

SOROTI FRUIT FACTORY TO BOOST TESO CO-OPERATIVES, FAMILY COME

Soroti Fruit Factory is expected to start commercial production later this year. The Government says this will eliminate profit-hungry middlemen who have been cheating farmers in the entire Teso sub-region

By Samuel Sanyal

Clad in a yellow T-shirt, the old man, John Brown Eruu, sports a wide smile as he rises from under the mango tree in the middle of his large compound. Like many farmers in Awesi village, Dabakala county, in Soroti district and the entire Teso region, Eruu has a large orange farm with a couple of mango trees scattered in between.

In order to realise the full potential of the flourishing orange and mango farming in the Teso sub-region, the Government, through the Uganda Development Corporation (UDC) in collaboration with the Korean International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) has invested \$7.4m (about Sh28m) in the Soroti fruit factory to add value to the produce in the region.

During a recent visit to the factory site by trade minister Amella Kyambadde and the UDC board, the minister said the factory would be instrumental in lifting households out of poverty by guaranteeing stable prices.

She noted that the factory was on

track to start commercial production later this year, after initial dry tests were successful. The factory is set to embark on wet tests in June for the next three months, which will pave way for commercial operations. After a long wait, the finish line is in sight.

Boosted by the factory, Eruu said farmers in the area under the Teso Tropical Fruit Growers Co-operative Union, which is an amalgamation of about 58 smaller co-operatives in eight districts in the region, are already increasing their production to feed the factory.

"My expectation is that prices will improve and that the farmers will definitely benefit because the factory will be there," Fruit farmer

He said in most cases, farmers have been selling their produce in sacks of close to 130kg for as low as Sh40,000 during the harvest season and between Sh70,000 and Sh100,000 to middlemen during the periods of scarcity in the off season. Eruu is hopeful that the factory means prices will be more stable and high throughout the year.

"My expectation is that prices will improve and that the farmers will definitely benefit because the factory will be there. I am sure that with the factory, the demand will be higher than what we presently supply," Eruu said.

"That is why we are expanding our farms so that we sustain the factory, we do not want what happened to Meat Packers factory to happen here, after they failed to get enough animals for slaughter to sustain the factory," he added, vowing to add acreage to his to his orange farm that gives him a rich harvest each year.

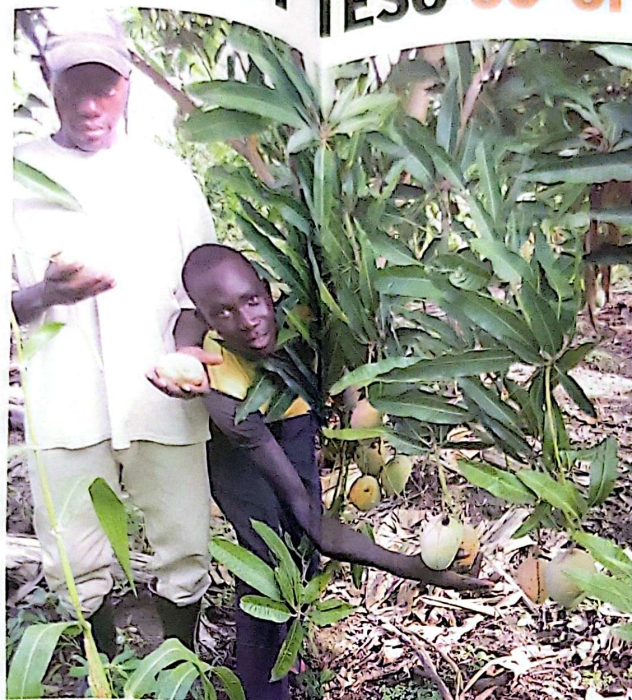
Variety
Phillip Musoke, the production manager at the Soroti Fruit Factory, said it will make both fruit concentrate and fresh juice when it starts production. It will directly employ about 100 full-time staff and benefit over 50,000 farmers.

Musoke added that a few aspects such as procurement of ready-to-drink packaging material are to be imported from China.

"Otherwise, the factory is ready to start," He said middlemen had been exploiting farmers by giving them about Sh200 per kilogramme of oranges.

However, the factory was looking to more than double this price to about Sh500 per kilogramme.

"This factory will motivate farmers to increase their acreage. This will benefit



Workers picking mangoes in Nwoya district. The factory in Teso could also benefit neighbouring regions

everyone in the fruit processing value chain. Farmers will be the direct beneficiaries.

However, agricultural input

suppliers, middle men and financiers such as banks will benefit as people borrow to expand production," Musoke said.

Agricultural bank
Kyambadde asked MPs who attended a meeting at the factory to support the Bill which would establish an

agricultural bank. MPs who attended the meeting include Gassan Florent (Dabakala County), Herbert Edmund Adrio (Soroti Municipality), Volter Mwariri (Katakwi Woman MP) and Joseph Andrew Koma (Tororo County).

Kyambadde said this Bill would cater for the interests of farmers. She also said a Cabinet paper was being prepared to ensure that the Soroti Fruit Factory receives a power substation to ensure stable electricity supply.

Spray machines

She said the Government had acquired 240 motorised spray machines to boost the fight against pests and diseases.

Kyambadde noted that by adding value to the fruits grown in Teso, household incomes and livelihoods of the people there would improve.

Factory to benefit all

Yudaya Kadondi, a senior economist at UDC in charge of the construction of the factory, said once the facility starts operations, it will have capacity to process six tonnes of oranges every hour and two tonnes of mangoes every hour. Initially, Kadondi said the factory will be operating for eight hours every day; later it will operate for two and then three shifts.

Tonnes of fruit produced

Kadondi pointed out that the Teso sub-region produces about 648,000 tonnes of oranges and 25,000 tonnes of mangoes per year, which are sufficient to sustain the factory. She noted that the Teso Tropical Fruit Growers Co-operative Union has been awarded a 20% stake in the factory, with the remaining 80% stake to be held by the Government.

She noted that no effort has been spared to ensure that the factory's eventual output meets local and international standards.

Kadondi said already, Teju Orange and Mango juice was being made at an experimental level, at Makerere University using produce from the Teso sub-region.

Factory targeting African market

In order to middle income status, the Government aims at improving the volume of non-traditional exports such as fruits and juices, especially to markets within the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Africa as a whole.

Amella Kyambadde, the trade minister, pointed out in a Cabinet paper that will be produced at the Soroti Fruit Factory, are some of the nine priority exports earmarked for growth under the recently ratified African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Uganda's export receipts increased by 13.9% to \$519.4m during the quarter which ended in January last year, mainly supported by an increase in coffee export receipts. Although coffee remains the key commodity export of Uganda, other commodities such as sorghum (\$17.8m), cocoa beans (\$15.9m), and fish (\$10.7m) are on the rise.

Bank of Uganda data shows that the value of fruits and vegetable exports hit \$43.2m in 2016, up from lows of \$5.2m a decade earlier. Even though fruit exports are still low, the current data represents a huge 731% jump in value over 10 years.

Emmanuel Mutahunga, a senior trade ministry official and acting executive director of the Uganda Development

Corporation (UDC) which oversees the operations of the Soroti Fruit Factory, said fruits offer significant potential in improving Uganda's export receipts under the national export development strategy.

"The national export development strategy aims at increasing export of value added products to regional markets, such as fruit juice from the Soroti Fruit Factory. In addition to exporting packed fresh fruit juice, we also intend to export fresh fruit," Mutahunga said.

Opian Jorem Obicho, the chairperson of the board of directors of Teso Tropical Fruit Growers Co-operative Union (TEFCU), said the region has about eight million orange trees and five million mango trees producing close to 700,000 tonnes of fruit every year.

However, Obicho noted that production can be ramped up if the right type of extension services are provided to farmers as well as subsidised inputs such as tools and pesticides through the regional co-operative.

Vollet Akurut, the Katakwi district Woman MP, urged the Government to expedite the takeover of Odina citrus farm by the union so that they can use it to scale up production to sustain the factory. Odina citrus farm is a 1,000-acre government scheme designed by Israel and established in the 1970s, but has since been abandoned.



TENDER NOTICE

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly and mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. In order to support its operations, its Sub Office in Adjumani is seeking for reputable and reliable companies to carry out construction works in Adjumani district under the Refugees and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPe) Programme.

Said bids are invited from reputable and reliable construction companies who are duly registered with the Government of Uganda, have Valid Tax Compliance and have previously performed similar works.

Tender Reference	Tender Description
UGAAD/2018/002	Proposal for Construction of the following Works at Paridi Stadium in Adjumani District:
	1. Construction of a sports hall
	2. Construction of 02 public toilets and concrete foundation for the pavilion (Eastern Wing)
	3. Construction of 02 public toilets and concrete foundation for the pavilion (Western Wing)
	4. Construction of waste drainage structures and water supply System
	5. Construction of female team toilets, dressing rooms and concrete foundation for the pavilion
	6. Construction of male team toilets, dressing rooms and concrete foundation for the pavilion

Documents should be picked free of charge from UNHCR Offices in Adjumani, Kitgum as well as District Office in Adjumani.

Bids must be submitted as specified in the terms and conditions.

Inquiries: 18th June 2018
Submission: 25th June 2018

QUALIFIED, REPUTABLE AND CONSTRUCTION FIRMS/ROM THE REGIONS

Please direct any request for clarifications or inquiries to: ugadsu@unhcr.org

WHERE THE PROJECTS ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED ARE ENCOURAGED TO BID.

Late submission of bids or bids not conforming to the tender document and conditions will not be considered.

UNHCR reserves the right to reject part or whole offers without assigning any reason whatsoever and will not be obliged to select the lowest offer.

Farmers ask government for inputs

There is a looming fear that Soroti Fruit Factory may turn into a white elephant because of its expected production capacity that fruit farmers in Teso may not be able to sustain. However, Opian Jorem Obicho, the chairperson of board of directors Teso Tropical Fruit Growers Cooperative Union, said the factory would consume less than a third of the total production in the Teso sub-region.

He said most fruits produced in Teso are sold to Kenyan, Rwandan and Tanzanian middlemen who then sell them to processors. The processed juice is then sold at a premium in Ugandan supermarkets.

Obicho challenged the Government to invest in cold storage facilities to preserve the excess produce that will

not be consumed by the Soroti Fruit Factory before it is sold to buyers within the region and beyond.

He also said oranges are heavy feeders on soil nutrients and, therefore, the Government should supply fertiliser in addition to seedlings that are supplied to the region by the army-run Operation Wealth Creation.

Obicho also noted that the co-operative needs specialised extension workers to advise on how farmers should navigate the onslaught of fruit flies and diseases.

He, however, pointed out that the factory was an opportunity to strengthen the co-operative movement in the Teso sub-region.

"Every sub-county has one extension worker who cannot

reach every farmer. In my county alone, there over 2,000 farmers. The Government needs to invest in water for irrigation and fertiliser. In the seventh and eighth seasons, the yields start to drop, we need fertiliser," Obicho said.

Emmanuel Mutahunga, the acting UDC executive director, said although the factory would consume about 21,000 tonnes of oranges in the initial year with a single shift, it would expand production through extra shifts to narrow surplus production in Teso in the subsequent years. "One of the tasks of the Soroti Fruit Factory is to market the orange and mango fruits themselves in the supermarkets. We are going to work with the co-operative union to ensure that it is as strong as possible," he said.



A KOICA official shows Kyambadde around the Soroti Fruit Factory recently. Photos by Samuel Sanyal



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

Uganda: Support to Higher Education, Science and Technology (HEST) Education V Project.

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (ICB)

Supply, Installation, and Commissioning of Learning Management Systems (LMS), Integrated Library Systems (ILS) and Professional Certification Training for Technical Staff for Beneficiary Institutions - LOT 3C

Date: May 2018
Loan No: 210015028093
ICB No: P-UG-AC-001/Goods/17-18/LOT 3C
Procurement Reference No: MoES/SUP/2017-18/PRO0185

- This invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this project that appeared in the UN Development Business online of 24th July 2013 and on the African Development Bank Group's Internet Website.
- The Government of Uganda has received a Loan from the African Development Fund (ADF) for various purposes towards the cost of Uganda: Support to Higher Education, Science and Technology (HEST) Education V Project. It is intended that part of the proceeds of the loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the Supply, Installation, and Commissioning of Learning Management Systems (LMS), Integrated Library Systems (ILS) and Professional Certification Training for Technical Staff for Beneficiary Institutions - LOT 3C.
- The Ministry of Education and Sports (hereinafter referred to as the "Executing Agency") now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply, Installation, and Commissioning of Learning Management Systems (LMS), Integrated Library Systems (ILS) and Professional Certification Training for Technical Staff for Beneficiary Institutions - LOT 3C, under International Competitive Bidding (ICB) and will be conducted in accordance with the ADB's Rules and Procedures for Procurement of Goods and Works (May 2008 Edition Revised July 2012).
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of: The Head Procurement and Disposal Unit, Ministry of Education and Sports,

The Procurement and Disposal Unit, Ministry of Education and Sports, Plot 9/11 King George VI Way, Embassy House Boardroom, Floor 7, Room 7.7

PERMANENT SECRETARY