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PRESS RELEASE

RE: Uganda Entrepreneurship Congress and Youth Expo (October 16-17, 2025)

- **Showcasing over 300 innovations at Makerere University**

Over 60% of Uganda's population is categorized as youth. According to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Barnabas Nawangwe, Makerere University is one of the institutions in Uganda with the highest concentration of youth. Annually, over 10,000 youth graduate from Makerere University to join the labour market. As they plan to transition into the job market, some of them, are hit by the hard reality of unemployment. In Uganda, the youth unemployment rate (*those aged 18 to 30*) is **16.1%** (*Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2024*).

To address this issue, Makerere University in partnership with the Government of Uganda, industry and the private sector, has been implementing programmes, to unlock the entrepreneurship potential of students and the youth in Uganda.

Through its College of Business and Management Sciences, the entity runs the Makerere University Entrepreneurship and Outreach Centre, committed to shaping Uganda's next generation of entrepreneurs. The Center brings together members of the entrepreneurship ecosystem to discuss issues that are shaping entrepreneurial activities in the country.

This year, **on the 16th and 17th of October**, Makerere University Entrepreneurship and Outreach Centre, presents to you-**The Uganda Entrepreneurship Congress and Youth Expo**, themed, **Brewing Prosperity: Youth Entrepreneurship in Uganda's Coffee Value Chain**.

The **Entrepreneurship Congress and Youth Expo**, spotlights one of Uganda's most strategic Agricultural sectors-COFFEE. Over **600 students** from the College of Business and Management Sciences at Makerere University, will showcase different innovations, with potential to be scaled into companies and business enterprises.

Focus on the Coffee Sector: By June 2024, Uganda had exported **667,037** kilograms of coffee worth **US\$162.36 million**, underscoring its role as a cornerstone of the economy and a key foreign exchange earner. Despite this performance, the majority of Uganda's youth remain excluded from the coffee value chain, often confined to low-income farm labor with limited participation in processing, branding, and export where the greatest value is captured (*Uganda Coffee Development Authority*).

With **78%** of Uganda's population under 30, this disconnect represents both a critical risk and an unprecedented opportunity.

Therefore, **the Uganda Entrepreneurship Congress and Youth Expo at Makerere University**, serves as a national convening platform for youth, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and private sector leaders to unlock youth-driven innovation across the coffee value chain, from climate-smart farming and agritech to processing, branding, and global market access. By moving beyond subsistence farming towards ownership, innovation, and high value enterprises, the youth in Uganda can secure a greater share of the global coffee market while catalyzing job creation and sustainable development.

- **16th October 2025**-Uganda Entrepreneurship Congress (8:00am to 3:00pm) at Makerere University Yusuf Lule Central Teaching Facility Auditorium.
- **17th October 2025**-The Innovation and Youth Expo (8:00am to 4:30pm) at Makerere University Freedom Square, featuring youth coffee brands, brewing demonstrations, agritech prototypes, and live cupping sessions.

Key milestone: Dr. Sarah Bimbona, a Lecturer at the College of Business and Management Sciences, and the Director of the Makerere University Entrepreneurship and Outreach Centre, states that during the Congress and Expo, over **600** youth will be equipped with new skills to join and innovate in the coffee industry.

Chief Guest: Mr. Odrek Rwabwogo, Chairperson, Presidential Advisory Committee on Exports and Industrial Development (PACEID).

Keynote Speaker: Mr. Moses Nyabila, Chief Executive Officer, aBi Development Ltd.

Case Presentation: By Hon. Justice Alfonse Chigamony Owiny-Dollo, Chief Justice of Uganda, titled: *“Youth Entrepreneurship in Uganda’s Coffee Value Chain: A case of Acholi region.”*

Panel 1: Market Readiness, Value Addition and Story Telling; and **Panel 2**-Financing the Future.

Some of the Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, National Coffee Research Initiative (NaCORI), BRAC Uganda, Tooke, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Vision Group, Mountain Harvest, Pepsi, Rainforest Alliance, Sumz, and the Banana Industrial Research & Development Centre.

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