

16th - 20th June 2025



Unlocking Regional Trade Potential: Stakeholders Chart Path for SME Growth in Uganda

A two-day national validation workshop on the integration of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) into regional value and supply chains was held at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Kampala. Organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in partnership with Uganda's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, the event served as a critical platform for engaging stakeholders on how SMEs can better leverage opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The primary objective of the workshop was to gather insights from stakeholders on how to boost the capacity of Ugandan SMEs to harness opportunities under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The discussions focused on identifying practical strategies that can strengthen SME participation in both domestic and regional value-added production and trade.

USSIA emphasized the importance of ensuring that small-scale industries are not left behind in the AfCFTA implementation. The Association advocated for inclusive policy frameworks that reflect the realities of grassroots entrepreneurs and support innovation, local sourcing, and sustainable business practices.

As Uganda continues its journey toward deeper economic integration within Africa, this workshop marks a critical step in aligning national SME development strategies with regional trade opportunities. The collaborative efforts are expected to catalyze stronger institutional linkages, improved research, and policy development that empowers SMEs to thrive in competitive value chains.

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DRIVING SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY: STAKEHOLDERS RALLY FOR GREEN CHEMISTRY IN UGANDA

Stakeholders from across government, academia, and industry convened at Hotel Africana in Kampala for the Global Green Chemistry Innovation and Network Programme (GGCINP) Awareness-Raising Workshop, a landmark event aimed at promoting environmentally sound chemical management and fostering green innovation in Uganda. Organized by the Uganda Cleaner Production Centre and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the workshop marked a significant step in aligning Uganda's industrial growth with sustainable practices.

USSIA reiterated the need for deliberate policy support to empower small manufacturers, who often lack access to capital and technical expertise necessary to adopt green technologies.

The Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA), representing the nation's vast network of small-scale manufacturers, played a pivotal role in the workshop by voicing the environmental concerns and innovation potential of local industries. USSIA highlighted ongoing efforts to eliminate hazardous substances in production processes, notably promoting chromium-free alternatives in leather tanning—a move aligned with global trends in safer chemical use.

As momentum builds around the green chemistry agenda, the collective efforts of institutions like the Uganda Cleaner Production Centre, USSIA, and key development partners offer hope for a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient industrial future.

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Private Sector Voices React to Uganda's National Budget



USSIA urged the government to adopt a more targeted approach in future budgets, one that amplifies support for small-scale industries and aligns sector priorities with actual growth trends. The association also called for regular budget reviews involving the private sector to ensure that policies remain responsive to evolving business needs.

As the dialogue concluded, there was consensus that while the budget presents some growth opportunities, its true impact will depend on how effectively resources are allocated and whether emerging sectors like ICT receive the attention they deserve. The private sector remains hopeful but cautious, calling for greater accountability, public-private collaboration, and inclusive planning in Uganda's fiscal agenda.

Key stakeholders in Uganda's business landscape gathered at Protea Hotel for the Private Sector Post-Budget Dialogue to analyze the recently announced national budget and its implications for enterprise growth. The event, which brought together representatives from business associations, policy experts, and government officials, served as a critical platform for dissecting how fiscal decisions will impact the private sector across various industries.

The dialogue featured an in-depth breakdown of the budget allocations, identifying both opportunities and constraints for private sector development. Stakeholders acknowledged positive strides in infrastructure investment and tax incentives targeting manufacturing and agro-processing. However, concerns were raised about inconsistent policy implementation and limited support for informal and early-stage enterprises.



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One of the central themes of the workshop was the need for inclusive vocational training programs that not only equip refugees with practical skills but also foster long-term integration into local economies. Stakeholders examined successful case studies, shared best practices, and began mapping out strategic partnerships that could bridge gaps in access, curriculum relevance, and certification processes.

Field visits to local vocational training centers allowed participants to witness firsthand the realities on the ground, offering a practical lens through which theoretical discussions were anchored. These insights informed rich discussions around policy alignment, resource mobilization, and community engagement. By the end of the three days, the RiTE Project Workshop aimed at producing a roadmap for collaborative action, ensuring that refugee learners are not only seen and heard but also given the tools to build meaningful, self-sufficient futures.

RiTE Project Workshop Sparks New Collaborations

In a concerted effort to enhance inclusive education for refugees, the RiTE (Refugee Integration Through Education) Project Workshop convened in the boardroom of the Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA), bringing together a dynamic mix of European and Ugandan partners, vocational training institutions, and refugee support organisations.

The three-day workshop marked a pivotal moment in cross-sector collaboration, setting the stage for sustainable and inclusive educational practices tailored to the needs of refugee communities. Through a blend of interactive sessions, field visits, and focused discussions, participants explored the current state of vocational education in Uganda and beyond, identifying pressing challenges and opportunities for innovation.



Strengthening Roots: ZEC Meetings Drive MSME Development Across Regions

The Zonal Executive Committee (ZEC) continues to make impactful strides in supporting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through its recent regional engagements in Mbarara and Kampala.



In Kampala, the meeting also highlighted the significance of member-to-member visits — a practical approach to peer learning and collaboration. By identifying common challenges faced by members, the zone aims to engage relevant authorities for targeted support and timely interventions. These proactive efforts are geared towards building a more responsive and sustainable MSME environment in the region.



In Kampala, the ZEC meeting served as a powerful platform for empowering MSMEs across the city's five divisions: Central, Kawempe, Nakawa, Rubaga, and Makindye. Leaders and stakeholders convened to share best practices, explore innovative financing solutions, and discuss strategies for market access and capacity building.

Discussions underscored the importance of collaborative growth, with a strong focus on equipping MSMEs with the tools, networks, and resources necessary to thrive in competitive markets. From enhancing access to affordable credit to organizing sector-specific training, the ZEC reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the backbone of Uganda's economy.

Both meetings reflect a unified vision — to build stronger, more resilient zonal structures that respond directly to the needs of MSMEs. Through strategic planning, leadership empowerment, and community-driven action, the ZEC is paving the way for inclusive industrial development across Uganda.

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Digital Pathways to Prosperity: Empowering Youth Through ICT Skills



Beyond basic ICT skills, the training introduced participants to a suite of digital platforms and services aimed at enhancing business readiness. These included the Yokazzi App, a tool designed to connect artisans, small business owners, and entrepreneurs to new markets and business opportunities; the USSIA Online Shop, which provides a platform for local producers to market and sell their products digitally; and the USSIA Starter Platform, an interactive space that supports youth and start-ups in developing structured and sustainable business plans.

With continued support, these young digital pioneers are poised to become powerful agents of change in their communities.

Under the inspiring theme “Community Youth Empowerment Through Digital Literacy,” a dynamic ICT training session was conducted, equipping young people with essential digital tools to thrive in today’s technology-driven world. The program focused on practical, hands-on training in key Microsoft Office applications — Word and PowerPoint — as well as foundational internet skills.

Participants learned to create professional documents and impactful presentations, crucial capabilities for job readiness, entrepreneurship, and academic success. In addition to technical skills, the training emphasized digital confidence, encouraging youth to leverage technology not just as users but as innovators and creators.



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Bridging the Gap: Direct Member Engagement Strengthens Industrial Growth

In a hands-on effort to stay connected with its grassroots network, a dedicated USSIA team recently conducted membership visits to five active members, with the goal of gaining firsthand insight into their business operations, delivering membership certificates, and addressing real-time challenges faced by small-scale entrepreneurs.

The visits, which spanned diverse sectors and business models, provided an invaluable opportunity for the USSIA team to understand the day-to-day realities of its members. From small manufacturing units to artisanal workshops, each visit showcased the resilience and innovation driving Uganda's small-scale industries.



One of the key highlights of the initiative was the official handover of USSIA membership certificates, a symbol of inclusion and recognition within the national network of small-scale enterprises. These certificates not only strengthen credibility for the members in business dealings but also open access to USSIA's wide range of support services including training, advocacy, and market linkages.



This initiative marks a renewed focus on grassroots empowerment, setting the tone for more inclusive growth and tailored support to Uganda's small-scale industrial sector. As USSIA continues to engage directly with its members, the voice of the small entrepreneur will remain central to shaping the future of Uganda's industrial development.

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Showcasing Local Excellence: South Western Entrepreneurs Exhibit at Ankole Kingdom Palace



A wave of entrepreneurial pride swept through the Ankole Kingdom Palace as small-scale industrialists from South western region gathered to showcase their locally made products in a vibrant exhibition celebrating innovation, craftsmanship, and regional economic potential.



The event not only offered valuable market exposure but also served to elevate the visibility of local industries within the Ankole sub-region. Visitors were impressed by the quality and authenticity of the products, many of which reflected unique cultural influences and sustainable production practices.



The exhibition also reaffirmed the importance of collaborative efforts between traditional institutions like the Ankole Kingdom and modern industrial development initiatives. By opening its doors to the local business community, the Kingdom demonstrated its support for economic empowerment and regional development.

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UPCOMING EVENTS



STREET MARKET

ARUA CITY

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August
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Arua City

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Location:
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VENUE: USSIA Offices, UMA show grounds Lugogo

DATE: 28th - 30th July 2025 **Starting At** 9:00am

0705378023 / 0773660688
info@ussia.or.ug
www.ussia.or.ug

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30th-31st July, 2025

8:00am -1:00pm

USSIA Offices, Layibi opposite Gasco petrol station

FEE: 50,000/=

More Information
www.ussia.or.ug

Contact Us
0783446122

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UPCOMING EVENTS



BEEF PROCESSING TRAINING


What to learn / Expect

Beef sausages
Minced meat

Fee: 100,000
/=

 USSIA Meat processing plant Mbarara

 17th - 19th July 2025
09.00am

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0706545449

Visit Our Website
www.ussia.or.ug



EXERCISE BOOKS MAKING TRAINING



Are you ready to turn your creativity into a profitable skill? Our hands-on training in exercise book making is the perfect opportunity to learn how to craft professional-quality books from scratch!

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 8:00am - 1:00pm

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FEE: 50,000/=

 More Information
www.ussia.or.ug

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0783446122



RE-USABLE PADS TRAINING



19th July 2025 | 9:00AM

Location: USSIA Mbale Offices, along Tororo highway

Ready to take control of your health, your wallet, and the environment? Discover the power of crafting your own reusable menstrual pads a sustainable, affordable, and empowering alternative to disposable products.

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 Website
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Making Sense of the National Budget: What It Means for Small-Scale Industries in Uganda

1. Support for Agro-Industrialization

The government continues to prioritize agro-industrialization — turning raw agricultural products into value-added goods. This is good news if you're in food processing, packaging, or related areas.

What it means for you:

- Expect more support for agro-processing equipment and inputs.
- Opportunities may arise through programs under Uganda Development Corporation (UDC) and Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI).

2. Affordable Financing for MSMEs

The budget increases focus on affordable financing, with continued support for:

- The Parish Development Model (PDM),
- Emyooga program,
- Small Business Recovery Fund.

What it means for you:

- You can access loans at lower interest rates if you're part of a SACCO, cooperative, or organized group.
- Prepare proper records and business plans to qualify.
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3. Tax Measures and Reliefs

The government introduced a few new tax incentives and measures to reduce the burden on local manufacturers.

What it means for you:

- If you produce locally, you may benefit from tax exemptions on machinery, inputs, or raw materials.
- Keep records and register your business to benefit from these policies.
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As a small-scale industry operator:

- Stay informed through USSIA and local government channels.
- Organize your business — registration, bookkeeping, and product standardization are now more important than ever.
- Take advantage of available training and financing programs.
- Collaborate with other members to form cooperatives or clusters — it makes accessing government support easier.
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