

# People, profits and purpose:

Oliver Lalani, executive director Roofings Group, outlines the vision, journey, achievements and challenges of the group as well as the future projections.

**B**riefly tell us about yourself and Roofings Group  
Roofings is a crown jewel in the manufacturing sector in Uganda, having a far reaching influence across the east and central African steel and plastic market space.

I have been involved with the company since 2009, although I spent a few summers during my schooling abroad doing some jobs down on the shop floor.

This involved stacking steel pipes and Roofing sheets fresh of the production line and learning about the various processes in steel forming and shaping.

I joined the company after doing my bachelors degree in economics and management just when breaking of the ground at Roofings Rolling Mills in Namanve started.

The experience in watching the three unique production plants being built from scratch and then gradually operating at higher utilisation levels was one of a lifetime and which I cherish to this day. Most especially, the diversity of nationalities and cultures working together to construct and commission one of Africa's finest steel complexes was inspiring to me.

Roofings was able to tap into best practices from the most renowned machine makers across the globe to achieve



Roofings group limited recently celebrated their 25th anniversary at the Kampala Serena Hotel last month



Oliver Lalani, executive director Roofings Group

technological excellence in producing the right quantity with the best quality available on the market.

For a company born in Uganda, this is an unparalleled accomplishment, for which we are all proud.

**You have watched Roofings grow since your childhood, in terms of achieving the mission and vision of Roofings Group, what would be your assessment?**  
Roofings has made an immense effort to be the most ethical, quality-conscious, reputable, reliable and professional construction material manufacturer in the market.

In aiming to be the largest and most diversified steel manufacturer, and being a one-stop shop for steel and plastic construction materials, Roofings has continuously invested in additional product streams and most importantly in to backward integration. RRM was the culmination

of this 'promise', creating massive employment opportunities for Ugandans and ensuring domestic value addition, export revenue generation, and import substitution which our country badly needs in the quest to achieve middle income status.

**You are celebrating 25 years, what do you see as your biggest milestone?**  
The biggest milestone in my view, is the realisation of RRM, Namanve. This investment is incomparable not only in Uganda but in the entire east and central African region, perhaps even the continent at large. Uganda's industrial development was severely retarded due to the troubles

## CHALLENGES

Unfair competition, dumping of construction materials from abroad and relative high cost of doing business.

in the 1970s which put it far behind some of its neighbours in manufacturing output. The inception of various industrial parks was a key step to encourage value addition and technological advancement in the manufacturing sector.

When Roofings became the first mover into KIBP, Namanve, the doors opened for many other companies to follow suit. When Roofings moved into the park, it was



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The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of **Planbuild Technical Services Ltd** congratulate our esteemed client **Roofing Uganda Limited, Uganda**. Congratulations on your fantastic achievements and may you continue to go above and beyond in all aspects of the business.

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# Roofings' 25-year journey

literally a bush.

No power, marrum roads and no connected water. As the project took off, so did infrastructure in the park. Now, it is home to the most technologically advanced steel manufacturer in the region! Roofings has a lot to thank the Government of Uganda for creating an enabling business environment.

The progression of Roofings is synonymous with the growth of the Ugandan economy, which is something every citizen should be proud of and enjoy.

## What are your views on Uganda's construction sector?

The construction sector has been maturing at a very fast pace. Due to the growing rates of urbanisation, industrialisation and infrastructure development, the availability of high quality steel in adequate quantity is of paramount importance. This is where Roofings comes in.

Private sector growth is picking up in the economy, as witnessed with the growth in the industrial park, where 260 companies are set to move in with dozens having opened up shop already.

The Ugandan population is growing at a very fast rate and life expectancy is also increasing, this means that companies have to cater for more and more demand, which is a great opportunity for the private sector.

There is a shortage of about a million homes in the country which will need to be satisfied with time.

The continuous investment in infrastructure development by the Government is another lifeline for the construction sector, especially in anticipation of the oil and gas activities, there is a lot more construction being planned.

The construction sector's contribution to Uganda's GDP is set to double by the time oil

## COMMITMENT

Everyone at Roofings will continue working hard and keeping on its trajectory of continuous growth and development

company going forward in the next 25 years.

## What is your promise to the consumer for the next 25 years and more?

First of all, on behalf of the entire team at Roofings; I would like to thank our staff,

clients, the Government of Uganda, and all stakeholders for their crucial part in the success story of Roofings.

The company could have never reached this milestone without the relentless support from its well-wishers, so this is really a moment for

everyone to be proud and feel inspired.

As the 25 years campaign slogan reads – there is so much more to do – which signifies the intention that everyone at Roofings will continue working hard and keeping on its trajectory

of continuous growth and development.

The future of Uganda is bright, and Roofings is a star, which aims to shine brighter each passing moment on this remarkable story of socio-economic growth in the Pearl of Africa.

is flowing, which is mega.

## What are some of the challenges encountered by Roofings Group in the last 25 years of existence?

As is the case with any success story, there have been quite a few challenges which have been faced. Unfair competition, dumping of construction materials from abroad and relative high cost of doing business are a few examples.

However, with the help from government agencies, one by one the bottlenecks are being resolved so that the manufacturing sector in general can grow and cater for the ever-growing needs of Ugandans.

## How is Roofings positioning itself to remain the leading steel and plastic manufacturing plant in the region?

Roofings is continuing to invest in technology and modernise its systems and processes in keeping up with the latest trends in global best practices.

The equity partnership and technical assistance arrangement with a company like Yodogawa Steel Works is testimony to the length at which Roofings will go to absorb new and better ways of operating.

The company also continues to invest in its people which is key, as they will be the drivers of the growth to come. Professional governance mechanisms, succession planning and continuous training will be key for the

# Congratulations

## ROOFINGS GROUP, UGANDA



The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of Umeme Limited wish to congratulate Roofings Group on their 25<sup>th</sup> year of diligent quality service, in strengthening our nation.

We take pride in our healthy relationship, as business partners and affirm to steady growth and supply of reliable electricity to boost our economy.

*25 years Anniversary*



Guests at the anniversary celebrations last month

## Umeme Limited

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