

UK exports boost critical infrastructure projects in Africa

- Support has led to UK contracts for six national infrastructure projects across Africa
- Businesses supported come from across the UK and from a range of sectors

The International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss, announced today (Monday, 20th January) at the UK-Africa Investment Summit that UK Export Finance (UKEF) has provided financing worth £620 million to support UK exports to Ghana, Zambia, Gabon and Uganda.

Support provided by UKEF has unlocked overseas contracts for UK exporters to provide goods and services for 6 national infrastructure projects across Africa, bringing significant social and economic benefits to the continent.

The £620 million of financing support provided by UKEF will provide:

- 750 hospital beds for maternity care in Ghana
- an upgraded terminal at Kumasi airport
- 600 hospital beds and 108 rural healthcare centres powered by solar energy in Zambia
- an industrial business park set to create 200,000 jobs in Uganda
- upgrades to over 80 km of road surfaces in Gabon
- supply of equipment to a Ugandan roads project

International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss said:

Africa is home to 8 of the 15 fastest growing economies in the world and its economic prosperity matters to the UK.

We want the UK to be the partner of choice in Africa so I am delighted that, with UKEF's support, British expertise will form a key component of these infrastructure projects that will directly improve millions of lives.

We are committed to strengthening our trading relationships in the region, to help deliver jobs and long-term, sustainable economic growth that will benefit African and British businesses alike.

Today's announcements build on a range of infrastructure projects UK Export Finance has enabled in Africa, providing close to £2 billion worth of support in the last 2 years.

As such, UKEF has also increased its risk appetite in Egypt, Nigeria and Rwanda, making extra support available for UK exports to Africa.

UKEF's country limit for trade with Rwanda has increased fivefold, now worth

up to £500 million, while its available support to Nigeria has doubled to £1.25 billion and its capacity to support for exports to Egypt is now worth £1.25 billion.

Fabio Camara, Director at Contracta Construction UK, said:

The modernisation of Kumasi Teaching Hospital and airport terminal will bring real benefits and we are pleased to be leading on their delivery. UKEF support continues to be invaluable in our expansion into emerging economies.

Carl Fergusson, Chief Executive Officer, Colas Limited, said:

UKEF's flexible finance was key to securing this contract, which will have a marked impact on the lives of people in Gabon and on our future growth. Their support for this project and of other infrastructure projects in the region demonstrates the UK government's commitment to growing UK trade with Africa.

Frederik Hsu, Deputy Chairman, NMS Infrastructure Limited, said:

This high social impact project will be transformational on healthcare and the lives of local people, especially in remote areas. UKEF's flexible finance has made it possible for our company to deliver these benefits while also generating significant exports for the UK as well as creating hundreds of local jobs in Zambia.

We would have been unable to commit to the delivery of this project without the professional support of UKEF and the team at DIT. We look forward to starting these projects and to seeing the impact they will have on the local economy.

Alan McMenemy, Commercial Manager, Unatrac, said:

We are delighted UKEF has chosen to support our business in Uganda. Their flexible finance played a key role in the securing of this contract. The deal will underpin and enhance our supply chain partnerships with prime contractors involved in infrastructure improvement in Uganda.

Lagan Chairman, Kevin Lagan said:

Following the successful sale of our building materials business to Breedon plc in 2018, we have targeted a range of exciting new

projects which support economic growth and infrastructural development nationally and internationally.

We have a strong track record working in Africa and the upgrade of Kampala Industrial Business Park strengthens our footprint in the region and supports the regeneration of a very important area of Uganda.

The UK-Africa Investment Summit reflects the commitment by the governments to strengthen economic ties between the UK and Africa and the Lagan team is delighted to play its part in this process, which not only supports our business, but is a welcome boost to the economies of both Northern Ireland and Uganda.

Full details of UKEF's £620m of support for UK export deals:

Ghana

- Support worth £110 million will enable the upgrade and construction of a hospital in Ghana. Contracta Construction UK will upgrade Kumasi teaching hospital, creating 750 beds for maternity care
- Kumasi teaching hospital is the main regional hospital for the Ashanti region in south Ghana. Upgrading the maternity unit will have a direct impact on reducing mother and child mortality rates
- £40 million worth of support will enable the further development of Kumasi airport by Contracta Construction UK, improving transport links for tourist and commercial use. It is estimated that the upgraded airport will allow travel for an extra one million passengers each year

Zambia

- A direct loan of £244 million will support the design, construction, equipping and operation of 108 rural healthcare clinics and three hospitals by NMS Limited
- Each rural clinic will be powered by solar energy, ensuring renewable, reliable power in remote areas

Gabon

- £40 million worth of support will enable a project by Colas (Gabon) UK Ltd to upgrade 83 km of road networks throughout Libreville, the country's capital

- This work will benefit an estimated one million people living in the area

Uganda

- Support worth close to £185 million will enable crucial work on the Kampala Industrial Business Park. Belfast based Lagan Group limited has partnered with Ugandan company DOTT services, to deliver a range of projects including upgrades to roads, water supply, power, IT and telecoms
- Once fully developed, the park will create employment opportunities for 200,000 people improving the country's GDP and the competitiveness of Uganda's exports
- UKEF has also supported a £1.5 million loan to enable the sale of machinery from Unatrac to Mota-Engil Africa, underpinning work on roads in the North East of Uganda
- Delivered through UKEF's new small deals team this will enable the sale of 22 pieces of machinery including loaders, engines, excavators and generators, initially for use on the Uganda North Eastern Road Corridor Asset Management Project (NERAMP)