamental human rights including through ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly for marginalized populations; increase collaboration to identify and respond to ongoing transnational threats posed by violent extremism and border insecurity; develop strong health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to current and future health security threats; enhance resilience to food insecurity and climate change; and promote vibrant post-pandemic economic growth open to U.S. investment. The Mission

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will continue to provide assistance required to ensure that Uganda can continue to play a positive, stabilizing role in the region. Our Consular services support these activities, promoting legitimate travel to the United States, preventing fraud and crime, and responding to the needs of U.S. citizens in Uganda. The Mission will achieve this strategy by incorporating the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion to enhance its human resources; aligning new infrastructure and technology to address space limitations and upgrade technology platforms; and cultivating an environment that boosts morale and empowers employees and family members to advance U.S. interests in Uganda.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Promote an accountable multi-party democracy with effective governance, human rights, and rule of law to build strong democratic institutions.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Uganda's public institutions, including security services, became stronger and more inclusive, accountable, and transparent to better address the needs and demands of the people of Uganda. (USAID CDCS Development Objective (DO) 3)
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Individual Ugandans, civil society representatives, and the media were more empowered to advocate for equal justice, resulting in checks on executive power, reduced corruption, better delivery of public services, and greater respect for fundamental human rights to include diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly of marginalized populations. (USAID CDCS DO 3)
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Emerging youth leaders across Uganda became increasingly aware of and actively participated in U.S. Government initiatives, and more actively demonstrated support for democracy and governance priorities in Uganda.

Mission Goal 2: Advance peace and security and mitigate post-pandemic challenges through partnerships to address challenges in security, stability, health, and climate.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Increased U.S.-Uganda collaboration to identify and respond to ongoing transnational threats posed by violent extremism, organized crime, and border insecurity.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Strong health systems were developed to prevent, detect, and respond to current and future health security threats, and to accelerate reductions in preventable deaths. (USAID CDCS DO 1)
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Communities and households in key geographical areas were resilient to food insecurity, climatic and other shocks and stressors. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

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- **Mission Objective 2.4:** Ugandan decisionmakers and community leaders increasingly valued the impact of U.S. assistance and advocated for closer U.S.-Uganda relations.
- **Mission Objective 2.5:** Implemented a targeted consular analytic strategy to improve visa adjudications and deter fraud locally, thereby strengthening U.S. security.

Mission Goal 3: Mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment enables sustainable economic and employment growth, inclusive innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Ugandan youth were equipped with the education and skills necessary to participate in the economy and value innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercial transparency. (USAID CDCS DO 2)
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Increased trade and private sector investment achieved Uganda's development objectives. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

Management Objective 1: Hired, developed, empowered, and supported the Mission workforce by incorporating the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, to advance U.S. foreign policy goals in Uganda.

Management Objective 2: Aligned existing and new infrastructure/facilities to support Mission goals and objectives more effectively.

Management Objective 3: Modernized information technology resources and tools to expand data availability and accessibility, increase collaboration, and improve service delivery.

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3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Promote an accountable multi-party democracy with effective governance, human rights, and rule of law to build strong democratic institutions.

Description |Uganda adopted a multiparty system in 2005 but the ruling government never fully embraced multiparty politics or allowed for meaningful political alternatives. When Uganda has a government and institutions that embrace competitive political processes, empowers civil society, counters authoritarian influence and digital repression, protects human rights against discrimination, inequity, and marginalization, counters violent extremism, and strengthens the rule of law, it will improve its ability to maintain domestic and regional stability while revitalizing its partnership with the United States. Mission Uganda will work with the Government of Uganda (GoU), civil society organizations, and other actors to develop accountable and inclusive institutions, including in the security and justice sectors, support democratic political party development, improve election administration and oversight, promote a vibrant and free press, encourage active citizen participation in democratic life, and protect internet freedom and accessibility. Through programs targeting key Ugandan institutions, including the military and police, the Mission will increase Uganda's adherence to democratic principles.

Objective 1.1 | Uganda's public institutions, including security services, strengthened and more inclusive, accountable, and transparent to better address the needs and demands of the people of Uganda. (USAID CDCS Development Objective (DO) 3)

- **Justification |** The GoU's ability to meet the needs of the people of Uganda is dependent on establishing accountable, inclusive processes. The 2021 elections highlighted both broad and deep challenges, falling well short of the most fundamental standards of free and fair elections. Freedom of expression and diversity of political thought is challenged by an increasingly authoritarian regime. Despite select efforts at reform, corruption remains persistent, which undermines service delivery and public trust. Challenges persist in equal access to public services, including access to healthcare and education, which will continue to widen as the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are felt on social services. Strong mechanisms to voice grievances, monitor progress, and hold institutions accountable are needed to ensure that Uganda remains peaceful. The pandemic has widened economic disparities and pushed people into poverty, which could lead to unrest, exacerbated by rapidly shrinking political space and an upcoming election in 2026. To address these shortcomings, Mission activities will include strengthening governance and accountability and improving citizens engagement and participation in political processes.
- **Linkages |** Mission Uganda's Objective 1.1 combines the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (INSSG) and the Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) Goal 3: Strengthen democratic institutions, uphold universal values, and promote human dignity.
- **Risks |** The major risks associated with not achieving this objective include the suppression of political competition and absence of transparent governance, use of excessive force and violence by Uganda's security services against political dissent, further shrinking of democratic space, reduction of public trust in government, and radicalization of underserved and marginalized communities.

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Objective 1.2 | Individual Ugandans, civil society representatives, and the media empowered to advocate for equal justice, resulting in checks on executive power, reduced corruption, better delivery of public services, and greater respect for fundamental human rights to include diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly of marginalized populations.

- **Justification |** The individual's ability to hold the Government of Uganda accountable and to publicly advocate for the needs of the population is critical to improve both human development and democratic principles. Strengthened democratic institutions and processes, in parallel with improved avenues for individual citizens and groups to voice concerns, will lead to a better relationship between the government and the people of Uganda. Recently, the Government of Uganda has closed civic space, causing a once flourishing civil society to retract and many to operate in fear of raids and closure. This closing space highlights a growing concern that political leadership at the top is becoming less democratic and less inclusive in the run up to the 2026 presidential elections, following the widely criticized 2021 elections. Individuals, civil society, and the media must be able to freely voice their development needs to local and national leaders, as well as hold these same leaders accountable for progress made. Toward this end, the Mission will execute legal aid initiatives to promote access to justice, undertake targeted civil society-strengthening activities, support press training and media professionalization, and provide emerging Ugandan youth leaders training that promotes civic engagement, enhances understanding of democratic principles, and gives them skills necessary to serve as community leaders and advocates for democratic values.

- **Linkages |** Mission Uganda's Objective 1.2 links well with the Department of State and USAID JSP's Strategic Objective 3.1: Promote good governance and defend strong, accountable, and resilient democracies that deliver for their citizens.

- **Risks |** Risks to not achieving this objective include a further breakdown of democracy with heightened and more repressive security measures and scrutiny of political opponents, the media, and civil society groups that erode democratic governance and lead to growing political discontent.

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Objective 1.3 | Emerging youth leaders across Uganda increasingly aware of and actively participated in U.S. Government initiatives, and more actively demonstrated support for democracy and governance priorities in Uganda.

- **Justification |** Over 77% of Ugandans are under the age of 30, and the youth population is increasing by over a million each year. Uganda's growing youth population has the potential to change the dynamics in the country through their political engagement, entrepreneurship, and activism. In order to secure the future of the U.S.-Uganda relationship, the U.S. Mission aims to build the capacity of emerging leaders who look to the United States as a positive example of democratic governance and who feel empowered to participate in their communities. Connecting Ugandan emerging leaders to the United States and the American people will enable the Mission to more effectively demonstrate the value of strong democratic institutions and a vibrant civil society, and in turn build the network of leaders advocating for Uganda's participation in a rules-based international order grounded in democratic principles.

- **Linkages |** Mission Objective 1.3 supports the National Security Strategy and African Affairs Bureau's Joint Regional Strategy goals to protect and promote democratic values and leadership. As noted in the JRS 3.2, we will strive to empower all Africans, with particular emphasis on engaging and empowering women and youth to constructively shape and participate in their social, political, and economic environments.

- **Risks |** There is significant competition between economic and political models in Uganda, and U.S. competitors exert increasing influence on Ugandan youth. As Ugandan youth become more active in political processes, it will be critical they are aware of and receptive to U.S. values and priorities. If we do not work to influence the political values of Ugandan youth, our global adversaries will.

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Mission Goal 2 | Advance peace and security and mitigate post-pandemic challenges through partnerships to address challenges in security, stability, health, and climate.

Description | Mission Uganda will work to advance peace and security by strengthening the underlying factors that impede advancement towards this objective. This includes working with the GoU, other development partners, civil society, and individuals to identify and address potential causes of instability as well as to strengthen systems to better prepare Uganda for current and future pandemics. One major source of instability is the eastern DRC-based but Ugandan-led terrorist group ISIS-DRC (a.k.a. Allied Democratic Forces), which conducted four bombings in Uganda in October and November 2021 that left six dead. In response, the UPDF, in partnership with the DRC military (FARDC), deployed to eastern DRC to conduct military operations against the group. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, challenges within Uganda's health system need to be addressed not just to mitigate current bottlenecks but also with an eye toward future disease outbreaks. This will include, but not be limited to, supply chain management, improving logistics and data collection and reporting, strengthening the role of primary health centers as well as the ability of tertiary referral hospitals to respond quickly and effectively, and solidifying partnerships with the GoU and other relevant actors to be able to coordinate quickly during crises. Climate change-related insecurity will also be a major priority through programming aimed at addressing increased household and community resilience. A more stable, secure, healthy, and resilient Uganda will be better able to address its own development needs and will be better positioned to partner with the United States to advance its own security interests and promote increased U.S. security against foreign threats.

Objective 2.1 | Increased U.S.-Uganda collaboration to identify and respond to ongoing transnational threats posed by violent extremism, organized crime, and border insecurity.

- **Justification |** A more democratic Government of Uganda will be better able to partner with the United States on preventing and countering violent extremism at home and improving regional security and countering transnational threats. Cooperation with

the UPDF and the Uganda Police Force on counterterrorism (CT) efforts is excellent. Uganda remains the largest troop contributing country to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) countering the al-Shabaab threat. The UPDF also recently deployed to eastern DRC to confront ISIS-DRC, the GoU's greatest CT threat, which claimed responsibility for four recent bombings that killed six persons in Uganda. The main drivers of radicalization and violent extremism in Uganda and throughout the region are lack of trust in government and the security forces, and marginalization of critical populations. In addition to countering terrorism, the Mission will also assist the GoU to bolster its resources to counter terrorist financing and money laundering. The GoU's capability to prevent the flow of money and resources to terrorist organizations such as ISIS-DRC is inadequate, given Uganda's porous borders, a weak regulatory structure, and lack of interagency coordination. Mission Uganda will achieve this objective by implementing programs that include increasing the capacity of security forces to participate in peacekeeping operations and prevent and respond to terrorist attacks; and strengthening the capabilities of GoU officials and other stakeholders to recognize, investigate, and take action against AML/CFT activities.

- **Linkages |** Objective 2.1 aligns with the INSSG's observation that terrorism and violent extremism remain significant threats to the United States; and links to the State/USAID JSP's Strategic Objective 1.4, which includes building the core capacities of key partners to prevent, mitigate, and respond to conflict and insecurity; countering violent extremism; and effective civil-military cooperation.

- **Risks |** Not achieving this objective could lead to the potential strengthening of violent extremism across the region by reducing the ability of Ugandan security forces and other stakeholders to address shared security challenges to deter insurgents and terrorists, minimize the impact of transnational organized crime, and enable local civilian leaders to exert authority over their forces in pursuit of joint security interests.

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Objective 2.2 | Strong health systems supported to prevent, detect, and respond to current and future health security threats, and to accelerate reductions in preventable deaths. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

- **Justification |** Uganda's health conditions are among the poorest in the world. Even after years of donor investments, the country's health system remains weak. Diseases such as HIV; malaria; diarrhea; respiratory infections including TB and COVID-19; and vaccine-preventable childhood diseases constitute 50% of illnesses in the country. In addition, the country is prone to emerging and epidemic diseases such as Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and Marburg due to its proximity to the equatorial rainforest and the vast, porous borders it shares with neighboring countries. Incidence of non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and cancer is also rising, adding further strain to the health system. With a very young and rapidly urbanizing population and a high fertility rate, Uganda's underinvestment in the health sector has resulted in inadequate health infrastructure in the public sector, high out-of-pocket expenses, and extensive dependence on donor resources. The national lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic further negatively impacted the health of the people of Uganda, especially among certain underserved populations such as people living with HIV, LGBTQI+ persons, and adolescent girls and young women. Mission Kampala manages health programs that seek to mitigate multiple threats impacting U.S. and Ugandan interests. The majority of assistance and support to Uganda has resulting benefits for health and stability in an otherwise tumultuous region. Mission Kampala will achieve objective 2.2 through supporting bilateral training engagements to build capacity in critical areas of disease response and control; strengthening the capacity of Ugandan institutions to prevent, detect, and respond to disease threats; build on long-standing investments and programs in a cross-cutting way in areas of laboratory strengthening, strategic information, health workforce, emergency operations, and public health research. Mission Kampala will support new investments and collaboration in the areas of border health, vaccine introduction, infection prevention and control, data analytics, and One Health. An emphasis on civil society and

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stakeholder engagement will seek to maximize inclusion of underserved populations such as people living with HIV, LGBTQI+ persons, and adolescent girls and young women in health programs. U.S. assistance to Uganda, as a GHSA Intensive Support Partner Country, will continue to provide technical assistance to improve the health system (including health financing and human resource development) at the national, district, and community levels to prevent and respond to future threats and improve health outcomes. This support will also include guidance to the GOU to create, fund, and operationalize a dedicated mechanism for health emergencies.

- **Linkages |** Mission Uganda's Objective 2.2 is designed to improve the health of a rapidly growing population, which is critical to the Joint Regional Strategy goals, specifically Goal 4, building Africa's resilience to meet post-pandemic challenges. Objective 2.2 also aligns with the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance of joining with the international community to combat the continuing threat posed by COVID-19 and other infectious diseases with pandemic potential. Further, objective 2.2 addresses the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality (NGS) by working to eliminate gender-based violence. Finally, it supports Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan, specifically strategic objective 1.1, to strengthen global health security, combat infectious disease threats, and address priority global health challenges through bilateral engagement and within multilateral fora.

- **Risks |** A cessation of U.S. health assistance could lead to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Ugandans. Risks associated with not achieving this Mission Objective include health threats that arise in Uganda that can endanger the security and safety of the United States, as infectious diseases can easily cross borders in our interconnected world.

Objective 2.3 | Communities and households in key geographical areas supported to be more resilient to food insecurity, climatic and other shocks and stressors, and economic growth improved. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

- **Justification |** Communities' and households' ability to mitigate and respond to shocks and stressors ultimately improves their ability to lift themselves out of poverty and to contribute to Uganda's economic growth. As climate change-related shocks and stresses continue to increase in frequency and size, it is critical that communities and households have improved capacity to adapt to changes in their environment. This includes their ability to produce food and to maintain economic livelihoods activities, even during sudden or longstanding environmental changes. Increased frequency of water-related challenges such as droughts and floods, changes to more traditional harvesting periods, and more erratic weather patterns threaten the ability of the people of Uganda to increase their household savings and to make economic gains. Improving resilience also helps to address underlying causes of conflict, such as competition over natural resources. U.S. assistance will build market systems and provide inputs and assistance at the household and community level to build resilience.

- **Linkages |**Mission Uganda's Objective 2.3 addresses USAID's emphasis on climate change as a key priority. It also promotes U.S. national interests by quelling sources of conflict that can spur larger unrest. Inability to address and respond to shocks and stresses can also increase insecurity and support growth of disenfranchised groups, which are a threat to the Government of Uganda and the region, and also to the United States as violent extremists can prey on vulnerable households for targets and recruitment. This directly relates to USAID/State's Joint Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 2.2 that calls for 'Inclusive and Sustainable Growth' including that 'the United States must mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation, and work to reverse environmental degradation such as deforestation, pollution, topsoil depletion, and over extraction.

- **Risks |**The major risks if this objective is not achieved include deepening poverty

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and food insecurity for the Ugandan population in the face of the increasing frequency of climate-related events that can compound household and communities' ability to cope, an increased risk of conflict between groups – including displaced persons and refugees – competing for scarce resources, and an increased risk of recruitment by violent extremist organizations of members of the population.

Objective 2.4 | Ugandan decision makers and community leaders increasingly valued the impact of U.S. assistance and advocated for closer U.S.-Uganda relations.

- **Justification |**The United States invests nearly one billion dollars annually in Ugandan communities to promote economic growth and employability, to improve health and education, to strengthen democratic values, and to enhance strengthen security. Yet many Ugandan decision makers and community leaders are not aware of the depth and breadth of U.S. assistance, nor of the positive impact U.S. assistance has on millions of Ugandans lives. Additionally, there are voices in Uganda actively seeking to undermine the role of the United States in Uganda by misrepresenting the nature and intent of U.S. assistance programs. Increasing awareness of the impact of U.S. assistance among these key audiences can spur these influencers to advocate for closer U.S.-Ugandan relations, to share accurate information about U.S assistance, and in turn make Ugandan people more receptive to values of transparency, accountability, civic engagement, and community ownership of development that support both Uganda's development and U.S. policy priorities. The Mission will increase awareness of the impact of the U.S. government's presence in Uganda through targeted media outreach and tours for local journalists, social media communication campaigns, print publications, and influencer engagements, as well as through media content partnerships to disseminate messaging on U.S. assistance programs in Uganda.
- **Linkages |** The Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, pg. 11 "to build partnerships in Africa, investing in civil society and strengthening long-standing political, economic, and cultural connections."

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- **Risks |**There is significant competition between economic development models in Uganda. The U.S. approach focuses on strengthening Ugandan civil society, institutions, and human capacity so Ugandans are healthy and have the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to thrive. Should Uganda abandon this shared model of development, which has underpinned the bilateral assistance relationship for the past three decades, there is risk that Uganda will fail to meet its development goals and be more reliant on countries whose approach to assistance increases debt trap risk and corruption while undermining good governance.

Objective 2.5 | By the end of 2024, the U.S. Mission to Uganda has implemented a targeted consular analytic strategy to improve visa adjudications and deter fraud locally, thereby strengthening U.S. security.

- **Justification |** Consular work plays a vital role in the national security and foreign policy of the United States and combatting fraud in both visa and passport adjudications strengthens U.S. border security while facilitating travel. Ensuring that only those who are eligible for U.S. passports and visas receive them is vital to border security. High overstay rates and asylum claims among Ugandan nonimmigrant visitors to the United States, and fraud and weak systems of accountability in international adoptions, necessitate strengthening local capacity and improving adjudications.
- **Linkages |** CA Functional Bureau Strategy Goal 2 ("Strengthen U.S. border security while facilitating legitimate travel"); Joint Regional Strategy Goal 2 ("Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests") and Goal 3 ("Strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance").
- **Risks |** The risk of not achieving this objective is increasingly sophisticated fraud trends that are difficult to detect, and which would contribute to erosion of U.S. border security. Lack of integrity in the intercountry adoption process risks failing to safeguard vulnerable children, with consequent deleterious effects on the image of the United States in Uganda.

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Mission Goal 3 | Mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, and investment strengthened to enable sustainable economic and employment growth, inclusive innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness.

Description | Mission Uganda's Goal 3 is designed to support the people of Uganda to pull themselves out of poverty and to build Uganda's international and regional competitiveness. Uganda's ability to achieve equitable economic growth will better position it to transition to a more prosperous country and will also help Uganda to become a more self-reliant nation, thus ending the need for foreign assistance altogether. Uganda was on an upward trajectory of economic growth before the COVID-19 pandemic, with increases in annual GDP growth from 2017-2019. But the pandemic and the Government of Uganda's strict lockdown measures have resulted in a drop in gross domestic product recorded since 2020. A focus on growth and employment is critical to help the country rebound and to support the people of Uganda to regain lost assets and competitiveness.

Objective 3.1 | Ugandan youth equipped with the education and skills necessary to participate in the economy and valued innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercial transparency. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

- **Justification |** Increased education among Ugandan youth will support them long-term to better participate in the economy by improving their skill sets and ability to drive innovation and entrepreneurial endeavors. Educational programming will also include trainings that will focus on market-driven labor demands so that youth are prepared for what employers are seeking, while also training an eye toward global demand, such as gaining skills in information and communication technology. This will ultimately support Uganda to become better placed globally in terms of trade and innovation and it will grow Uganda's economy by supporting a labor force with more technical skills that can compete globally. This supports U.S. national interests in several ways. First, it strengthens Uganda as a trade partner by supporting a better skilled populace that is able to partner with and purchase from U.S. commercial interests.

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Educating youth can also be a deterrent against violent extremism, as disenfranchised and out-of-school youth are often more likely to be recruited into terrorist sects or to participate in homegrown conflict. Mission activities will address this goal through programs that enhance early grade reading outcomes--thereby improving future educational outcomes; strengthen community engagement in managing schools; provide Ugandan youth, including from disadvantaged and marginalized populations, the skills needed to succeed in the job market and in life; and enhance awareness of the role of a rules-based market economy in promoting economic growth in Uganda.

- **Linkages |**Objective 3.1 aligns with USAID and State Department goals to promote peace and prosperity. These are achieved through enabling youth to positively channel their potential into capacity building and to support youth to participate in the economy. Uganda is a very young country in terms of demographics so catering to youth needs is critical to ensure that the needs of this rapidly growing population are met. This will also help to stabilize potential conflict among youth by supporting them to be more self-sufficient and providing them with skills that will enable them to prosper economically. This directly aligns with USAID/State's JSP Goal 2 to 'Promote global prosperity and shape an international environment where the United States can thrive.' It also directly relates to Strategic Objective 2.1 (Global Governance), Strategic Objective 2.2 (Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth), and Strategic Objective 2.4 (Strengthen Resilience).

- **Risks |** Potential risks if this objective is not met include an inability by Uganda to supply the educated and trained populace necessary to staff skilled positions, creating a permanent competitive disadvantage that hinders Uganda's economic growth. This can cause frustration amongst youth and lead to potential conflict.

Objective 3.2 | Trade and private sector investment increased because of Uganda's development objectives. (USAID CDCS DO 2)

- **Justification |** The private sector creates the vast majority of jobs within Uganda and globally. Connecting the private sector to opportunities to advance Uganda's development objectives, including increased economic growth, better access to innovative services, and improved ICT, is critical to supporting Uganda to identify and meet its population's needs. Trade is also a key aspect to grow Uganda's economy so that it has the means to become more self-reliant and less dependent on foreign aid. This supports U.S. national interests by improving Uganda's ability to be a strong U.S. trade partner, and also by strengthening its ability to conduct trade regionally and globally.

- **Linkages |** Objective 3.2 aligns well with USAID's private sector engagement policy and the U.S. Department of State's Private Sector Engagement and Partnerships Fund initiatives. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Uganda's economic growth has slowed, and new, underutilized partners are needed to help in its recovery. An emphasis on trade and private sector investments will support Uganda to look for non-governmental partners that can bring innovation to service delivery to meet its development needs. This also aligns with USAID/State's Joint Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 2.1 (Economic Governance), which states 'Revitalizing global economic governance is essential to accelerating economic growth, expanding middle class jobs, and raising standards of living worldwide. America's economic strength will also be enhanced through strengthening partnerships and alliances, expanding U.S. trade and investment opportunities, and restoring U.S. leadership in international organizations, as well as in bilateral arrangements and regional bodies.

- **Risks |** If this objective is not achieved, inability to harness the private sector will mean missed opportunities to improve goods and services through local initiatives and the inability of the Government of Uganda to shift to meeting its own development needs without the assistance of the Mission Uganda.

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4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Hired, developed, empowered, and supported the Mission workforce by incorporating the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, to advance U.S. foreign policy goals in Uganda.

- **Justification |** Promote and implement workplace flexibilities to include core and situational telework policies and flexible work schedules. Support staff wellness through post wellness initiatives. Ensure DE&I principles are well-integrated into USDH and LE Staff recruitment and orientation programs and maximize training and development plans and opportunities to ensure staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to accomplish the Mission's U.S. foreign policy goals. While the Mission has a relatively competitive compensation and benefits package and recruitment has generally been robust, expanding workplace flexibilities and wellness support programs, advocating EEO principles in recruitment and in the workplace, and promoting staff development and equal access to training opportunities will enhance the Mission's ability to recruit a more diverse and well-qualified workforce and incentivize staff retention.
- **Linkages |** Management Objective 1 aligns with the State Department and USAID Joint Strategic Goal 4.0 on workforce development. A comprehensive compensation package that includes workplace flexibilities, wellness programs, excellent health benefits, generous leave allowances, and a company culture that embraces and advocates diversity and inclusion will ensure we can meet the Mission's goal to recruit and retain a workforce equipped to achieve its foreign policy goals.
- **Risks |** If we cannot recruit and retain a well-qualified workforce, we run the risk of not being able to support the Mission's operational platform and foreign policy objectives. If the Mission cannot remain competitive in the marketplace and fails to adopt programs that support and empower our workforce, we risk losing employees to

Approved: May 12, 2022

organizations with more competitive compensation packages and which have a more attractive and diverse organizational culture.

Management Objective 2: Align existing and new infrastructure/facilities to support Mission goals and objectives more effectively.

- **Justification |** Management continues to wrestle with storage issues both unclassified and classified. The current warehouse has been the subject of two OIG reports and there is an OBO sanctioned path forward on finding a new one. The Chancery grounds are dotted with containers (in contravention of OBO's guidance) to accommodate the current and growing need for classified storage space. The New Office Annex (NOX) and Support Annex Project (SPX) are expected to conclude this year and will relieve some overcrowding in the Chancery, but those projects fail to address a critical expansion of the Classified Access Area, which can only be addressed through a separate follow-on project and does not address at all the warehouse needs. Post will continue advocating with OBO for a more substantive long-term solution to meet all needs facing the Mission.
- **Linkages |** Management Objective 2 aligns with the State Department and USAID Joint Strategic Goal 4.0 on workforce development. The NOX, SPX, warehouse relocation, and CAA build all support a future state of the Embassy that achieves collocation and SECCA requirements while providing a compound space that appropriately serves the Mission community. Additionally, office and warehouse location is a factor in evaluating residential housing.
- **Risks |** Each element is an independent project and assumed timelines may slip, causing scheduling issues for staff and customers. If all new spaces are not constructed or moves to new locations are not completed, it will negatively impact Post's ability to efficiently meet diplomatic goals by limiting staff and restricting program initiatives.

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Management Objective 3: Modernize information technology resources and tools to expand data availability and accessibility, increase collaboration, and improve service delivery.

- **Justification |** Mission Kampala understands the importance of state-of-the-art information technology, its impact on day-to-day operations, and its role in enabling the Mission to efficiently and effectively perform essential tasks to achieve ICS goals. Toward this end, we will continue to aggressively pursue knowledge management improvements that streamline our organization and processes, allow for data-driven analysis to support decision-making, and provide more flexible and expansive information sharing and message delivery.

- **Linkages |** Management Objective 3 aligns with the State Department and USAID Joint Strategic Goal 4.0 on workforce development. The NOX, SPX, warehouse relocation, and CAA build, all support a "future state" of the Embassy that achieves collocation and SECCA requirements while providing a compound that implements federal IT requirements outlined in the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) and that of the Department's CIO to share network infrastructure and unify telecommunication spaces.

- **Risks |** Risks associated with not achieving this objective include lack of access to data and poorly informed decision-making, difficulties collaborating across agencies, and impaired service delivery, all of which contribute to high operation costs and inefficiencies that reduce effectiveness and erode morale. Collocation of telecommunication spaces, sharing infrastructure, and following Department IT network guidance will be a new paradigm for tenant agencies who may resist. Failure to unify telecommunication spaces and share infrastructure will lead to inefficient use of space, will strain embassy cable management systems and environmental and electrical systems, and could increase IT security vulnerabilities.

Approved: May 12, 2022