**Winning Innovations**
A wide variety of innovations were presented, which reflected the depth of interest by young Ugandans in agriculture as an enterprise. The innovations ranged from:

- **Best start-up using ICT, enterprise, Western, Eastern, Central, Northern, established enterprise, climate-smart agriculture, student enterprise, Coffee trade idea, Horticulture farmer group, Women entrepreneur, Innovator in aquaculture**

**Over all winner Edison in the mid with officials from Swisscontact and Ministry of ICT**

The winner will go through a period of inspiration and support. They will undergo training in the various areas they presented to win the challenge. This will include commercial enterprise development and planning, among other topics. They will also receive mentorship and where necessary, the technical support to transform their business ideas into ventures that can stand on their own and earn them income.

As Mrs. Tania Haidara, the country director for Swisscontact Uganda observed at the awards ceremony: “the objective of organising the 2019 National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge is to encourage young Ugandans to transform innovative agribusiness ideas into profitable and sustainable agribusiness ventures.”

The awards ceremony at Silver Springs Hotel in Kampala was graced by a number of sponsors, among them Heifer International, Centenary Bank, Bank of Africa, Uganda National Young Farmers Association, the Uganda National Aquaculture Association, KK Fresh Foods Ltd., Tropical Dynasty Ltd., Monitor Publications Ltd., as well as representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

In a speech delivered on behalf of the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, the Director Research and Innovation, Mr. Maxwel Otino Grame lamented the disconnect between creating innovations and commercialising them. He noted that this is the reason for the high mortality of innovative ideas in Uganda. However, he commended the Agribusiness Innovations Challenge as one of the platforms that is helping young Ugandans to commercialise their ideas and turn them into flourishing ventures. He cautioned the young innovators not to sit back once their ideas were accepted, warning that the highly competitive environment will continue to test the limits of their ideas.

Mr. Otino Grame added: “You’re not winners of this challenge unless you have to think of the marketing plan, packaging, and how to commercialise your ideas. It’s not enough that you have a good idea. There is no use of having a good idea if you cannot commercialise it. That is the concept of this challenge...The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge is to encourage young Ugandans to transform innovative agribusiness ideas into profitable and sustainable agribusiness ventures.”

Mr. Otino Grame urged the young innovators to continue building and maturing their ideas to commercialisable products and services that can change the lives of millions of Ugandans.

**The importance of the challenge in getting young people to turn their dreams into commercially successful businesses, is demonstrated further by Grace Eva Birungi, who won the Best Women Entrepreneur category. Grace produces poultry manure. She was inspired by the fact that every home, has at least one bird producing facial waste, a good raw material for manure production, yet many are faced with the challenge of a lack of good quality fertilisers. In November 2018, she heard about the Agribusiness Innovation Challenge and was too late to take part. In 2019, she took the opportunity of the opportunity to enter her idea. Grace’s ambition is to produce poultry manure at an even larger scale. Among her plans is linking up with the overall winner of the 2018 edition, who is in a biogas production, to see how best she can create synergies and grow and expand her business and inspire other young people to learn from her example and replicate the idea of using poultry waste to produce manure in their homes.”

“*You are people at the centre of Swisscontact’s development interventions. We are focused on building and facilitating strong and sustainable partnerships between business companies and young entrepreneurs/smaller farmer based on win-win economic benefits.***”

Mrs Tania Haidara, Country Director for Swisscontact in Uganda

The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge 2019 Award Ceremony

The challenge targeted women, youths, farmers, farmer organisations, student entrepreneurs and innovation with agribusiness ideas that have high potential for scaling up and the ability to positively impact society. The applicants had to be Ugandan citizens between the ages of 18 and 35 and not a winner in previous competitions. Women and persons with disabilities were particularly encouraged to participate. Business that participated were those with annual turnover of less than 20 million Ugandan shillings, but showing potential for growth.

Over 200 submitted applications were reviewed for eligibility and comparability after the closing date on 30th November 2019. These were shortlisted to 50, who were shortlisted were trained in business pitching skills before they presented their innovations to a panel of judges. The panel of judges comprised experts in their respective sectors, including smallholder farmers who evaluated the business idea in a structured and professional manner. Furthermore, successful entrants progressed to the preliminary judging round, which was held in October 2019, and consisted of three judges who evaluated the business idea in a structured and professional manner. Successful entrants were selected based on their business ideas and complied with the entry terms and conditions, as well as the quality and content of the idea plan. The entries were reviewed and judged according to specific criteria. Namely:

- Potential to create additional jobs;
- Future growth potential of the business;
- Viability and sustainability of the business idea;
- Market opportunities and competitiveness;
- Innovation, uniqueness and attractiveness of the venture.

Lk Edition receiving award

The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge 2019 Awards Ceremony was now in its sixth year. At the awards ceremony in Kampala on December 12, 2019, 35 entrants were recognised for their ideas and plans in 12 categories. Winners were awarded a cash prize of 3 million shillings, while the runners-up and third place winner were awarded 2 million and 1.5 million shillings, respectively.

**Second left Guest of Honor Mr. Maxwell Otin Ottim Handing a certificate to one of the winners while Ms. Tania Haidara 2nd Right Swiss contact country Director looks on.**

Rohibah Mundu, the only female winner in the regional category, won the Best Start-up Agribusiness Award. When Rohibah sat out to be her Bachelors of Agricultural Sciences at Makerere University, this year, her goal was to discover something new in her academic pursuits. The idea she had in mind was whether it was possible to process tannaria and battle it as a drink. When she heard about the National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge, Rohibah decided to enter her idea to be evaluated for an award.

**Celebrities with their accolades**

He informed the young innovators of government’s support through a 10-billion-shilling fund set aside to support innovative ideas. He said he informed the young innovators of government’s support through a 10-billion-shilling fund set aside to support innovative ideas. He said the National Research and Innovation Framework has been developed by government and disclosed plans to ‘stratify’ the fund in order to support young innovators. “We are in business with you and we shall be with you for a long time,” he said. Indeed, such government initiatives have already found a body of young innovators to support further, who have been identified and nurtured through platforms like the Innovation Challenge.

The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge is demonstrating that young people can be creative and innovative and that their great ideas can be nurtured into successful agribusinesses. The number of applicants was higher than in previous years, with many entrants from rural areas. The ceremony was attended by the National Research and Innovation Framework has been developed by government and disclosed plans to ‘stratify’ the fund in order to support young innovators. “We are in business with you and we shall be with you for a long time,” he said. Indeed, such government initiatives have already found a body of young innovators to support further, who have been identified and nurtured through platforms like the Innovation Challenge.

The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge is demonstrating that young people can be creative and innovative and that their great ideas can be nurtured into successful agribusinesses. The number of applicants was higher than in previous years, with many entrants from rural areas. Over 2,000 young applicants from (LSDF and LLEARN) in partnerships with the Palladium Group. The partnership, the National Research and Innovation Framework has been developed by government and disclosed plans to ‘stratify’ the fund in order to support young innovators. “We are in business with you and we shall be with you for a long time,” he said. Indeed, such government initiatives have already found a body of young innovators to support further, who have been identified and nurtured through platforms like the Innovation Challenge.

The National Agribusiness Innovation Challenge is demonstrating that young people can be creative and innovative and that their great ideas can be nurtured into successful agribusinesses. The number of applicants was higher than in previous years, with many entrants from rural areas. Over 2,000 young applicants from (LSDF and LLEARN) in partnerships with the Palladium Group. The partnership, the National Research and Innovation Framework has been developed by government and disclosed plans to ‘stratify’ the fund in order to support young innovators. “We are in business with you and we shall be with you for a long time,” he said. Indeed, such government initiatives have already found a body of young innovators to support further, who have been identified and nurtured through platforms like the Innovation Challenge. Today over 2,000 young applicants (from LSDF and LLEARN) in partnerships with the Palladium Group. The partnership, the National Research and Innovation Framework has been developed by government and disclosed plans to ‘stratify’ the fund in order to support young innovators. “We are in business with you and we shall be with you for a long time,” he said. Indeed, such government initiatives have already found a body of young innovators to support further, who have been identified and nurtured through platforms like the Innovation Challenge.

Tanja Haidara, Country Director for Swisscontact in Uganda

**About Swisscontact**

Swisscontact is the business-oriented independent foundation for International Development Cooperation. Swisscontact has a proven track record of successfully developing and implementing large-scale local economic development programmes, as well as financial services and sustainable resource programmes worldwide in Uganda, Cameroon and Lebanon. Swisscontact’s goal is to support young entrepreneurs and support poor farmers and self-employed people in their efforts to bring their products to the domestic and international market. Swisscontact is involved in the Uganda National Aquaculture Association, and the Uganda National Horticulture Association, KK Fresh Foods Ltd., Tropical Dynasty Ltd., Monitor Publications Ltd., as well as representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.