

HIGHLIGHTS OF UGANDA'S NATIONAL MIGRATION POLICY, 2025

Uganda's National Migration Policy was formally adopted in August 2025 after remaining in draft form since 2010. The Policy provides a comprehensive framework for managing internal, regional, and international migration, with the aim of maximizing social and economic benefits while safeguarding the rights and welfare of migrant workers, including those abroad.

1. VISION AND MISSION OF THE POLICY

Vision : To be a model of excellence in the provision of migration services to Ugandans and migrants

Mission : To facilitate, control and regulate migration for the development of Uganda.

Overall objective : To manage migration for the socio-economic and political development of Uganda



2. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The National Migration Policy aims to:

- i. Harmonize and strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks for migration.
- ii. Improve inter-agency coordination and stakeholder collaboration.
- iii. Implement regional and international migration policies effectively.
- iv. Facilitate safe and regular migration for all Ugandans.
- v. Promote diaspora engagement for national development.
- vi. Protect migrant rights and ensure non-discrimination.

3. KEY POLICY COMPONENTS

- i. Strengthen the legal framework: Review, harmonise, and domesticate migration-related laws and frameworks at national, regional, and international levels.
- ii. Improve governance and coordination: Establish strong implementation structures, including a coordinated inter-ministerial mechanism and an expanded migration workforce.
- iii. Enhance border management: Upgrade border surveillance, infrastructure, and biometric systems to facilitate legal migration while addressing irregular movements.
- iv. Promote citizenship awareness: Increase public

- understanding of citizenship rights and responsibilities in migration management.
- v. Support safe labour migration: Regulate recruitment agencies, implement bilateral labour agreements, and strengthen pre-departure training for migrant workers.
 - vi. Leverage the diaspora: Encourage diaspora investment and skills transfer through targeted incentives and improved consular services.
 - vii. Integrate migration into development planning: Mainstream migration into National Development Plans (NDPs), Sector Development Plans (SDPs), and Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs).
 - viii. Align with national and global commitments: Ensure migration governance is consistent with Uganda Vision 2040, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and regional frameworks such as the AU and IGAD.
 - ix. Protect vulnerable migrants: Strengthen protection systems for victims of trafficking, refugees, stateless persons, and other migrants in vulnerable situations.
 - x. Improve refugee and statelessness management: Develop integrated frameworks to manage refugee protection and statelessness.
 - xi. Address climate-related migration: Integrate migration into climate adaptation and disaster response planning, supported by strengthened funding and legal frameworks.

- xii. Improve migration data systems: Establish an integrated national migration information system to support planning, policy development, and reporting.
- xiii. Enhance data sharing and skills: Promote inter-agency data sharing and build national capacity in migration statistics.
- xiv. Build institutional capacity: Train government institutions, civil society, and local governments on migration governance.
- xv. Raise public awareness: Increase awareness of migration laws, rights, and services to support informed and safe mobility decisions.

4. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE POLICY

The policy covers the following components;

- i. Migration and the National Economy
- ii. Internal Migration
- iii. Migration and Citizenship
- iv. Migration and Climate Change
- v. Labour Migration
- vi. Migration and International Cooperation
- vii. Border Management
- viii. Diaspora Management
- ix. Migration Data and Information Management
- x. Refugee Management
- xi. Statelessness

Each component includes specific objectives, strategies, and actions to ensure effective and coordinated migration governance.

5. HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

- The Policy will be implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).
- An Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration (IMTCM), composed of focal persons from relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), will coordinate implementation across sectors including labour, security, justice, health, education, environment, finance, and foreign affairs.
- The National Citizenship and Immigration Board (NCIB) will host the Secretariat of the IMTCM.
- Government will work in partnership with civil society organization, development partners, the private sector, and United Nations agencies, in line with their mandates and expertise.

6. FUNDING OF THE POLICY

Implementation of the National Migration Policy will be financed through:

- The Governance and Security Sector framework
- The Administration of Justice Programme
- Retention of non-tax revenue
- Partnerships and collaborations with development partners and the private sector

7. THE LABOUR MIGRATION COMPONENT

The Labour Migration component aims to promote the rights and obligations of migrants,

improve labour migration governance, and protect migrant workers particularly those seeking employment abroad.

Key Labour Migration Strategies in the Policy

a. Strengthening and Regulating Labour Recruitment

The policy proposes to:

- Apply existing laws and regulations to recruitment processes
- Establish an electronic labour monitoring system to track migrants' stay and status
- License labour recruitment companies
- Publish a list of approved recruitment agencies
- Monitor and supervise recruitment companies
- Strengthen negotiating power of migrant workers' associations
- Promote ethical recruitment practices
- Support the recruitment industry through a conducive business environment
- Integrate labour migration systems with URA, NIRA, and e-immigration platforms

b. Facilitating Access to Justice and Remedies

Proposed interventions include:

- Facilitating access to justice centres in host countries
- Deploying labour attachés in embassies
- Monitoring migrant workers through Ugandan missions abroad
- Ensuring consular protection
- Simplifying travel document processes
- Repatriating migrant workers in distress and providing support
- Establishing a single national labour

migration coordination centre

- Establishing rescue centres in destination countries

c. Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs)

The policy commits to:

- Negotiating new bilateral labour agreements
- Reviewing and implementing existing agreements
- Ensuring portability of social security benefits
- Minimising violations of fundamental human rights
- Ratifying international and regional migration instruments
- Monitoring recruitment companies
- Verifying job offers and employers through foreign missions
- Identifying skills demanded in destination countries

d. Improving Training for Ugandan Migrant Workers

The policy proposes:

- Equipping young people with global labour market skills
- Strengthening pre-departure orientation training.

e. Detention Centres for Irregular Migrants

The policy proposes:

- Establishing detention centres in immigration offices
- Ensuring compliance with international standards
- Developing regulations for detention management
- Respecting fundamental human rights

f. Registration of Migrants in Professional Associations

Proposed actions include:

- Collaboration between Ugandan and foreign professional bodies
- Certification and verification of qualifications through National Council For Higher Education (NCHE)

g. Managing Irregular Migration

Proposed interventions include:

- Research and data collection on irregular migration
- Establishing a national trafficking database
- Strengthening coordination
- Awareness of migration risks
- Return and reintegration of victims

h. Public Awareness on Safe Labour Migration

The policy proposes:

- Public education on migration laws and migrants' rights
- Media campaigns on regular migration and trafficking
- Community engagement through local leaders
- Educational radio and TV programmes
- Promoting safe labour migration standards
- Eliminating negative perceptions of labour migration
- Clarifying roles of migration institutions
- Establishing an electronic complaints system

8. GAPS AND CONCERNS

- i. No strategy specifically addresses women migrant workers, despite women forming the majority of Ugandan migrants abroad. The policy ignores heightened risks faced by women, especially domestic workers in the Gulf
- ii. Inadequate and Unclear Funding with no comprehensive budget attached. The Policy relies on future donor funding and integration into annual MDA budgets.
- iii. Limited clarity on mechanisms to ensure compliance with ethical recruitment and bilateral agreements.

9. ALIGNMENT OF THE POLICY WITH REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

The policy mirrors strategies in:

- African Union Migration Policy Framework
- IGAD Migration Policy Framework

However, replication without implementation mechanisms risks turning the policy into a paper commitment with no real impact.

The policy further commits to ratification of all the ILO conventions related to Migration.

10. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Uganda's National Migration Policy 2025 is a well-intentioned and comprehensive framework that reflects international standards and recognizes migration's role in development. However, implementation mechanisms are weak with inadequate funding.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Include strategies to address challenges faced by female migrants, their labour rights, and human rights aligned with the AU Migration Policy Framework
- Allocate sufficient budgetary resources
- Establish measurable indicators for bilateral agreements