

23<sup>RD</sup> PRESIDENT'S EXPORT AWARDSNew Vision  
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## Value-addition boosts exports

By Faridah Kulabake

**A**lthough Uganda's merchandise exports have increased considerably over the years from \$450.1m (about sh1.6 trillion) in 2001 to \$2.9b (about sh10.45 trillion) in 2016, its share of the global export market remains low.

While the World Trade Organisation (WTO) estimates that the global merchandise export market was at \$16 trillion in 2016, Uganda's exported goods worth \$3.16b (sh11.2 trillion) in the 2016/17 financial year compared to \$5.71b (sh19.28 trillion) worth of imports, has created a \$2.54b (sh9.2 trillion) deficit.

However, exporters and Government export promotion agencies are seeking to bridge that gap by taking deliberate efforts to increase export volumes and values.

Apart from its usual mandate of co-ordinating export-related efforts geared towards export development and promotion to boost export revenue, the Uganda Export Promotions Board (UEPB) has over the years rewarded exceptional exporters so as to recognise and entice exporters to export more to boost export revenue.

UEPB recently awarded 45 companies and individuals at the 23rd President's Export Awards held at Imperial Royale Hotel, Kampala. The award ceremony was the culmination of the annual Export Week which sought to bring together all the different stakeholders and develop solutions to grow exports.

It was organised under the theme: *Exporting - growth opportunities for local industries.*

The awards sought to recognise companies that have over time worked towards creating a vibrant and dynamic export sector in Uganda. Companies walked away with platinum, gold, silver and bronze awards for their contributions.

To participate in the competition, companies had to have exported in 2016 and the assessment was based on the export value in their respective categories.

**Overall winner**

Hima Cement emerged the overall exporter of the year, having exported products worth \$56m (sh202.2 billion) in 2016. Others won gold, silver and bronze in different categories.

**Gold category**

The gold winners were Nile Breweries Limited (beverages category), Tororo Cement (cement and lime category), Movit Limited (cosmetics), Kyagalanyi (coffee) and Agagai (U) Ltd (flowers), Roofings and Ltd (base metals and articles), Mt. Meru Millers (Animal d).

Other gold winners were Esco and Ltd (cocoa), Capital Reef



Staff members of Roofings Group which received the gold award for the metals and articles with Minister Amelia Kyambadde (fourth-left)

Uganda (cereals and pulses), Olam Uganda (cotton), Brookside Uganda (dairy and dairy products), Fresh Perch (fish and marine products) SkyFat Tannery (hides and skins), Cipla Quality Chemicals (pharmaceuticals), Kakira Sugar Works, Leaf Tobacco and Commodities (tobacco) and Bidco (soaps, detergents, edible fats and oils).

**Silver category**

The Silver award winners were Steel and Tube Uganda Ltd (base metals and articles), African Tradewinds Ltd (cocoa), Ugacof (Coffee), Jesa Farm Dairy (dairy and dairy products), Lake Eco Fish Processing (fish and marine products), Royal Van Zanten (flowers), Abacus Parenteral Drugs (pharmaceuticals), Mayuge Sugar (sugar) and Mukwano Industries (soaps, detergents, edible fats and oils).

**Bronze category**

Bronze award winners were Uganda Baati (base metals and articles), Amos Dairies (dairy and dairy products), Export Trading Company (coffee), Lake Bounty Ltd (fish and marine products), Rosebud (flowers) and S.W.T for Hides and Skins: S.W.Tanners Ltd.

**Special category**

There were also special awards for the youth exporter of the year Serina Nakamatte of Shaga Green Ltd), woman exporter of the year (Betty Kabahenda of FFP Uganda), Regional exporter of the year - East (Muhumuza R. Wilson and Sons

## RUGUNDA URGED EXPORTERS COMPLY WITH THE NECESSARY REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.

Ltd), Regional exporter of the year -south west (Rusekere Growers Tea Factory) and Regional exporter of the year - north (Bee Natural Uganda).

**Innovation award**

The innovation award went to Pearl Dairy Ltd, while the Embassy of the year award went to the Embassy of Uganda in the Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

**Special recognition**

Special recognition was also given to agencies whose efforts promote exports including UDPF Fisheries Protection Unit for fighting illegal and bad fishing practices, TradeMark East Africa, Swisscontact, Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Association, Uganda Fruits and

Vegetables Producers and Exporters Association, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, Caritas Uganda, Uganda Revenue Authority and the National Environment Management Authority.

**Premier calls for co-operation**

Speaking during the award ceremony, Prime Minister Dr Ruhakana Rugunda urged exporters to work in groups and co-operatives to consolidate international trade gains, including ensuring consistent and sustainable quantity, quality and timely delivery to international markets.

He said co-operatives ensure that exporters always have the right quality and volumes of the required product, which he said will help the country lower its current trade deficit.

The failure to grow exports is partly attributed to the lack of adequate volumes required in the export markets, mainly because exporters work individually.

"Our economy relies on improved exports; in a way, you (exporters) have the key to strengthen and stabilize the economy," Rugunda said.

He added that expanding and enhancing exports is one of the ways through which Uganda to earn the needed foreign exchange, create jobs and improve livelihoods.

Rugunda also urged exporters to enhance value addition, work towards improving agricultural productivity and comply with the necessary regulatory requirements for domestic and international markets.

He applauded the exporters and the awards, saying said recognising best exporters will promote quality and enhance competitiveness, sensitise and creates awareness about the importance of exports and rally Ugandans to associate with the export agenda.

The UEPB executive director, Elly Twineyo Kamugisha, applauded the Government efforts in constructing power dams, saying it will offer affordable and reliable power to support the industrialisation agenda.

Annual power generation in Uganda currently stands at 900MW up from 60MW in 1986 and is expected to increase to about 2,600MW upon completion of Karuma and Isimba, Ayago and Achwa hydropower dams, according to Rugunda.

Kamugisha, however, asked the Government to continue recapitalising the Uganda Development Bank and also set up an export development fund to enable exporters access cheap capital.

He noted that ability to export has been hampered by the expensive short-term commercial bank loans, which make it hard for them to invest in boosting quantities, improving product quality and packaging for exports.

Trade minister Amelia Kyambadde urged exporters to ensure good quality exports, saying that improving standards and quality is key if Uganda is to increase exports. She also alluded to the need to boost value addition instead of exporting raw materials so as to increase the value of exports.