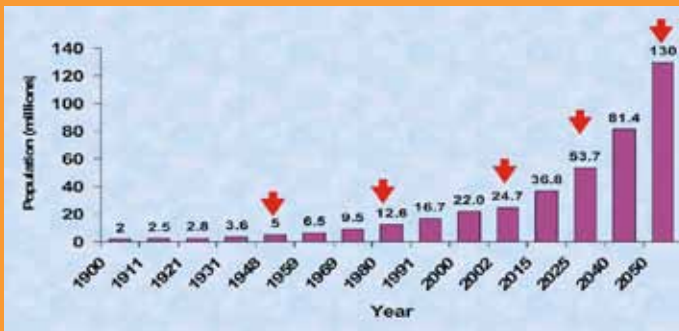


GENEXT fact sheet

Background

Trends show that on average every Ugandan woman will have at least 7 children in her lifetime. Though some arguments are floated that this can be an opportunity to grow its middle class and workforce; Uganda's fast growing population currently poses more challenges to the social, economic and political development than opportunities. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics shows that there are only 265,700 jobs each year for youth leaving tertiary institutions, 650,000 homes can only have one meal a day and there is just 1 doctor for almost 25,000 patients. The current population growth however outpaces development and creates an outcry for land, jobs, shelter and many more needs.

According to the Population Secretariat, Uganda's population currently stands at 34 million. Uganda has the youngest population in the World with 56 out of every 100 Ugandans being below 18 years. The youth in general contribute more than half of the entire population. One in every four Ugandans is an adolescent 10-19 years (WHO) and one in every three is a young person aged 15-24. The population structure is expected to remain youthful for the next fifteen years.



Source: The state of Uganda Population Report 2011.

The Population Secretariat projects that by 2016 Uganda will have 10.4 million sexually active adolescents who will likely be predisposed to early pregnancy and STI infection including HIV.

Current Situation

Today Young people's lack of youth friendly services for reproductive health only worsens the already wanting situation. Currently 25 out of every 100 teenage girls are getting pregnant an issue not much of a wonder since on average teenagers begin sexual activity at 16 - 17 years.

The reality is that young people are giving birth and contributing to the growing population. Only 30 of every 100 women who would like to space or delay their births or stop child bearing entirely, have access to contraceptive. Regarding the young people aged 15-24, this stands at only 10% indicating poor access to and utilization of Family Planning services despite an open policy on Family Planning eligibility.

The communities within which young people negotiate their lives each day lack or are limited greatly in social protection services; cases of gender based violence, community and home sexual abuse are very common and gender stereo types from which many cases of violence go unnoticed, unreported and or ignored as a result of poor systems.

Moreover Uganda's young age structure has critical population and development implications. It creates a high child dependency ratio that places a heavy burden on the working age population and constrains the provision of basic needs and social services by the Government.

At least every Ugandan considered as adult (18 years and above) has a dependant below the age of 15. This reality does not promote economic and social development within societies and certainly it limits the development prospects of the young people below 18 years.

Factors that contribute to increased population

- Low contraceptive use 30% (UDHS,2011) , with high need for family planning at 41%
- Poverty
- High fertility rate (high desired family size of 5.6 for men and 4.8 for women)
- Cultural and gender norms
- Lack of advocacy with messages about the benefits of smaller and manageable families by the Government

GENEXT Initiative

The GENEXT nationwide wide campaign for Smaller families has been designed as an effort to address these challenges.

GENEXT is a revolution that brings together youth aged 18 – 30 years who are rallying for smaller families. The GENEXT revolution believes all youth have a “right” to be able to live the good life and this can be realized by having a small family.

A smaller population will guarantee a good education, better jobs, money for food, and quality of life for children which will see a socially, economically and politically stronger Uganda.

Goal: To influence and change the mindset of the target audience, motivating them to adopt the behavior that results in family planning and smaller families.

VISION: To see a slower growing population by 2013.This will be created by a movement of activists who can be mobilized to stand up for smaller and manageable families.

Mission: GENEXT campaign is committed to empowering young men and women with knowledge and skills to improve their lives and secure their future by championing smaller families.

Objectives:

- Change the mindset of rural communities, political leaders and the country as whole to value small family size.
- Create a supportive & enabling environment for people to understand the need for family planning and how it will improve the quality of life
- Create a wake up revolution among those who have intent to adopt family planning.
- Generate adequate demand for family planning services and commodities within communities
- Increase the user base for family planning methods and thus increase the contraceptive Use.

What can communities do to solve this problem?

- Increase access to youth friendly health services provided including FP
- Educate young people on smaller family campaign its benefits and avail all information about youth friendly health services
- Encourage education of girls so that more years are spent in school
- Discourage cultural practices that affect their development and health
- Be proactive and demand from leaders quality services as well as accountability
- Participate in decision making processes within their communities and districts especially budgeting and planning for health
- Engage in productive income generating activities

For more information please visit www.genext.ug or facebook on [genextuganda!](#)