



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

GENDER *for* DEVELOPMENT UGANDA

**Cash Plus for
Adolescent Girls in
Lower Secondary**



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Funded by
the European Union



Gender for Development in Uganda

G4DU

Promoting gender equality and education in Uganda

unicef 
for every child

Background

Despite progress, Uganda faces major challenges in providing accessible basic education to children and adolescents, with low transition and retention rates to secondary levels as fundamental challenges to be addressed, particularly among girls. Several barriers to education persist but financial barriers remain the main reason cited for both non-attendance and dropping out of school. Families struggle to pay for the costs associated with education, such as school fees, uniforms, scholastic materials, school meals, and other related expenses, like building or development funds. Beyond being particularly affected by poverty, girls face a series of additional barriers to education, such as barriers linked to community gender norms, barriers linked to reproductive biology, barriers that limit physical access to school, among others.

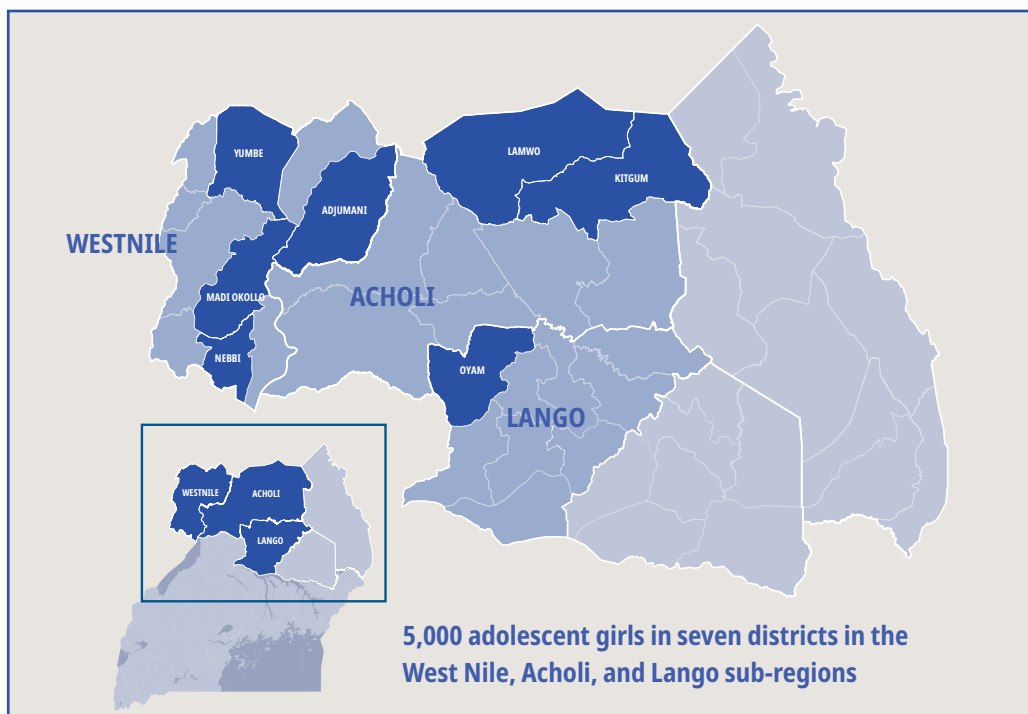
In response to these challenges the European Union in 2023 launched the Gender for Development Uganda (G4DU) Programme. This multi-agency initiative aims to promote the education of adolescent girls, reduce gender-based violence, and advance sexual and reproductive health. The G4DU is co-financed by the European Union, Germany, and Belgium, and implemented through a partnership that includes UNICEF, KfW, Enabel, and the Spotlight Initiative, all working together to achieve these critical objectives.

Objective

A key output of UNICEF's efforts under this programme is to improve inclusive access and participation in schools for adolescent girls, including their transition to and retention in lower secondary level. To achieve this, led by Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and other stakeholders, a **labelled cash plus** programme was developed in 2024 through a co-creative process.

Target population

The intervention aims to support 5,000 adolescent girls in seven districts in the West Nile, Acholi, and Lango sub-regions (Adjumani, Yumbe, Nebbi, Kitgum, Madi-Okollo, Oyam, Lamwo) from S1- S4, a period of four years.



Eligibility

- Vulnerability targeting through an eligibility criterion
- Completion of PLE and possession of a certificate
- Admission into SI within 64 USE schools
- Ugandan Nationals and Refugees
- Girls with disabilities
- Girls that completed P7 from Accelerated Education Programmes (AEP)

Enrolment process

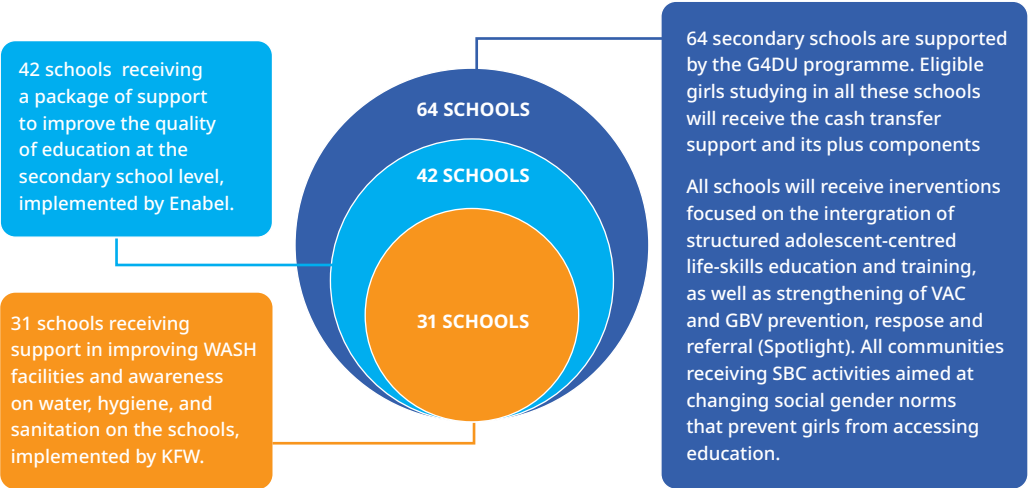
- Aligned with the G4DU convergence districts and schools in all the seven districts.
- Mobilisation of potential beneficiaries who sat P7 in 2024.
- Phased approach of pre-registration and registration of potential beneficiaries.
- Verification and validation of adolescent girls who reported in SI in 2025 that meet the eligibility criteria.
- Dissemination of eligible beneficiaries with MoES, District Local Governments, Schools, parents and Caregivers and Girls.
- Obtaining consent from both adolescents and their guardians prior to enrolment.

Programme Design

The design aligns with Uganda’s Social Protection policy and legal framework, the National Social Protection Strategy (2024) which adopts a life cycle approach and draws from global experience on cash plus programming.

The cash plus at secondary is expected to provide financial support (cash) and complementary services (plus) for the beneficiary girls in 64 Universal Secondary Schools (USE).

Package of Interventions



Pillars of the cash plus programme



Labelled Cash Transfers

Transfer value:

Each beneficiary adolescent girl receives UGX 264,744 per school term. **Girls with disabilities receive a 50% top-up** to help cover additional education-related costs incurred by them and their families.

However, the final amount a girl receives each term depends on their attendance rate in schools and participation in mentoring.

Attendance in school:

- Minimum school attendance of 50% qualifies for UGX 198,558.
- High rates of school attendance of 80% qualifies for the full amount of UGX 264,744.

Attendance in mentoring:

- 50% attendance = eligible to receive the cash transfer.

Payment modality

A mixed approach of cash disbursements will be used during the four years. For the start of the programme, for transparency and accountability purposes, UNICEF, through Stanbic Bank, primarily uses a Cash-In-Transit (CIT) company to deliver cash physically. Once mobile money details linked to identification of designated parents/caregivers is completed, mobile money will be a modality of choice.

If the beneficiary girl is below 18 years old, this transfer will be sent to the designated parent or caretaker.

If the girl is 18 years old and above, the selected girl can receive the cash transfer directly.

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The 'Plus' component

The cash plus programme does not operate in isolation, but is part of a broader education initiative, of the G4DU Interventions implemented by other partners, particularly Enabel, Spotlight, and KfW, as well as other UNICEF-led initiatives within the programme's framework.

To complement the cash support, the programme specifically delivers two critical plus interventions delivered through an implementing partner, Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation (TMF). These include:

1. Peer-to-peer mentorship.

The mentoring module is designed to build a positive relationship between the girl and a role model, predominantly young women aged 18 to 30 that are locally recruited, who provide guidance and encouragement. This component is structured around two key elements: one-on-one mentoring sessions, and group mentoring.

A total of 200 mentors that include a senior woman teacher from each school are trained and each works with 25 adolescent girls during the duration of the programme.

2. Referral to Services

The referral to services pillar is designed to ensure that girls' essential needs, particularly in the areas of health and protection, are addressed as prerequisites for continuing their secondary education. The aim is twofold: to raise awareness of available services and to promote the effective use of these services.

Grievance redress mechanisms for cash transfers

Beneficiaries can raise complaints or concerns through multiple accessible channels



Government-led grievance redress structures at district and sub county levels



MIS captured grievances (peer or lead mentors).



Child Helpline – Sauti 116



WhatsApp messaging and calls (0783349584)



Community child wellbeing committees



U-Report
(Text 'JOIN' to 8500 (SMS) or WhatsApp 0709168500).