



Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation seeks to reinvent itself to become profitable

The Board, Management and Staff of Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation congratulate His Excellency The President Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Cabinet and Members of Parliament on the 30th NRM Anniversary.

We are mandated to publish all Government Legislation, the Uganda Gazette and Civil Service Standing Orders.

One hundred and thirteen years ago, the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation was established to be the crowning glory of printing business/services in Uganda and East Africa. But while there is bee-hive activity on Kampala's Nasser Road, which has become Uganda's printing hub, at the Entebbe-based printing company, silence greets you.

Seeking to reinvest itself into a vibrant printing and publishing company, the corporation has embarked on a journey to rejuvenate itself to its past glory

For starters, the corporation's managing director, Irene Muwanguzi, who joined the corporation in December 2014, together with a lean Management team launched a three-year strategic plan to guide the company's plan of action.

"Although we were supposed to be operating on commercial basis from the start, we were unable to do so because we didn't have a proper strategy," she said. "The strategic plan will guide us on where we need to go."

UPPC has in the past been faced with transparency challenges including corruption and mismanagement, which have tainted its image and eroded stakeholder confidence. But with improved internal systems and rebranding, UPPC will be able to regain public confidence. "We have to ensure proper corporate governance going forward and also ensure proper accountability for all the revenues generated," Muwanguzi notes.



H.E. YOWERI K. MUSEVENI
PRESIDENT OF UGANDA



Irene Muwanguzi, MD, UPPC

Government is required to give UPPC money for its operations as per the 1992 UPPC Act, but no funding has been forthcoming for about 20 years. It also inherited a lot of old assets in form of equipment, printing material and staff who had been employed on permanent and pensionable basis, which presented a big problem to new Management.

"We have been grappling with this challenge but we see government starting to show interest in funding the company again and we hope to get funds in the coming financial budget," Muwanguzi says. Despite receiving no funding, the company is now able to make some money. In 2011, the company's income was estimated at Sh3b and increased to Sh3.3b in 2012. It, however, slowed down to Sh3b in 2014 picking up to about Sh3.7b in early December 2015.

UPPC also intends to adopt the latest printing and publishing technologies so as to drive business efficiency and more profitability. The newest machine at the corporation was bought in 1991.

Opportunities in the industry

According to Muwanguzi, Uganda's printing and publishing industry has immense opportunities and potential for growth. Although UPPC is by law supposed to be the official printing company for all government documents, only about 10% of government printable work is done there.

Other sensitive material UPPC is supposed to be printing includes land titles, legislations and legal instruments, government policy statements, parliamentary white papers, bills and Acts of Parliament among others.

Major growth obstacles

The biggest hindrance to growth over the past years has been limited capitalisation and inheritance of old assets. "We inherited a lot of debt estimated at about Sh3b including tax liabilities to NSSF; and URA's tax returns were not being done on time. Consequently, we have to service the Sh3b debt alongside the new tax obligations which is not easy," Muwanguzi explains.

The burden of the long serving workers who should by now be retired is also weighing down the ability to grow faster. The printing house still has workers who have worked with the printer since the 1970s but cannot be let go because of limited resources to pay their gratuity, amounting to about Sh2b.



UPPC- At Public Administration Exhibition at Kololo on 23rd June 20015

The corporation is supposed to print all sensitive government documents such as ballot papers, examination papers for Uganda National Examination Board, government log books, driving permits, death and birth certificates and budget documents. "Right now there is a lot of duplication of documents including university certificates. We want to close that loophole," she says.

Plans for 2016

In 2016, Muwanguzi notes, UPPC will focus on rebranding so as to improve its corporate image, in addition to amending the UPPC Act to make it relevant to the current situation. UPPC intends to establish a printing school so as to help bridge the skills gap in the printing and publishing industry.



Some of the high techprinter,s at UPPC