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**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN  
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**REPORT OF THE 3<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE  
(RCC) OF THE GREAT LAKES TRADE FACILITATION PROJECT  
14-15 December 2017  
Kigali, Rwanda**

**ICU/CK,TB/2017**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) of the Great Lakes Trade Facilitation (GLTF) Project was held on 14-15<sup>th</sup> December 2017 in Kigali, Rwanda. The meeting was convened to review the progress of the project implementation from June to December 2017 of COMESA Secretariat and the three project countries namely Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Rwanda and Republic of Uganda. It also provided the opportunity for Member States to share experiences with each other, identify policy issues that would need further processing by the member states as well as review the work plan for the next six months (January to June 2018).

## **ATTENDANCE**

2. The meeting was attended by delegates from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Uganda, officials from the COMESA Secretariat and a representative of the World Bank. A detailed list of Participants is attached as ***Annex I***.

## **AGENDA 1: OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS**

### **Remarks from COMESA Secretariat**

3. Mr. Thomas Barasa, The project Coordinator of the GLTFP presented apologies for the absence of the Director of Trade, who could not make it to the meeting due to exigencies of duty that could not allow him to travel to Kigali. He welcome all participants and thanked members for having made time to attend the meeting and particularly thanked the Government of Rwanda for hosting and chairing the meeting as well as the hospitality accorded to the delegates. He briefly outlined the objectives meeting and hoped that the meeting will achieve its set objectives.

### **Remarks from the World Bank**

4. The World Bank Representative, Mr. John Kaiser also welcomed the participants to the meeting and under-scored the benefits and importance of having a regional project as opposed to having a national initiative due to the fact that regional projects yield more value and better results and provide an opportunity to work together and interact for the good of the region. He added that the RCC is a vehicle for the participants to take stock of what has been done in all project countries and provide direction on the way forward in addressing the challenges and increasing cooperation required at the borders.

## **OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OF RWANDA**

5. The representative of the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Alice Twizeye, Director of External Trade gave the opening remarks. She presented apologies for the PS who could not make it for the meeting because of an equally important meeting that he had to attend to. She welcomed participants to the meeting and urged members to get time and enjoy the good weather and the facilities in Rwanda. She then proceeded to read the statement

from the PS as summarized below:

- i. Wished a very good morning to all and welcomed everybody to Rwanda and to the 3<sup>rd</sup> RCC meeting for the GLTFP.
- ii. Thanked the participants for the time they have reserved for the meeting to discuss the progress of project implementation in their respective countries
- iii. Added that the presence justifies the strength and importance of the partnership as sister countries with a lot to share
- iv. Reiterated that the GLTFP project is an initiative which could not have come at a better time and it perfectly aligns with our mutual development goals. The project creates the legislative and logistical framework to improve cross border trade, which collaborates with the recommendations of research conducted both internally and externally on the measures needed to sustain economic growth in the region.
- v. The PS pointed out that the participating countries need to recognize the commendable efforts of the governments implementing this project as all the efforts are concrete steps and outputs that will work together to improve the volume of cross border trade and the experiences of cross border traders.
- vi. Also added that Rwanda and her neighbors are important trading partners with a firm commitment to increasing trade and cooperation through their joint membership in COMESA and EAC
- vii. Added that the project is a firm step towards regional trade liberalization and will usher more benefits and Rwanda has already seen vast improvements in the areas of cross border traders and therefore thanked the world bank for funding the project
- viii. Confirmed that Rwanda will continue to reduce the length of delays during border crossing , reduce rates of harassment and remove non-tariff barriers
- ix. Re-affirmed that the GLTFP is a testament of joint efforts for the strong economic and political partnership with common goals our development objectives
- x. Urged members to ensure that the contributions to the project are well aligned to the expected outcomes in order to improve the economic and social well-being of the people in the region.

After making the above the remarks, Mrs. Twizeye wished delegates fruitful deliberations and productive discussions during the next two days and declared the meeting officially open. She as the representative of the PS then assumed her position as the Chair of the meeting.

## **AGENDA 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The meeting adopted the agenda with amendments as follows;

1. Registration
2. Opening Remarks from COMESA – Dr Francis Mangéni  
Remarks from the World Bank - Keyser  
Opening of the meeting- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry and EAC Affairs, Government of Rwanda
3. Introductions
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Minutes of the last RCC Meeting and matters arising from the meeting
6. Progress Report from COMESA Secretariat– Thomas

#### Coffee/Tea Break

7. Country Progress Reports covering:

Status of implementation of the project and Planning and scheduling of project financed improvements to border posts and construction of border markets, share designs to ensure cross-border compatibility/coherence; and

Update on the implementation of STR regimes at GLTFP borders

Discussions

#### Lunch Break

8. Monitoring and Evaluation –updates from recent surveys, as well as planning of future surveys, consolidation of the data and emerging trends in key Project Development Indicators.

Discussions

#### Coffee/Tea Break

9. Programme and Budget for the next six months (January-June 2018)  
Discussions

10. Review and Adoption of Report

11. Adoption of Report

12. Any Other Business

13. Closure of meeting

### AGENDA 3: MINUTES OF THE LAST RCC MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

6. Participants raised a number of issues concerning the report of the previous RCC meeting which was held in Kampala Uganda in June 2017. For new participants, the report of the first committee meeting was made available to them provide guidance on the TOR's for the RCC. The meeting agreed that all reports need to be signed after adoption.

Recommendation:

All minutes of the RCC should be signed by COMESA Secretariat and the Chair immediately after adoption.

7. The RCC noted progress on implementation of the decisions made during the previous meeting and participants were urged to focus mainly on the recommendations in the previous report and give updates on the progress made towards implementing the recommendations. The current RCC reviewed the minutes of the second RCC and recommendations made. And based on the reported progress, additional followup actions were agreed.

8. *Recommendations under under Paragraph 28 of the previous Report*
- a. *Member States to come up with a strategy on the treatment of women traders that have children and to integrate child care facilities and services in the project infrastructures.*

#### Implementation Status

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Rwanda and Uganda have general/comprehensive strategy that covers women in cross border trade and therefore they noted that was no need for separate strategy.

Recommendation

- 1) All participating countries were urged to improve on information sharing and cooperation and hence share strategies
- 2) Countries were requested to check and confirm if their general gender strategies are being implemented in the border posts

- b. Project Countries should consider gender issues while developing their cross border infrastructure and child care to be included as a component if cross border markets. Rwanda to share national designs and policy frameworks that are being done for the implementation and construction of border child care facilities with other member countries. Uganda also informed the meeting that it has a comprehensive strategy.***

#### 9. Implementation Status

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Rwanda had not yet shared the strategy and was therefore urged to share with Uganda and Congo

Recommendation

3) Rwanda and Uganda were requested to share their strategies with each other and DRC.

- a. TIDOs reports should be shared with and discussed among the border agencies, CBTAs and other stakeholders to ensure full ownership and harmonization before such reports are sent to the respective Ministries and COMESA Secretariat.***

## 10. Implementation Status

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TIDOs are currently sharing their reports with member States. Regional TIDO coordinator has been recruited and consolidating and analysing these reports before sharing with member States.

Recommendation

There was need to streamline the reporting and supervision of the TIDOs. Even though a regional TIDO was recruited, the TIDOs first line of reporting and supervision should be the country.

COMESA to prepare summary reports from the three countries and share with project member States.

The reports should focus more on outputs and impact

COMESA Secretariat is urged to prepare a sheet of TIDO operations status and this should be submitted quarterly in terms of what is functioning or not.

- a. Member States to introduce uniforms and identify badges for border officials for easy identification and to reduce illegalities;***

## 11. Implementation Status

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Rwanda and Uganda reported to the meeting that all their border officials have uniforms and badges for easy identification. All the border officials in DRC also have uniforms and badges.

Recommendation

The three project countries should ensure that all relevant officials should wear uniforms and badges and this should be the subject of M&E.

- a. All taxes should clearly be displayed on boards at border points; and translated into local languages***

## 12. Implementation Status

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It was recommended by the meeting that the few mandatory taxes, duties and fees that small scale traders are expected to pay should be displayed clearly at the project border posts.

#### **AGENDA 4: PROGRESS REPORT FROM COMESA SECRETARIAT**

##### **13. COMESA presented a progress report for the period ending 30th November 2017 as follows:**

The following key activities were completed:

- The Procurement Expert and Project Accountant were recruited.
- Regional Information Desk Officer was recruited, located in Rubavu.
- Office furniture and office equipment for project staff at COMESA Secretariat and TIDOs was purchased
- Three-year work plan and budget estimates was prepared and approved.
- GLTFP 2017 work programme & budget estimates was prepared and approved.
- The Audit of GLTFP Accounts for the period July to December 2016 was carried out in 2017.
- Procurement Plan prepared and approved by World Bank.
- World Bank Group conducted a Procurement Post Review (PPR) of contracts below the Prior Review Threshold (PRT) in May 2017

The following activities were still pending on on-going

- Hiring of consultants to develop training manuals for Training of Trainers and delivery of training.
- Interviews and Operationalisation of TIDOs

#### **Discussion**

Delegates stressed the need to clearly delineate activities to be implemented under regional and national levels in order to avoid duplication of efforts. It was noted that certain activities that were in the 2018 work programme are also planned under national level and there is therefore need to closely coordinate these activities. Similarly certain budget items, for example, installation of information kiosks and piloting of data in DRC required more detailed explanations.

#### **Recommendations**

- ✓ ***The selection of national trainers should be based from relevant institutions in line with the the module***
- ✓ ***Country level trainings will be undertaken and funded by member States. Member States should ensure that this is included in their project budgets.***
  
- ✓ ***COMESA Secretariat to share M&E reporting template with member States***
- ✓ ***COMESA Secretariat to share ToRs for training manuals to avoid duplication***

- ✓ ***Regional TIDO and STR consultant to be provided with office space in country PIUs for better coordination***
- ✓ ***COMESA Secretariat to regularly update meetings on TIDO status so as to address issues on a timely basis.***
- ✓ ***Capacity building should be based on country specific skills gaps and needs***
- ✓ ***Training of trainers modules to be validated by member States for harmonization of curriculum***
- ✓ ***COMESA Secretariat to share TORs for STR Consultant with member States***
- ✓ ***COMESA Secretariat should provide equipment at Mpondwe and Bunagana border post for TIDOs as the existing equipment is old.***

## **AGENDA 5: COUNTRY PROGRESS REPORTS**

14. The countries provided progress reports on the status of implementation of the project at the national levels as follows:

### **(a) UGANDA**

Uganda provided a presentation on the Progress of implementing the projects summarized as below:

- The project implementation team is fully constituted and operational
- The Steering Committee is fully constituted and its first meeting was held in May 2017,
- Formal launch of the project was held at Mpondwe on 25 Sept 2017

On Infrastructure Development:

- Mpondwe leaders and communities were prepared for the development of both the Border Market/Border Export Zone and the border post. Two meetings one with the leaders and cross border traders were held in Sept 2017.
- Site surveys and assessment of existing facilities were undertaken for all the three targeted sites i.e. Goli, Mpondwe and Bunagana
- Request for expression of interest was done in November for consultancy services for Goli Border Post for the development of the; Master Plan, Architectural Designs, Environmental Impact Assessment, Designs, Bills of Quantities and Bid Documents for Development for Goli Border Post. Calls for proposal will be issued in Feb 2018
- A no objection has been received from the Bank on the drafts on request for expression of interest for consultancy services for Development of Mpondwe and Bunagana border posts. This includes Development of: Master Plan, Architectural Designs, Environmental Impact Assessment, Designs, Bills of

Quantities and Bid Documents for Development of Goli Border Post. Calls for proposal are to be issued in April 2018

- Request for expression of interest for construction of Mpondwe Border Market were done in November for consultancy services for the Master Plan, Architectural Designs, Environmental Impact Assessment, Documentation, Designs, Bills of Quantities and Bid Documents for Development of Goli Border Post are under evaluation. Calls for proposal are to be issued in March 2018
- The EoI for Cargo flow survey was received

#### On Implementation of STR and Cross (Border Reforms)

- Two meetings have been held at Bunagana and Mpondwe to Mobilise Cross border traders to establish CBTA and prepare them on implementation of the STR
- Three meetings have been held in simplifying cross border trade procedures. It has been proposed that we introduce e-gates, interstate pass, pass for vehicles entering for less than 10 kms; removal of controls on standards and agriculture for products below \$2000
- Sensitization of the cross border traders and joint training of border agencies
- Developed a harmonized border legal framework including the removal of visas requirements for small scale trades
- Awareness was created on formation of Joint border committees is ongoing at Mpondwe and Goli
- Bids for three studies, have been received, evaluated and awaiting the approval of the
- Contracts committee: These relate to; establishment and Training of Members on Operationalization of the JBCs; the Assessment and Development of the CBT/STR Training needs and Modules and the Development of Cross Border Trade Regulations
- REoI for the development of a Sustainability and Development Strategy for CBTAS and TIDS have been received document calling for expression of interest for the functional review of the border agencies has been submitted to the Bank and is awaiting the no objection

#### Observed STR Challenges

- Lack of harmonized border legal framework
- Lack of modern tailored technology for clearing cross border communities
- Lack of knowledge of cross border procedures
- Language barriers
- Insecurity
- Lack of appropriate infrastructure and public utilities

#### Project Implementation Support and Monitoring

- Uganda is in the process of finalizing bids for the consultancy on the development of the communication Strategy which will include the design of the website and other communication materials
- UBOS undertook a baseline survey in the last week of November

## Discussion

Delegates noted progress made in implementing the project in Uganda.

It was noted that Uganda is simplifying and harmonizing all border procedures for different border agencies. The meeting observed the concern by Uganda that there's need for Bilateral Meetings between project countries in order to achieve similar arrangements across the borders.

Furthermore it was noted that in Uganda, restructuring of JBC will involve inclusion of cross border traders to allow for full participation in the decision making process. A consultant to develop guidelines on the functioning of JBC is to be hired.

## Recommendations

### ***COMESA Secretariat to support bilateral meetings through the STR dialogues***

#### (b) **RWANDA**

Rwanda provided a presentation on the Progress of implementing the projects summarized as below:

- On border Infrastructure and facilities improved (Rusizi 1), the ToRs were prepared for hiring a consultancy firm to conduct a detailed design study for Rusizi I OSBP and supervision of construction works.
- Development of border markets and logistics platforms (Nyamasheke and Rusizi 2): Contract was signed with the successful Consultant to conduct Detailed Studies, produce tender documents and supervision of works and issuance of the service order and starting of work
- 95% of the works on the Perimeter fencing have for Kamembe airport were completed.
- A Contract Signed for other infrastructure services for Kamembe & Inception report submitted for design studies for NAVAIDs, AMHS, D-AIM, MET Equipment, AGL & Electrical systems
- ToRs were prepared and Request for Proposals (RFP) issued for the activity on Training and capacity building for traders and officials. Currently under evaluation
- JBCs guidelines were validated and approved
- The Contract for obtaining the Happy or Not device was signed. The device will be installed in 2018
- The process of obtaining ICBT Monthly Data to be collected and analysed is progressing well. The MoU between MINICOM and BNR was signed on 8th December 2017.
- ToRs published, evaluation completed under contract negotiation stage for the Grievance/ information mechanism (hotline service operation) operational at selected border post

- 2 perception and time to cross surveys undertaken completed
- Development of the Communication Strategy is being planned. The Contract was signed with service provider
- ToRs for the development of the project website were developed and approved by WB

### **Challenges**

- ✓ Budget execution rate still low: Reason being, 80% of the budget is allocated to construction works which are expected to commence in the next fiscal year 2018/2019. Secondly, majority of activities are consultancy assignments which are ongoing and payments have not been made yet.
- ✓ RTDA: Construction works for RUSIZI I OSBP are expected to commence in June 2018. However, the allocated budget for this activity is low. The project will request for fund reallocation after completion of study design

### **Recommendations**

***Rwanda should share JBC guidelines, Communication Strategy, Gender Strategy as well as details of the supplier of 'Happy or Not' devices.***

#### **(c) DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

DR Congo made a presentation on the progress summarized as follows:

- Rapid impact actions at the border posts at petite barrière in Goma and Rusizi I at Bukavu --installation of public toilets, benches, dustbins and street lamps have been achieved
- Recruitment of a consultant for the realization of temporary infrastructure studies at petite barrière in Goma and Ruzizi I at Bukavu was completed
- Recruitment of a consultant for the realization of temporary infrastructure studies at petite barrière in Goma and Ruzizi I at Bukavu was completedThe Recruitment of an individual consultant for monitoring and control of infrastructure construction provisional works at studies in Goma and Ruzizi I in Bukavu was completed as well as the Recruitment of two companies for the realization of the works provisional at petite barrière in Goma and Ruzizi I in Bukavu
- Recruitment of a firm responsible for the evaluation study of environmental and social impacts (ESIA) and the plan of involuntary resettlement (PAR) was completed but a new contract by "direct agreement" is being prepared more to the addition of other sites (cross-border markets in Rusizi II, site from Mugunga to Goma)
- The recruitment of a group (firm / company for the design and implementation of work at the posts level targeted and cross-border markets at petite barrière, in Rusizi II and Kavimvira is almost complete.
- A consultant was recruited to develop the communication strategy. However, North and South Kivu produced brochures detailing activities; bulletin/brochures to be produced quarterly by central Government In the future activities will be published on the project website. Various ways to disseminate information on traders' charter have been identified such as meetings, publishing, illustrations and social media etc.

### **Discussion**

Kasindi border post is focusing on small scale activities such as walk ways for small scale traders and improving the car park.

It was noted by the meeting that a bilateral agreement was signed between DRC and Rwanda and a similar agreement between DRC and Uganda is planned for January 2018.

The meeting further noted that, a World Bank Mission advised DRC that a safeguard report is required before any construction improvements on the Kasindi Bridge can commence. In the meantime, the mission recommended DRC to implement small works rather than rehabilitating the bridge.

## Recommendations

***The meeting urged r DRC and Uganda to collaborate and coordinate by holding regular meetings to address issues relating to implementation of STR and harmonise approaches to the development of the OSBP and the Border Market on the targeted borders among other issues.***

***DRC should make use of the platform for agencies working at border areas to meet on a regular basis to assess nature of issues at the borders and to send to central Government to address these issues.***

## **AGENDA 6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION –UPDATES FROM RECENT SURVEYS, AS WELL AS PLANNING OF FUTURE SURVEYS, CONSOLIDATION OF THE DATA AND EMERGING TRENDS IN KEY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS.**

COMESA presented a progress report on selected Programme Indicators: The summary is below:

- Survey data on key program indicators such as time to cross, harassment and travelers' perception on their experience on crossing the various borders has been collected since 2016 in DRC while Rwanda started in 2017. Uganda has just completed her first survey and is in the process of capturing and analyzing data
- Overall time to cross is improving amongst all borders and all borders have performed above their targets.
- Rusizi 1 in Rwanda registered the shortest time to cross of an average of 2.33 minutes while Rusizi 1 DRC side has the longest time to cross of 11.4 minutes. This length is partly attributed to distance as the border post is located far away from the exit. However they could be more administrative issues that may need attention. Nevertheless Rusizi 1 DRC side registered the largest reduction in time to cross as it has reduced the time to cross by 30.6 minutes. (Its baseline/target was 42 minutes).
- Incidence of harassment is also reducing and border posts are performing above target apart from Kasindi DRC. The highest level of harassment is registered at Petite Barriere DRC (Though it met its target). Rwanda harassment level is very minimal averaging 1% and in some surveys 0%.
- The percentage of traders reporting receiving a receipt for official payments made is still low, especially at Rusizi DRC and Kasindi.

- On the indicators that pertain specifically to Rwanda, 95% of the perimeter wall at Kamembe Airport is completed. However, the other works on renovations of the airport are still lagging behind. The amount of annual number of passengers through Kamembe was 20,560 against a target of 24,000 hence registering an achievement 86% of the target.

#### Discussion

There are still challenges in timely data provision that needs to be resolved. There are also some indicators that are not being reported on especially those that are not addressed by the survey questionnaire. It was noted that the experts of member States and COMESA Secretariat have scheduled a Video Conference on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2017 to discuss the M & E issues related to the project.

#### Recommendations

- i) **The Secretariat should coordinate the program to hold a VC with the World Bank to discuss M & E issues pertaining to the GLTFP**
- ii) **COMESA Secretariat should convene a workshop with Member States to review the project M&E Operational Manual and other M&E implementation activities**

## **AGENDA 7: WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS (JANUARY-JUNE 2018)**

COMESA presented a summary of the budget for the period January to June 2018. The total estimated budget was expected to be USD 2,432,900.

### Discussion

- On activity “Conduct Training of Trainers Course (10) at project border posts for border agency staff and traders” COMESA was requested to seek further guidance from the TTL and the PAD. There is need to assess the timelines for the completion of each proposed module to ensure effective training. Secondly the modules will also provide guidelines on which stakeholders should be targeted for training.
- The activity “Participation of STR Consultant in baseline surveys”: there is need for clarification of the role of the STR in the survey.
- COMESA was advised to avoid duplication with the countries on implementation of activities.
- On: Hiring of consultant to develop GLTFP website” COMESA was advised to work with MS to find a better way of implementing this activity in order to avoid duplication and get best value for money
- COMESA was requested to provide MS with additional information from the IT Division on the activity “Purchase of kiosks for two border posts”. If included, their location will need to also be agreed. It was further proposed that the kiosks could be located inside the TIDs since the information they will be providing is part of the terms of reference for the TIDOs
- “Automation of reporting on ICBT data” and “Hire of consultant to develop the GLTFP web-based portal as part of COMSTAT” should be merged since they are closely related.
- COMESA was advised to review the budget on “Piloting data collection on small scale cross border trade (SSCBT) in DR Congo to ensure it is sufficient for effective delivery of the activity.

The meeting noted the need for the Secretariat to review the work plan and liaise with MS to avoid duplication of activities as observed on some of the items such as installation of toll free lines, training and website development, among others.

### Recommendations

***The Secretariat should review the work plan and liaise with MS to avoid duplication of activities as observed on some of the items such as installation of toll free lines, data collection on ICBT, training and website development, among others.***

***The STR dialogues should be more than just a workshop but should include smaller meetings such as; focussed bilateral meetings, presentation of the STR Consultant reports and TIDO reports.***

***COMESA to provide additional information to member States on how the kiosks would operate to allow members make an informed decision.***

***The Secretariat should update the work plan in line with comments made on the work plan by the RCC.***

**AGENDA 8: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held in Rwanda on a date to be determined. The Chairmanship of the RCC should be based on a fiscal year to allow each member State to host at least two RCC meetings. The Chairing of the RCC by DRC will be for the period July 2018 to June 2019.

**AGENDA 9 : ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Delegates should arrive a day before the meeting**

**The meeting recommended addition of another day to provide adequate discussion and reporting**

**The coordinators and necessary experts should meet before the RCC to discuss technical issues and distill policy issues for the RCC**

**PIUs Coordinators and relevant experts should meet on a quarterly basis to discuss progress of project implementation which is then presented to RCC. For each action required in the recommendations, it should be undertaken within a reasonable time frame but before the next meeting.**

## Annex 1: List of participants: RCC Meeting - 14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2017

### World Bank

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### Uganda

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