

Nursery bed operators demand Shs 700m from UCDA

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KAMPALA. Coffee nursery bed operators in Kasese District are demanding about Shs700m from Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) that has not been paid to them for close to one year.

The operators, under the Rwenzori Coffee Nursery Operators, Buyers and Processors, prepare seedlings that are supplied to farmers under the coffee replanting programme-a component of the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC).

The group, who spoke to *Daily Monitor* on Tuesday, said after supplying seedlings to farmers under the supervision of OWC soldiers, they are supposed to be paid by UCDA.

However, since October last year, several of them have not been paid despite claims sent to the UCDA headquarters in Kampala.

Mr Jim Kalimunda, a nursery bed op-

erator in Kyondo sub-county, said he is demanding Shs270m for the coffee seedlings he supplied over two planting seasons of October 2016 and March 2017.

He said the last time he was paid Shs 84m was December 23, 2016 and the money was arrears for the 2015/2016 supply.

"I have not been paid Shs270m in total for the nine files on which I supplied coffee seedlings. Sometimes, UCDA officers reduce the number of seedlings supplied when they approve the claim files. I want my money paid to be able to take my children to school," Mr Kalimunda said.

Ms Kedress Muhindo, a resident of Kibirizi in Bugoye Sub County, said she supplied 35,000 coffee seedlings in October 2016 but she is yet to receive her payment worth Shs 9m.

Mr Philemon Mutebuli, the chairperson of the Rwenzori Coffee Nursery Operators, Buyers and Processors Association told *Daily Monitor* in Kampala yesterday that the total amount his

members are demanding is standing at Shs 697m.

UCDA responds

However, Mr Emmanuel Iyamulemye, the UCDA managing director told *Daily Monitor* on Tuesday that at the moment, there are no seedling suppliers that have not been paid.

He said those complaining over non-payment do not have genuine paperwork to show evidence of supply.

"What you are being told is not correct because genuine suppliers know how to address their issues to us. Those who genuinely supplied were paid. So those complaining should avail us with evidence," he said.

"The issue of nonpayment should not rise now because coffee is a business and we always make sure that all payments are done within three months after supply. And this is done through EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) system," he added.