EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Uganda experiences the effects of the COVID19 pandemic & the impact of the current lockdown which is a measure to curb the spread of COVID19, Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) in partnership with UN Women facilitated a 2 days online discussion focused on import substitution, economic stimulus proposals, opportunities, including the young people and women; and linkages to drive Uganda’s economic self-sustainability.

The online discussion was hosted on 3rd & 4th May 2020 via zoom webinar and a live televised broadcast on NBS TV. The theme of the discussion was “inclusive economic stimulus strategies, opportunities and linkages amidst COVID19”

The discussion attracted key note speakers from the productive sectors of the economy including agriculture, manufacturing, education, tourism, banking & insurance, ICT, Sports & entertainment among others, as well as Government Ministries such as Ministry of Trade, Judiciary who facilitate & contribute to private sector development.

During the 2 days online engagement, there was attraction of;
- 10 million viewers on TV
- 12 million tweets
(Trending hashtags #PSFUEcon2020 #COVID19UGRecovery)
- 5 million followers on Facebook & YouTube
- 2,000 comments & questions
- 3,000 participants registered via zoom webinar link

There were key highlight recommendations noted from viewers which included the following;

1. Accelerate the implementation BUBU policy to build internal capacity and resilience and promote import substitution
2. Organize agriculture production & Invest in value addition mechanisms and facilities
3. Provide export guarantee schemes especially for markets such as DR Congo
4. Incubation for women so that they contribute to the resilience of the Ugandan economy

INTRODUCTION

The business environment plays a critical role in private sector growth and competitiveness. Before the current crisis, nearly 75% of Ugandan firms were operating at less than 50 percent capacity. Since the COVID 19 pandemic set in during early March 2020, production for most sectors was suspended pausing severe challenges in supplies, distribution and consumption. Uganda’s import bill stands at $6.7b with a fast growing trade deficit, currently in excess of $3b. Although Uganda launched BUBU policy in 2017, our capacity for local production has increased albeit slowly in manufacturing and service provision.

The current crisis demands that Uganda continues to increase its capacity for local production especially in areas that support healthy and safety as well as food production, processing, storage and marketing. Uganda’s fight against the dangers caused by COVID 19 like elsewhere, must be read in our capacities to manufacture healthcare equipment including face masks, medicinal drugs, ventilators, soaps, sanitizers etc.

The need to have a self-sustaining economy and one that is resilient from external shocks such as the COVID 19 pandemic cannot be over emphasized. PSFU together with some partners had been working with Government to jointly design interventions that can in the short run save lives of both persons and businesses, but as well, shape the medium to long term strategies for the economy (Economic Recovery Plan). A number of conclusions had been crafted and the public needed to be part of the onward strategies and solutions.

The wider membership of the private sector therefore needed to know about these developments, and also make their own input to sharpen these strategies and also regain traction and restore hope. Hence, the rationale of hosting the first ever online private sector conference.

Objectives of the Conference;

I. To update the business community on the measures so far proposed to Government
II. To examine the extent to which COVID 19 pandemic and its measures have affected various businesses by size, sector, geographical area and general economy.

III. To collect private sector players across the sectors their input on the possible measures to address these challenges in the short, medium and long term.

IV. To amplify the visibility of the PSFU as the apex body of the private sector in Uganda.

The above objectives were successfully achieved with evident representation of wider viewership and participation through registrations and constant feedback received as comments, recommendations and questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TWEETS</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>REACH</th>
<th>IMPRESSIONS</th>
<th>TOTAL RT'S</th>
<th>TOTAL FAVES</th>
<th>REPLIES</th>
<th>HIDDEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>655</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>955,724</td>
<td>19,623,205</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>2,998</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ATTENDEE SURVEY**

The online conference was organized & set-up via zoom webinar with a live televised broadcast. The zoom webinar link interested participants to register
and log questions before the conference. Through the link statistics, there were 3,000 people registered to participate in the conference and 10 million viewers on TV, as well as YouTube and Facebook channels. From the twitter statistics below, there were more engagements from men than women.

![Audience by Age](image1) ![Audience by Gender](image2)

The majority of your followers appear to be men along with people between the ages of 25-34.

**PROGRAM AND SPEAKERS**

The online conference was hosted on 3rd and 4th May 2020 with a 3 hours broadcast on TV for the two days. The TV and online discussion was moderated by eloquent TV personalities who engaged & coordinated the various key note speakers, audiences and the hosts from PSFU & UN Women.

The key note speakers were guided to share the realities & challenges within their sectors amidst COVID19, as well as possible solutions to support the sector.

The discussions were complimented by video clips recorded highlighting sector stimulus proposals & solutions shared by sector chairs as represented on the PSFU Board of Directors.
Day One: There were five key note speakers selected from the manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, education and finance sectors. These were; Prof. Waswa Balunywa, Ms. Barbara Mulwana, Mr. Patrick Mweheire, Hon. Victoria Sekitoleko & Mr. Amos Wekesa.

Day Two: There were nine key note speakers who represented the media & entertainment, ICT & Innovation, Oil & Gas, Transport & Logistics, Sports, Trade, Judiciary sectors, as well as job opportunities presented by a representative from Mastercard Foundation Uganda. These were; Chief Justice Hon. Bart Katureebe, Hon. Amelia Kyambadde, Mr. Kin Kariisa, Mr. James Saaka, Mr. Ernest Rubondo, Mr. CK Japheth, Dr. Merian Sebunya, Mr. Don Rukare, and Mr. Samuel Yalew Adela.

Key recommendations;

- Balance selection speakers to have inclusion of women & young people
- Time management to ensure content delivery is sufficient & feedback is also addressed.

PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORS

The online conference was hosted in partnership with UN Women, NITA-Uganda, Uganda Chamber of Mines & Petroleum, Mastercard Foundation under the Young Africa Works Uganda Program, Public Relations Association of Uganda (PRAU) and Soft Power Communications.

Next media services was the official media sponsor of the e-conference and provided a 360 coverage of the 2 days event through NBS TV, and online channels which included social media & news site. There was constant promotion
of the conference through the news bulletins, TV show guest appearance (The Frontline), video spot adverts &

The partnerships enabled the conference to achieve its objectives through ensuring promotion and execution of the various pre and post event activities, as well as meeting the financial obligations involved.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The key highlights collected from feedback from participants; partners include the following;

a) Improve liquidity amongst the population through use of expansionary monetary policies. For instance, negotiate for a debt stand of the 15 trillion shillings worth interest and channel the resources to SACCOs and VSLAs to benefit over 18 million people. This will improve their liquidity, business operations and consequently improve effectiveness of the demand for goods and services

b) Implement the BUBU and Local content policies to support industries improve their cash flow constraints. The local content bill needs to be passed by Parliament immediately & should be aligned with BUBU policy

c) Settle all domestic arrears that belong to the private sector

d) Expedite at the VAT and WHT refunds for the private sector to ease their cash flow constraints

e) Deploy a tax regime that promotes local industries formalize and add value and rather increase import duty for most of the imported products

f) Implore bilateral negotiations to address NTBs, open new markets such as DR Congo and others. Also consider marketing Uganda to international tourists such that they get to know that Uganda is on the right pandemic management trajectory.

g) Consider availing a recovery fund that must be managed as a risk guarantee scheme under commercial banks with clear and well managed procedures. This could target priority sectors and interest should not exceed 10%

h) PSFU needs to implement the lead firm model to provide employment to masses, organize production, address standards and improve household incomes for the young people and women

i) Devise a policy regime that targets a better management of population growth rate to support the country in planning and GDP growth.
j) The informal sector also requires a stimulus package to kick start their businesses given the fact that they use very limited capital and they have been depending on it during the COVID period

WAY FORWARD:

The e-Conferences will continue to be strategically organized to discuss each sector in detail providing solutions and the recommendations will be shared publicly.

PSFU will continue to engage Government on behalf of private sector to ensure that fiscal and tax policies are enforced and in turn will support liquidity of enterprises post COVID-19