

PSFU NEWSLETTER

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4TH UGANDA-KENYA COAST TOURISM EXPO LAUNCHED

On August 28th, the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), and key stakeholders joined their Kenyan counterparts to launch the 4th Uganda-Kenya Coast Tourism Conference, scheduled for Monday - Tuesday, October 27-28, 2025 in Malindi, Kenya.

PSFU CEO Stephen Asiimwe described the conference as “a big opportunity for every sector of the economy to benefit variously,” and encouraged Ugandan tourism businesses to register and showcase their best.

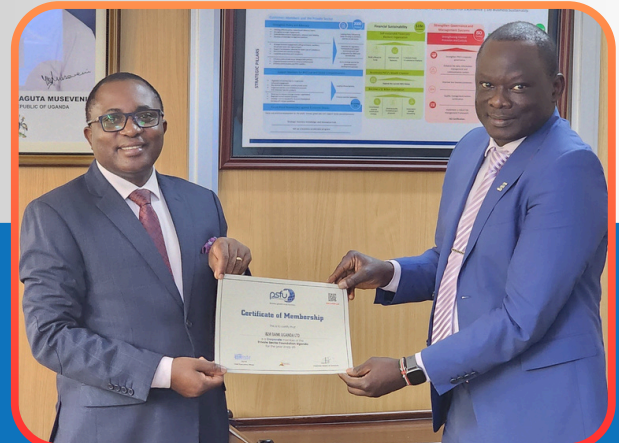
UTB CEO Juliana Kaggwa promised stakeholders that Uganda is ready to host Kenyan travellers. Ambassador Charles Ssentongo, from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, hailed the conference as “a Symbol of Regional Unity,” noting that beyond promoting destinations, it strengthens trade, investment, and people-to-people ties between Uganda and Kenya. The annual conference remains a vital platform to boost tourism, foster cross-border collaboration, and unlock shared economic opportunities.

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PSFU Welcomes New Members



On August 28th, the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) welcomed new members into its fold during an induction session held at the head offices in Nakasero.

The session, led by Mr. Francis Kisirinya, Chief Membership Officer, introduced the organizations to PSFU's mission, programs, and opportunities to actively engage in shaping Uganda's private sector agenda.

The new members officially joining PSFU include: Tricolor Partnerships T/A BNI Uganda (Corporate Member), Business Development Service Providers Network (Member), Cocoa Exporters Association Uganda Ltd (Member), Civil Society Coalition on Transport (Member), Credit Reference Bureau Association Uganda Ltd (Member), I&M Bank (Corporate Member), Flow Uganda Ltd (Corporate Member), and Pet Flakes Ltd (Corporate Member). Their addition strengthens PSFU's role as the apex body representing and advancing the interests of Uganda's private sector.

PSFU, UNBS Push For BDS Standards

The Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), in collaboration with the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) Technical Committee 400 on Quality Management and Quality Assurance, held the 10th meeting of its Working Group on Business Development Services (BDS) at Ridar Hotel, Mukono, on Thursday, July 31st.

The meeting brought together key stakeholders from government, academia, and the private sector, including representatives from Enterprise Uganda, Makerere University Business School (MUBS), the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. Discussions centered on reviewing the draft East African Standard (EAS 1159:2024) for BDS, aimed at building organizational capacity and strengthening service delivery for MSMEs.

Participants carried out a clause-by-clause review of the draft, with particular focus on performance measurement, accountability, and continuous improvement. The Head of the Services and Business Management Division emphasized the importance of BDS standards in facilitating trade, boosting efficiency, and supporting regional integration, while also noting challenges such as enforcement gaps, limited awareness, and resistance to change.

Stakeholders further recommended developing sector-specific BDS standards for agribusiness, ICT, and manufacturing, and highlighted the need to integrate sustainability through eco-certification models. Proposals for new standards—including health and safety at events and spatial data standards—were also tabled.



UNBS Engages Traders and Cargo Stakeholders on PvOC and Clearance System Reforms

The Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) held a joint meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at the PSFU head office in Kampala, with cargo consolidators, clearing agents, and traders to address challenges surrounding the Pre-Verification of Conformity (PvOC) system and inefficiencies in cargo clearance at Inland Container Depots (ICDs).

During the meeting Chaired by PSFU's Sector Coordinator – Trade, Transport, Logistics – Collins Agaba, stakeholders highlighted delays in clearance—now stretching up to five days despite Certificates of Conformity—as well as high and inconsistent inspection fees, and limited consultation on recent procedural changes.

They also raised concerns over congestion caused by UNBS tagging entries under IM7, which stalls release of goods even for compliant importers.

In response, UNBS explained that the IM7 tagging directive stemmed from the Prime Minister's office to streamline clearance and reduce congestion. They showcased their new e-portal system, which auto-allocates inspectors and enables faster clearance, with pilot testing already underway for motor vehicles.

The meeting agreed on immediate steps:

- Expedite clearance of the existing backlog.
- Release compliant cargo under seal while holding others for further inspection.
- Draft a binding arrangement between UNBS, consolidators, and ICDs to ensure compliance.
- Strengthen stakeholder engagement and sensitisation on new processes.

A follow-up engagement was scheduled for later to review progress. Stakeholders appreciated the professionalism shown by UNBS but called for more structured communication and policy reforms to ease trade facilitation.



A team from UNBS, cargo consolidators, clearing agents, and traders, with PSFU's Collins Agaba (1st Right) at the PSFU Head Office

From the Secretariat

PSFU Executive Committee Retreat Charts Path for Stronger Future

PSFU's Executive Committee, together with a host of other staff members, held a two-day retreat at Emin Pasha Hotel from Monday, September 9th to Tuesday, September 10th, 2025, under the stewardship of the CEO, Mr. Stephen Asiimwe. The retreat brought together PSFU leadership to reflect, re-align, and chart a renewed course for the organization's future.

With the goal of serving staff, members, and stakeholders more effectively, the retreat was dedicated to revising and brainstorming ideas for a stronger Strategic Plan.

To encourage deeper participation and cohesion, the team was divided into clusters that held intensive discussions on innovative approaches to elevate PSFU's impact in Uganda's private sector.

Beyond long-term planning, the retreat also reviewed preparations for PSFU's flagship end-of-year engagements. These include the Annual General Meeting, the Next Gen event, and the PSFU@30 Gala, all tentatively scheduled for November 24th–25th at the Kampala Serena Hotel. These events are expected to not only celebrate PSFU's 30-year journey but also spotlight its vision for the future of Uganda's private sector. The team at the retreat reaffirmed its commitment to building stronger collaborations, amplifying PSFU's projects and activities, and steering the organization toward greater innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability.



Finance Ministry Launches Budget Strategy for FY2026/27



The National Budget Conference for the Financial Year 2026/27 was successfully held at the Speke Resort Convention Centre, in Munyonyo, on Thursday, September 11, where government leaders, private sector representatives, and development partners convened to shape Uganda's economic direction.

At the Conference, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Matia Kasaija, presented the Budget Strategy for FY 2026/27, which, according to him, will help implement the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV) alongside the 10-fold Growth Strategy. Kasaija outlined some of the key foreseen outcomes of the strategy, underscoring: "strengthening domestic financing, improving national savings, accelerating private sector growth, advancing economic and commercial diplomacy, and deepening regional integration to secure sustained market access."

The event was officiated by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, who commended Minister Kasaija and his team at the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for their leadership in steering the budget process with vision and commitment. The CEO of Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) - Stephen Asiimwe, noted that as the apex body for the private sector in the country, "we have proposed a number of resolutions within the ATMS sectors.

In Agriculture, we are proposing that funding is increased to a tune of sh3 trillion, to support Agro-processing hubs, removal of levies on specific products like maize brand, Scale funding on Agricultural mechanization to boost production, investing more money in water for production to improve on yields, and funding research & paying for application of the same. We believe this will increase Uganda's GDP by 30%."



The Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development - Ramathan Ggoobi, lauded PSFU in guiding Uganda's private sector towards



Private Sector CEOs Rally to Boost Uganda's Tourism Future

On Wednesday September, 10th, over 200 CEOs, policymakers, and private sector leaders gathered in Fort Portal City for the 6th Bi-Annual Private Sector CEO Retreat, a high-level forum focused on accelerating Uganda's tourism-led growth. Held under the theme "*Transforming Uganda into a Preferred Tourism Destination: Enhancing Public-Private Sector Investment in Infrastructure*," the retreat brought together influential voices to align strategies for making tourism a central pillar of socio-economic transformation.

Tourism is one of the four anchors of Uganda's ambitious 10-fold growth strategy, which seeks to expand the economy from US\$50 billion in 2025 to US\$500 billion by 2040. In FY 2024/25 alone, the sector attracted 1.37 million international tourists and nearly 2.8 million domestic visitors, generating Shs 6.3 trillion. According to Katusiime Doreen, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, this growth reflects the resilience of the sector and the success of campaigns such as Explore Uganda.



The retreat, which closed on September 11, with Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja presiding, focused on four key pillars—conservation, digitalisation, product diversification, and safety. Resolutions from the forum are expected to strengthen public-private partnerships, unlock new investment opportunities, and cement Uganda's position as a world-class destination.



Farmers Voice Concerns in Busoga, Sebei and Bugisu Engagements

Between August 27 and September 5, 2025, the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) led a field engagement across the Busoga, Sebei and Bugisu regions, drawing in farmers, local government leaders, stakeholders and technical staff. The meetings, held in districts including Bukwo, Kapchorwa, Kween, Bulambuli, Sironko, Mbale, Namutumba, Iganga and Bugiri, sought to highlight key challenges facing farmers while exploring sustainable solutions to boost incomes, trade and food security.

Across the regions, farmers cited recurring issues of poor seed quality, limited storage facilities, weak market access, fake inputs, low value addition, unreliable electricity, and lack of access to finance. These bottlenecks, they said, continue to stifle productivity and competitiveness in both local and regional markets. For instance, farmers in Bukwo complained of post-harvest losses and aflatoxin contamination, while those in Kween raised concerns over poor prices, unfair trade with Kenya, and the absence of financial literacy. In Kapchorwa, inadequate transport and power disruptions were reported, while Bulambuli farmers highlighted land fragmentation, poor sensitization and lack of drying space for produce.





The engagements, however, were not only about challenges. Concrete recommendations were proposed, among them:

- Distribution of high-quality seeds by the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO).
- Stronger enforcement against fake inputs and harmonisation of agro-standards nationwide.
- Increased budget allocations to support value addition and access to modern farm machinery.
- Establishment of water points and boreholes in parishes to address irrigation challenges.
- Enactment of ordinances to regulate cooperatives, improve governance and ensure fair trade.
- Investment in affordable electricity and solar-powered irrigation to support production.

The fieldwork underscored the urgent need for inclusive agricultural transformation in Eastern Uganda. By strengthening farmer organisations, improving infrastructure, and enforcing quality standards, stakeholders agreed that the region can move towards higher productivity, better market access, and sustainable livelihoods for thousands of smallholder farmers.

PSFU, Partners Launch Landmark Studies to Transform Agricultural Financing & Value Chains in Uganda



The Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), in partnership with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, and with support from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), on Tuesday, 23rd September, unveiled two ground-breaking national studies designed to unlock the potential of Uganda’s agriculture sector.

The studies, focused on Sustainable Financing for Cooperatives and Business Associations and Policy and Market Interventions for Beans, Maize, and Rice Value Chains, were officially launched during a high-level dialogue that convened government leaders, private sector actors, financial institutions, development agencies, and farmer organizations.

Agriculture remains the backbone of Uganda’s economy, employing over 68% of the population but contributing just 24.1% to GDP, according to the 2024 Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

Despite this dominance, the sector remains underfinanced, receiving only 12.2% of national credit. Many cooperatives continue to grapple with high-interest rates of up to 25%, lack of collateral, and weak financial systems—with fewer than 20% ever accessing commercial loans.

The studies revealed significant institutional gaps: only 41.3% of cooperatives maintain updated financial records, 38% undergo external audits, and just 21% utilize digital finance tools. High operational costs, particularly for energy and transport—which consume up to 50% of cooperative budgets—further constrain competitiveness.

“Current policies do not always reflect the realities faced by farmers. These studies provide a blueprint to address systemic gaps and unlock the potential of Uganda’s cooperatives and value chains.” Said Martin Maku – Sector Coordinator Agriculture, Agribusiness and Forestry at PSFU

“Uganda’s ambitious goal to achieve the tenfold growth of the economy translates in an average growth rate of 17% over a 14-year period. Uganda must double the size of the GDP every 5 years for it to reach 500 billion before 2040. To help achieve this goal, we believe that a transformed Agricultural industry, especially with key studies like these, is what we need as a country,” said Stephen Mbogo Kirya – Assistant Commissioner from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives



PSFU Hosts EnDev-GIZ Team for Strategic Talks on Clean Energy & Private Sector Growth

The Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), on Friday 12th September 2025, welcomed a delegation from GIZ's Energising Development (EnDev) programme for high-level strategic discussions aimed at scaling clean energy access and strengthening private sector development in Uganda.

The EnDev-GIZ team was led by Mr. Un-Young Yong, Project Manager for Energising Development Uganda, together with Ms. Bettina Baesch Ssemwaka, Head of Component for Refugees and Host Communities.

They were received by PSFU's CEO, Mr. Stephen Asiimwe, alongside senior management and the Demand-Side Results-Based Financing (DSRBF) Project team.

Asiimwe praised the enduring collaboration between PSFU and GIZ, highlighting GIZ's pivotal role in supporting transformative initiatives such as Last-Mile Results-Based Financing (RBF) Project, COVID-19 Economic Relief Fund for Off-Grid Solar and Cook Stove Sectors, Leave-No-One-Behind (LNOB) Project, Demand-Side Results-Based Financing (DSRBF) Project.

So far, the DSRBF Project has reached over 42,000 households, with 42.2% of them being refugee households. These interventions have provided access to solar energy and clean cooking technologies—empowering communities, promoting environmental conservation, and accelerating Uganda's transition to a clean and inclusive energy future.

Mr. Un-Young Yong acknowledged PSFU as a reliable and results-driven partner, emphasizing that EnDev's mission to strengthen the private sector aligns seamlessly with PSFU's mandate. He noted that PSFU's consistent delivery on GIZ-supported initiatives makes it a strategic ally in advancing sustainable development.



PSFU, EnDev-GIZ Champion Market Awareness to Expand Clean Energy Access in Northern Uganda and Kiryandongo

The Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), in partnership with Energising Development (EnDev)-GIZ, with funding from Kingdom of Netherlands, is implementing the Demand-Side Results-Based Financing (DSRBF) Project, designed to bridge the affordability gap for improved cookstoves and off-grid solar products in underserved refugee settlements, host communities, and other vulnerable rural areas across Northern Uganda and Kiryandongo District.

As part of this initiative, PSFU and EnDev-GIZ have rolled out a market awareness campaign across more than 13 districts, running from August to October 2025. Between August and September 2025, awareness activities were conducted in Kiryandongo, Lamwo, Adjumani, and Yumbe districts. The campaign featured road drives, exhibitions, market activations, radio talk shows and advertisements, and community engagement sessions.

The campaign has significantly increased public awareness of available clean cooking and solar technologies and the price subsidies offered under the DSRBF Project, which has already begun to translate into stronger demand and uptake of clean energy solutions among the population.

In addition, the campaign has attracted the participation of a number of clean energy service companies (ESCOs), which have taken advantage of the platform to showcase their technologies.

This exposure is helping these companies penetrate rural markets more effectively, leading to increased sales while expanding household access to modern, affordable, and sustainable energy solutions.

Through these ongoing efforts, PSFU and EnDev-GIZ are empowering households, creating business opportunities, and contributing to Uganda's broader transition toward clean, sustainable, and affordable energy for all.



PSFU Onboards Financial Institutions to New MSME Financing Gateway Platform



On Thursday, 18th September, a high-level breakfast meeting was convened by PSFU, at Protea Skyz Hotel, to introduce financial institutions to the newly established MSME Financing Gateway Platform, a digital solution designed to revolutionize access to finance for Uganda's micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The platform, developed with the support of the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the EU-EAC MARKUP II Programme, aims to bridge the persistent financing gap faced by MSMEs by directly linking them to financial institutions. It promises to not only expand outreach opportunities for lenders but also to power inclusive economic growth across Uganda.

PSFU's CEO - Stephen Asiimwe, called upon the financial institutions to embrace the platform. "Let's work together to digitally transform MSME financing in Uganda. Your participation will position your institution as a champion of inclusive growth and innovation." Asiimwe said

The meeting drew key players from banks, microfinance institutions, and development partners, who noted the platform's timely role in helping MSMEs, over 90% of Uganda's private sector, access innovative financing to grow.

Upcoming Events...

Uganda-DRC Business Connect Forum

We are excited to announce the Uganda-DRC Business Connect Forum, set to take place in Butembo, DRC, from 29th September to 2nd October 2025.

This premier forum will bring together business leaders, investors, and exhibitors from Uganda and the DRC to explore new trade and investment opportunities, foster strategic partnerships, and showcase innovative products and services.

Private sector players from both countries are invited to join this platform for meaningful networking, knowledge sharing, and business growth.



3rd Uganda–Russia Intergovernmental Commission



The Government of Uganda is pleased to announce the upcoming 3rd Session of the Uganda–Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation, set to take place in October 2025 in Kampala. This high-level forum will bring together representatives from both nations to strengthen partnerships and drive progress across key areas of mutual interest. The session will spotlight five thematic pillars of cooperation as outlined in the bilateral agreement between Uganda and the Russian Federation:

Upcoming Events...

31st Uganda International Trade Fair

Uganda Manufacturers' Association (UMA) is set to hold the 31st Uganda International Trade Fair, from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 12th November, at UMA Showgrounds, Lugogo, Kampala.

Running under the theme: "Sustainable Industrialisation for Inclusive Growth, Employment and Wealth Creation", the trade fair is set to bring together multiple players in the manufacturing and services sector, all converging to explore business opportunities, forge strategic partnerships, and exhibit the very best of products and services across diverse industries.



Uganda–Somalia JPC & Investment and Business Summit



Uganda will host the 2nd session of the Uganda-Somalia Joint Permanent Commission (JPC) alongside an Investment and Business Summit, scheduled to take place from Tuesday 7th to Wednesday 8th October, 2025, at Mestil Hotel, Kampala.

This high-level forum will bring together business leaders, investors, policymakers, and development partners from both Uganda and Somalia to explore new trade and investment opportunities. The summit will provide a unique platform to strengthen bilateral relations, foster cross-border partnerships, and showcase priority sectors such as agriculture, trade, logistics, manufacturing, services, and finance.



Business growth is our business

Private sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) is Uganda's apex body for the private sector made up of over 340 Business Associations, Corporate bodies and the major Public Sector Agencies that support private sector growth. Since its founding in 1995, PSFU has served as a focal point for private sector advocacy as well as capacity building and continues to sustain a positive dialogue with Government on behalf of the private sector. PSFU is also Government's implementation partner for several projects and programmes aimed at strengthening the private sector as an engine of economic growth in Uganda.



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