

“Industrialization for job creation and shared prosperity should be reflected in the FY 2018.19 Budget Allocation” CSOs and Private sector demand.

Members of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Private Sector have called upon the Government to reflect the theme of the FY 2018/19 Budget through appropriate allocation to the Trade, Industry and Cooperatives sector. This call was made during a CSOs Consultative Meeting on the FY 2018/19 Budget allocation to the Trade, Industry and Cooperatives Sector organized by SEATINI. The meeting was attended by CSOs representatives, Members of Parliament, Agro-processors, Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), the Ministry of EAC Affairs (MEACA), Ministry of Trade and its key Agencies like UNBS.

During the meeting, Ms. Jane Nalunga, the Country Director SEATINI-Uganda noted that Trade, Industry and Cooperatives sector is critical in establishing backward and forward linkages between manufacturing and agriculture, creating employment, advancing technology, stimulating agricultural production and productivity, and export competitiveness and ultimately improving people’s livelihoods. It is also critical in improving Uganda’s exports thereby reducing the ever increasing Trade deficit, reported by the Bank of Uganda at USD 238.80 Million as of November 2017. However, she stressed that the proposed 0.5% (92,378,000,000 Billion UGX) budget allocation to the sector for the FY 2018/19 is not sufficient to support the sector to achieve the budget theme of Industrialisation for job creation and shared prosperity.



Figure 1 L-R: Mr. Wakaabu Siragi, Principal Commercial Officer from Ministry of Trade, Mr. Mwambutsya Ndebesa lecturer at Makerere University and Ms. Jane Nalunga, Country Director SEATINI-Uganda

Issues for consideration



Figure 2 Eng. Dr. Ben Manyindo, ED. UNBS giving his remarks

The meeting recalled that there are a number of Departments and Agencies within the Ministry of Trade which play a critical role in development. Key of these include the Trade and Development program whose major role is to enhance Uganda’s Market through negotiations; the UNBS which is mandated to develop, promote and enforce the use of standards while ensuring fairness in trade through reliable measurement systems; and the Uganda Export Promotions Board (UEPB) whose major mandate is to facilitate development, diversification and promotion of exports. Other key departments and agencies include the MSMEs department, Uganda Development Corporation,

Cooperatives Department including other critical players like District Commercial Officers. However, it was indicated that these departments are underfunded and thus need to be prioritised in the FY 2018/19. In his submission, Eng. Dr. Ben Manyindo; Executive Director of UNBS indicated that the proposed 21 billion UGX to UNBS for the FY 2018/19 won't be enough in facilitating its plans of ensuring product compliance to standards, standards harmonisation at regional and national levels and simplifying the documents of standards into easily understood languages.

Participants also called for rethinking the liberalisation policy if Uganda is to Industrialise, create jobs, tackle inequalities, vulnerabilities and address her Trade deficits. This was reiterated by Hon. Ruhunda Alex, Chairperson Parliamentary Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry who called for a rethink of Foreign Investments as it has resulted into an influx of petty foreign traders. He also reiterated that the Committee has tasked Government to match the theme of the Budget with its allocation to the Trade, Tourism, Industry and Cooperatives sector as this is the core sector if the budget theme is to be realised.



Figure 3. Hon. Ruhunda Alex, Chairperson Parliamentary Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry giving his remarks.

In Pictures:



Figure 4L-R: Ms. Agnes Kirabo, the E.D Food Rights Alliance, Mr. Allan Ssempambo , Assistant Manager Policy at Uganda Manufacturers Association, Mr. Mwambutsya Ndebesa of Makerere University, Dr. Isaac Shinyekwa, Head of Trade and Regional Integration Department at Economic Policy Research Centre, and Mr. Sam Musige , Principal Commercial Officer at Ministry of EAC giving their positions on the FY 2018/19 as Panellists.