

Electronic registration of farmers commences

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KAMPALA. The government has announced plans to register farmers across the country. The planned electronic registration of farmers will, according to the Prime Minister, Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, help government direct interventions in the sector and coordinate farmers for modernisation of agriculture.

The exercise is expected to cost \$150m (Shs565.7b). This newspaper understands that the planned registration exercise and profiling farmers, farmer organisations and agro dealers will commence in Amuru, Iganga, Kalungu, Nebbi and Ntungamo districts using customised mobile based data collection tool.

In this regard, the government recently contracted Market-led Users owned ICT for agriculture information service to undertake the registration, profiling and development of a data base for eligible farmers.

68%

Farming. The Uganda National Census report 2014 says 68 per cent of Ugandans are stuck in subsistence agriculture.

Some of the key information to be captured include bio data, location, literacy levels, landownership, status, types of commodities, acreage, farmer group composition and income levels.

While launching the project in Kampala this week, Dr Rugunda said the government had borrowed Shs566b from the World Bank to support, organise and enhance production, especially focusing on some of most importance crops.

"We are attaching great importance to agriculture sector because 26 per cent of the country's GDP is from agriculture and 52 per cent of our exports are of agriculture in nature," Dr Rugunda said.

"If we improve agriculture, we are improving opportunities for jobs, exports and the country will move forward," he said.

The Minister of Agriculture, Mr Vicent Ssempijja, said electronic registration will enable establishment of a correct database for farmers showing their quality and quantity in terms of production.

Mr Ssempijja said the system will help to link the farmers, buyers and distributors.

"They (farmers) have to be known because it is the only way of knowing how much support is needed depending on the database," he said.