

German social enterprise, NGOs create jobs for West Nile youth



When Godfrey Azamuke was recruited to

an Impact Building Solutions Foundation (IBSF) construction project at Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement in the West Nile region in early 2018, all he wanted was to earn better daily wages than he was making as a carpenter.

IBSF is a social enterprise that focuses on local construction and manufacturing. Seeking to produce and use environmentally friendly materials, it produces zero carbon panels, engineered wood solutions, light weight galvanised steel structures and complementary building materials.

With offices at Bunga



The opening ceremony of the Impact Building Solutions Foundation (IBSF) factory in Nwoya district. GIZ photo

hill in Kampala and a manufacturing facility located at the Amatheo Agri Farm in Lolim, Nwoya district, the company was founded by Eckardt Dauck, a German entrepreneur and impact investor, who is also

the organisation's current chairman.

Azamuke was recruited alongside more than 50 other individuals to support a group of IBSF's specially trained builders who were engaged in the construction

of an office block and a set of staff quarters at Yoro Base Camp as well as for Rhino Camp High School all in Arua district. For eight months, Azamuke and his colleagues worked on the project. During the construction period, Gerard Nayigiziki, the site supervisor, had taken note of Azamuke's dedication to his work and, therefore, took a keen interest in developing his skills.

Nayigiziki thus identified the 33-year-old as someone with the potential to perform other more specialised tasks.

"After the projects were completed, Nayigiziki said he wanted to take us and train us to be technicians," Azamuke said, sitting alongside Ronald Ayikobua, who had also been identified for training.

After that training, Azamuke says he and Ayikobua had gained sufficient skills to be deployed as strawboard technicians. The two were subsequently transferred to the recently launched IBSF factory, which has been established to produce environmentally friendly zero carbon building panels.

Azamuke and Ayikobua are just two of the beneficiaries of the company's unique approach to doing business and empowering the members of the communities in which it operates.

An IBSF briefing document says during the construction of classrooms at Rhino Camp High School, training and employment was provided for local workers as well as refugees living in the camp.

"Through on-the-job training and local up-skilling programmes, capacities

will improve within the manufacturing, construction and agricultural sectors, the three priority sectors of the economy in line with the Uganda Skills Development Project (USDP)," the document says.

Speaking at the launch of the factory, Dauck said when running at full capacity, IBSF is able to produce building materials for 600 schools or clinics, 1,150 site offices, 4,250 shelters or 2,500 affordable housing units each year.

The MP for Nwoya County, Simon Oyet, says the creation of local jobs can only be maximised once other organisations support local content in construction projects by using locally produced material such as IBSF's zero carbon panels. He committed to support the promotion of IBSF products to encourage job creation.

According to IBSF, once sufficient demand has been established, the number of jobs created in manufacturing and pre-fabrication could rise to 100, while those in the

construction sector will be about 900.

"We have social, environmental and economic targets such as improved livelihoods through the creation of local value chains, training and up-skilling programmes. We aim to create environmental impact using rice straw as the main raw material, a waste byproduct of the production of rice that is currently being burned. Furthermore, IBSF does not burn wood and no water is used in the production process," Dauck added.

As part of its mission to tackle environmental degradation and create job opportunities in northern Uganda, IBSF has entered into a strategic partnership with Malteser International, a non-governmental aid agency of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Malteser International has its headquarters in Cologne, Germany.

Speaking at the launch of IBSF, the president of Malteser International Europe, the Count Douglas Saurma, described the partnership with IBSF as a reflection of Malteser International's new entrepreneurial approach to helping vulnerable people around the world.

"In addition to the eco-friendliness of straw panel construction, our partnership aims to create employment opportunities for young people in this region. Both Ugandans and refugees will be employed in the production facility as well as on construction sites," he said.

To guarantee a stable supply of raw materials from the outset, IBSF has partnered with Amatheo Agri and has located the factory on Amatheo's farm. Amatheo currently grows 1,000 hectares of rice producing enough straw to manufacture the equivalent of 500 affordable housing units or 1,200 shelters. The value chain will also be extended to local farmers.

The new synergy between the agribusiness and construction industry that IBSF has spearheaded with its partners, according to a launch statement from the social enterprise, showcases the high potential of bringing together actors of various industries to foster innovation and co-operation in the country.



Office of the Auditor General

* HAPPY NATIONAL DAY *

Congratulatory Messages

On behalf of the Management and Staff of the Office of the Auditor General of Uganda (OAG), I have the honor to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the Government and the people of German on the auspicious occasion of the German National Day.

The Office of the Auditor General recognizes the cordial relations of the German and Uganda Government which has contributed immensely towards the socio-economic transformation of Uganda.

OAG acknowledges support from the Government of German through GIZ and KfW as one of our Development Partners. The support has facilitated capacity and infrastructure development in the OAG. KfW through the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development has funded construction of OAG Regional Offices in Arua, Hoima and Moroto. KfW is also in the process of procuring a Management Information System for OAG. The Government of German through GIZ also offers OAG technical support in various aspects.

I wish to reaffirm the Office of the Auditor General's commitment to working closely with the Government of German to further advance our cooperation for future interventions.

John F.S Muwanga
AUDITOR GENERAL.

SKILLING AND JOB CREATION

Through on-the-job training and local up-skilling programmes, capacities will improve within the manufacturing, construction and agricultural sectors, the three priority sectors of the economy in line with the Uganda Skills Development Project .