



The construction of power dams in the country is an opportunity for the local firms to supply materials

# Opportunities to supply electric wires and cables

By Nelson Muhoozi

Alfred Mubiru, a businessman, is interested in supplying products to electricity projects, but he fears there may not be many opportunities since the market could already be saturated.

However, according to the energy ministry, Mubiru's fears are baseless since the country intends to intensify power infrastructure development in line with its plans to achieve lower middle income status by 2020 and upper middle income status by 2040.

According to the National Development Plan (II), Uganda should produce 2,500MW of electricity by 2020, if it is to attain middle-income status by 2040.

Currently, two large hydropower dams are under construction and are expected to be commissioned before 2020. Karuma power dam expected to generate 600MW, while the Isimba will generate 183MW.

To achieve these figures the Uganda Electricity Generation Company Limited (UEGCL) says, the Government needs to prioritise and fast-track the development of the proposed four hydro-power plants on River Nile. They are Ayago (840MW), Oriang (392MW), Kiba (288MW) and Murchison (648MW).

UEGCL recently said they were on track to complete the Isimba and Karuma dams, which are expected to double the country's power output.

Umembe spokesperson Stephen Ilungole said there are many opportunities available for Ugandans to exploit because of the Government's ambitious energy projects going on.

"We have a number of local firms benefiting from the projects because all the materials we use are available here, save for the Yaka Meters that we get from South Africa," Ilungole said.

"Actually there is no question on

## DEMAND FOR ELECTRIC CABLES

**The question of opportunities in supply of electric cables should not arise. We are working with many local contractors such as Roko, the Cable Corporation Limited in Lugazi and many others, on the project, which commands 65% of the market share in Uganda.**  
Stephen Ilungole Umembe spokesperson



Electric cables have ready market

whether or not there are opportunities in supply of electric cables. We are working with many local contractors such as Roko, the Cable Corporation Limited in Lugazi and many other indigenous companies on the project, which commands 65% of the

market share in Uganda.

"We welcome new customers on board because the work ahead is humongous. We need more suppliers of electric cables, bolts, poles, and other materials so that the government's plan of 41,738MW by 2040 is accomplished within the set time period," he added.

According to the general manager of Ketron Development Services, opportunities are available, especially for those who want to buy from manufacturers and then resell or use on other projects.

"We do not manufacture the electric cables. We buy them, which means any traders with capital can join the business," she said.

According to Ponman Kiran, the general manager of Seven Hills Impex, although there are opportunities in the sector, the profits are not quick, meaning patience is required in order to succeed in the long run.

It is also expensive to start up this business, due to the huge capital required. One needs about sh360m, which is too high for many businesses, especially the locals with limited capital.

However, Kiran said, this is for those who want to import the electrical materials.

"Alternatively, one can simply be an agent or distributor for the bigger and already established companies.

This is an easier way to start up the business. In this case, one needs about sh100m and they are good to go," Kiran said.

He added that the presence of unscrupulous traders selling substandard products, creates mistrust for those selling genuine products.

"We also face the challenge of high interest rates while seeking financing. However, this should not discourage people from starting the electric cables and wire business," Kiran advised.

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