



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE

HON.HARRIET NANTABAZI

**MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
COOPERATIVES**

3rd February, 2023

THE PROJECT MANAGER-TFO GLOBAL- .

REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS
AND AGENCIES,

OUR DEAR WOMEN ENTREPRENURS,

THE MEDIA FARTANITY

ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to salute Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada and the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Office for the initiative to collaborate with Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives Uganda Export Promotion Board and other private sector players like USSIA and UWEAL for promoting women entrepreneurs to access global market for locally produced goods especially crafts, home décor and textiles.

I also want to thank the 230 women across the country who participated in the training, on Export Readiness, e-Marketing, Governance and ethics, human right in business among other modules, applaud the TFO Canada and Ministry of Trade the tireless efforts in supporting women by

building their capacity to explore at International level, especial special sector of crafts, and home décor.

I also want salute those who have been selected for this market familiarization tour and trade mission in New York City, you are representing and carrying the flag of the country in promoting trade with the North America , specifically USA and Canada.

This is a big opportunity for our women who are always disadvantaged in all sector of government and in private sector.

Therefore, any initiative that empower women especially in the area of private sector development is fully supported by NRM Government and we appreciate the support given by to TFO Canada for coming up with this program, and more importantly in the area of promoting exports.

Am happy to note that, one lady among you have already delivered the first consignment to USA worth \$60,000 last month. Now if half of you can sign a trade deal of that amount per quarter, this can translate into \$25,200,000 in export in the sector of art and craft, home décor in a year

Uganda's exports are highly regionalized, with more than half of all of Uganda's exports concentrated within the EAC (40% of total exports in 2018) and COMESA (8%) where FTAs already exist and this is mostly

dominated by men. The share of Uganda's exports to other African countries such as SACU (largely South Africa), Nigeria and Ghana is much lower, jointly making up less than 2% of total export value.

These low export flows with African countries outside of the EAC and COMESA provide rationale for the removal of tariff barriers to intra-African trade, as is anticipated under the AfCFTA. The Establishment of AfCFTA is a big opportunity for our women and youth to take advantage of.

Any initiative that build the capacity of our women and youth to engage in investment and Export trade with other countries within the framework of AfCFTA and other market outside AfCFTA is fully supported by Government.

Uganda export performance in the global trade is extremely still low. As you are aware, Uganda mostly exports agricultural products (80 percent of total exports). The most important exports is coffee (22 percent of total exports) followed by tea, cotton, copper, oil and fish. The country is also investing into tourism industry by putting up infrastructures within the tourism circuits that support the sector growth.

It is important to note that the trade familiarization tour that our Women led SMEs are going into will go along improving our trade balance.

The third National Development Plan (NDP III) and Vision 2040 identifies Uganda strategic opportunities for positioning to harness the export

trade within African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and outside market. These include: i) a youthful population, the third largest in the World; ii) rapid urbanization; iii) a strong comparative advantage in agriculture and minerals; and iv) a strategic geographical location on the continent which is ideal to position Uganda as trade and logistics hubs

It is important to note that the trade familiarization tour that our Women led SMEs are going into supported by TFO is in line with National Development plan 3 that advocates for support to private sector as a pillar of economic growth and supporting export readiness program that will go along improving our trade balance.

The Ministry through Uganda Export Promotion Board launched the export readiness programme in 2017 with the main goal of preparing and improving export performance of companies/SMEs.

This was to respond to the level of exports that the country stands at compared to the global trends. Involvement of all of you in building capacity of women SMEs to export is a plus and in line with Government program, especially the National Export Development Strategy. Once again, as a Ministry we applaud Trade Facilitation Office - Canada for supporting this program.

To transform Uganda from this peasant society to a dynamic modern society that we are advocating as government, we have to enhance

exports, by improving efficiency within the export supply chain, That is through increased value-added products, adopting all emerging marketing techniques, enhance entrepreneurial knowledge and skills and adopt the culture of doing research and innovation, networking among our SMEs to improve on our competitiveness in the global market.

The Uganda economy is premised on SMEs which is the engine of economic growth and with the major employers in various sectors with 50.7% in service sector, 33% in commerce and trade, and 10% in manufacturing. Women play an integral part in Uganda's economy and play critical roles in all these sectors of the economy.

The Ministry established a fully-fledged Directorate of MSME in 2016 to support MSMEs growth in development – we carry out business development services to support SMEs improve on their efficiency and ensure their products meet the quality standards , adopt good governance and strengthen their marketing position for SMEs growth and development.

The Ministry is responsible for creating an enabling environment for private sector to thrive. The following policies have so far been developed, among others: MSMES Policy, Industry policy, Trade policy, Buy Uganda Build Uganda Policy, Cooperatives Policy, Trade Licensing bill to enhance trade within and outside country.

In addition, the Ministry works closely with other Ministries and other Government Agencies and Private Sector Organizations to support SME development. These are but not limited to Enterprise Uganda, Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA), UMA, UIA and Uganda Women Entrepreneur's Association Limited (UWEAL), among others.

The expected outputs are as follows:-

1. Creating a conducive business environment for SMEs development in all sectors with a kin interest on women entrepreneurs
2. Promoting research, innovation, value addition in strategic sectors in collaboration with MDAs like; Makerere Foods Technology Business Incubation Center (FTBIC) Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) to support innovation in product development
3. Promoting product Standards & Certification through UNBS to ensure all products meet the quality standard for both the local market and export opportunity
4. Linking SMEs to Regional and International market through signing bilateral and multilateral Trade protocols, M.OUs, Agreements with regional and international organization such as TFO-Canada , among others;
5. Government of Uganda has recently disbursed 200billion Small Business Recovery Funds(SBRF) through Bank of Uganda and Financial Institutions for SMEs to borrow at affordable rate through

commercial banks at interest rate of 10%. This help to support SMEs recovery from the negative impact of covid 19. You are encouraged to apply.

6. Enabling SMEs to access affordable and cheap financing through; Uganda Development Bank, Micro Finance Support Center, and other Financial and non-Financial Institutions;
7. Ccapacity building for entrepreneurship, business and Industrial development skills through our technical staff at the Ministry
8. Enhancing gender equity, inclusiveness and environmentally friendly businesses for sustainable development;

Other interventions

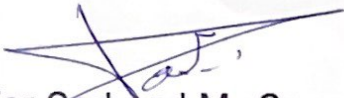
1. Government has set up one stop center at UIA for investors to improve and ensure quick and timely service to our local and international investor
2. One Stop Border Post at Busia, Malaba, Mirama Hills, Elegu to facilitate trade and URA and other government agencies play a key role facilitate trade in this Borders

I therefore, take this opportunity to thank the Canadian Government and the TFO Canadian globe team for this great support to our SMEs and for giving them opportunity to learn trade from other established market.

For the women, we look forward working with you, and to continue supporting you in this export trade promotion agenda.

With these few remarks, I flag you off to represent our country in this Trade Mission in New York.

I thank you for listening to me.



For God and My Country

HON. HARRIET NTABAZI MP

MINSTER OF STATE FOR TRADE