

# UGANDA COFFEE FARMERS ALLIANCE



*“Coffee is wealth”*

## UCFA TESTIMONIAL

Uganda Coffee Farmers Alliance (UCFA) is the apex of coffee farmer organizations in Uganda whose objective is to improve access and coordinate provision of essential services to coffee farmers in Uganda. There are 4 main critical service areas that are required by coffee farmers which are: extension training, input supplies, agriculture finance, value addition and markets. UCFA is working closely with many partners who include both public and private sector organizations such as Uganda Coffee Development Authority, Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (HRNS) and IBERO, among other agriculture service providers, to improve farmers' access to the essential services.

UCFA was established in 2010 by coffee farmers in Uganda with support from HRNS which has also played a critical role in establishing and developing professional farmer organizations as well as providing technical agronomic support to boost the extension system among coffee farmers' organizations through of farmer field schools and demonstration gardens. IBERO has played a crucial role in providing a competitive market for farmers and providing feedback on their coffee quality.

UCFA members who are coffee farmers have been facing a challenge of lack of access to finance to purchase yield improving inputs and limited working capital for farmer groups for coffee bulking, processing and logistics during the marketing season. In spite of engaging with various financial institutions, the number of farmers benefiting from previous financing arrangements had remained low and fertilizer use was also limited.

However, the timely start of the BLOOM program has changed this dynamic and now many farmers who could not previously access fertilizers, are now getting them under BLOOM. Likewise, farmer groups are also able to access working capital financing from IBERO which has enabled them to bulk, process and market greater volumes of coffee.

As UCFA, we send our sincere appreciation for the BLOOM program to IBERO Uganda, *Bernhard Rothfos* and the *Neumann Kaffee Gruppe* and the other partners for the timely and critical interventions that will improve the farmers' productivity and livelihoods.

We hope that the BLOOM program will expand and cover all the farmer organizations or Depot Committees (DCs) within UCFA so as to benefit more deserving farmers. We also hope that BLOOM will provide more significant amounts of cash loans to farmers so that they stop depending on middlemen loans for their children's school fees and medical emergencies. Once this is done, farmers will be reduced pre-selling of coffee at exploitative terms to middlemen and the DCs will be able to bulk even greater volumes.