

Roofings' impact on the economy

Roofings Group is one of the 11 businesses that Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) has awarded the prestigious Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) status. Umar Nsubuga interviewed the finance and economic advisor, Dr Martin Kyeyune, about the recent accreditation of the group and the impact of their business on the economy

What does this new status mean to your company?

The AEO status means recognition for high level of compliance for tax and other regulatory requirements.

It is also a regional certification of our products, which means our products are complimented in the East African Community.

This status, therefore, smoothen and lessens our cost of operation.

For example, we get priority status treatment by URA, translating into faster clearance of goods as well as timely manual clearance of goods in the event of system

breakdown across borders.

We are privileged to have uninterrupted system availability to allow timely lodging of assessments and payments and dedicated support by a relationship officer, creating room for better business facilitation.

Can you tell us a little more about the products and services you offer?

Roofings Group, which comprises Roofings Limited and Roofings Rolling Mills Limited, is the largest manufacturer of steel and plastic construction materials in East Africa.

Our products conform to standards set by the International Organisation for Standardisation and our quality offers long term benefits to consumers.

The steel products include plain galvanised and pre-painted coils, roofing sheets, hollow sections, mild steel plates, open profiles, barbed wire, razor wire and chain link.

All our products are widely used for domestic, commercial, public and industrial purposes. We have plastic products such as polyvinyl chloride,



Dr Martin Kyeyune, the finance and economic advisor

high-density polyethylene and polypropylene random copolymer pipes for plumbing, electricity and sewerage conduits.

We offer transport services and financing options especially for dealers, so as to foster their growth. We also offer technical support and testing services to our customers.

Prior to the certification, were there any challenges you faced, that will most

likely be addressed by the attainment of this new status?

Yes of course, back then we used to experience delays in cargo clearance. However, with this status we are able to utilise the single customs system which is not associated with unnecessary inconveniences.

URA systems sometimes breakdown because of manual interventions, resulting in delayed imports and losses across the

production spectrum.

We have been affected by delayed export clearances for goods, resulting in demurrage and increased transport charges/ surcharges for idle time as well as high electricity and machine maintenance costs.

As an entrepreneur, what support do you need from the Government or other stakeholders?

To enforce compliance across all sectors in a bid to ensure a level playing field for all. If this level is attained we will be able to achieve our 2040 Vision.

What has been Roofings' impact on the economy?

Our contribution is mainly through direct employment. Between 2016 and 2018, Roofings Group employed on average 1,520 people.

Roofings Rolling Mills employed 767 people on average in the same period. Most of these are engineers and technicians.

We estimate the indirect employment to be five times the number of direct employment.

Our investment has boosted economic activities in areas

such fabrication in Katwe and Bweyogerere. We are opening up new outlets such as one in Mbarara, which will boost more economic activities.

Our power consumption for the group is about 17MW at a capacity utilisation slightly above 50%.

At economically viable full capacity, we can consume about 25MW.

Our exports for the group increased by 25.6% from 50,392 tonnes in 2017 to 63,313 tonnes in 2018. The exports earned Uganda \$60m in 2017 and \$75m in 2018, an increase of 25%.

The net value addition (net forex earnings) in Uganda at about 36.6% was \$22m in 2017 and \$27.5m in 2018. This also implies forex saving for the country.

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

We will continue to strengthen the nation in the construction industry. We promise our customers more innovative product range.

For the dealers, we promise to give technical and financial assistance so that as we grow they also grow into dominating the market.

FOR GALVANISING UGANDA INTO DEVELOPMENT FOR 25 YEARS.

We are delighted to congratulate Roofings Group on reaching such an important 25-year milestone. Long may you continue to strengthen the domestic, commercial, public and industrial structures that help strengthen Uganda and beyond.

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