



Shaping Africa's Future with Evidence, Equity, and Innovation for Impact

Shaping Uganda's Future Through Human Capital Development

Harnessing Uganda's Demographic Dividend

Fact Sheet | July 2026

Demographic Opportunity

Uganda is experiencing a demographic transition marked by a growing working-age population. This presents a major opportunity to accelerate socio-economic transformation through strategic investments in education, skills development, productive employment, health, and youth empowerment.

A large working-age population can only translate into a demographic dividend when people are healthy, educated, skilled, and productively employed.

Labour Force Overview, 2024

Note: Labour-force indicators in this factsheet follow the Uganda Bureau of Statistics Census 2024 reporting framework, which presents labour-force statistics for persons aged **15 years and above**. The **14–64 years** age group is included only as a national working-age reference.

Indicator	Figure
Working-age population, 15 years and above	25.5 million
Share of total population, 15 years and above	57.4%
Population aged 14–64 years	25.2 million
Share of total population, 14–64 years	56.7%
Labour force	11,012,086
Employed persons	9,653,537
Unemployed persons	1,358,549
Labour Force Participation Rate	43.2%
Employment-to-Population Ratio	37.9%
Unemployment Rate, 15 years and above	12.3%

Youth NEET Profile

Youth remain one of the most vulnerable groups in Uganda's labour market.

Youth Category	NEET Population	NEET Rate
Youth aged 15–24 years	4,001,528	42.6%
Youth aged 18–30 years	5,250,768	50.9%



Shaping Africa's Future with Evidence, Equity, and Innovation for Impact

Nearly four in every ten young people aged **15–24 years** are not in employment, education, or training. Under Uganda's national youth definition of **18–30 years**, more than half of young people are NEET.

High youth inactivity limits productivity, reduces future earnings, and delays Uganda's ability to realize the demographic dividend.

Uganda's Demographic Dividend Profile

Expanding Working-Age Population

More than half of Uganda's population is of working age. This provides a strong demographic foundation for economic transformation, especially if the country expands access to education, skills, decent work, and health services.

Dependency Burden

Uganda's age dependency ratio stands at **83.8**, meaning that every **100 working-age persons support approximately 84 dependents**, including children and older persons.

- Child dependency ratio: 77.7
- Old-age dependency ratio: 6.1

The high child dependency burden highlights the importance of continued investment in education, health, nutrition, and human capital development to prepare Uganda's future workforce.

Labour Market Performance

Employment

Only **37.9%** of the working-age population aged 15 years and above is employed. This indicates that Uganda is not yet fully utilizing its growing labour force.

Employment is:

- Higher among males than females.
- Higher in urban areas than rural areas.
- Strongly associated with higher educational attainment.
- Highest among persons with post-secondary education.

Labour Force Participation

Uganda's Labour Force Participation Rate stands at **43.2%**, meaning that less than half of the working-age population is economically active through employment or active job search.



Shaping Africa's Future with Evidence, Equity, and Innovation for Impact

Labour force participation is:

- Higher among males than females.
- Highest in Kampala Capital City.
- Lowest in Madi sub-region.

This low participation rate suggests that a large share of Uganda's human capital remains outside the active labour market.

Unemployment

A total of **1,358,549 Ugandans** are unemployed.

The unemployment rate is:

- 12.3% among persons aged 15 years and above.
- 12.6% among persons aged 14–64 years.

Women experience higher unemployment than men, reflecting persistent gender disparities in access to labour market opportunities.

Key Challenges

Uganda's pathway to a demographic dividend is constrained by several labour market and human capital challenges:

- High dependency burden, especially child dependency.
- Low employment-to-population ratio.
- Labour force participation below half of the working-age population.
- Persistent unemployment, especially among women.
- High youth NEET levels.
- Gender disparities in access to productive employment.
- Regional disparities in employment and labour force participation.
- Limited absorption of educated and skilled young people into decent work.

Unlocking Uganda's Demographic Dividend

Uganda can maximize its demographic dividend by transforming its growing working-age population into a skilled, healthy, and productive workforce.

Priority Actions

- Expand quality education and technical skills development.
- Strengthen school-to-work transition pathways for young people.
- Accelerate job creation through industrialization, agriculture, innovation, and private sector growth.



Shaping Africa's Future with Evidence, Equity, and Innovation for Impact

- Increase women's participation in productive and decent employment.
- Strengthen youth employment, entrepreneurship, and innovation programmes.
- Improve access to reproductive health and family planning services.
- Promote labour market policies that support decent work and inclusive economic growth.
- Address regional inequalities in access to education, skills, and employment opportunities.

Key Message

Uganda's growing working-age population presents a major opportunity for socio-economic transformation. However, the demographic dividend will not happen automatically.

Realizing this opportunity will depend on Uganda's ability to create productive jobs, invest in human capital, reduce youth inactivity, expand women's economic participation, and ensure that every young Ugandan has the skills and opportunities needed to contribute to national development.

A healthy, educated, skilled, and productively employed population is the foundation for Uganda's demographic dividend and sustainable economic growth.

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) – National Population and Housing Census 2024, Final Report, Volume 1.