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Ugandaâ??s Pearl Bank earns recognition for driving inclusive agricultural lending

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Bank of Uganda has recognized Pearl Bank for its performance under the Agricultural Credit Facility and Small Business Fund schemes, underscoring the growing importance of targeted financial inclusion in strengthening Ugandaâ??s agricultural and small enterprise economy.

The recognition was announced during a stakeholder workshop held at Hotel Africana, where financial institutions and programme participants gathered to review progress in expanding access to affordable medium- and long-term financing across key productive sectors.

Implemented jointly by the central bank and participating financial institutions, the Agricultural Credit Facility was established to improve access to affordable financing for agricultural investment, with a focus on strengthening productivity, value addition, and rural enterprise development.

Pearl Bank emerged among the institutions acknowledged for significant growth in agricultural lending, supported by financing solutions tailored to both commercial and smallholder farmers. According to the bank, its agricultural loan portfolio has expanded by approximately 180 percent since 2020, driven by initiatives including seasonal working capital financing, risk-sharing mechanisms, and partnerships aligned with government agricultural programmes.

The bankâ??s financing activities span multiple agricultural value chains, including coffee, dairy, grains, poultry, and horticulture, while supporting investments in irrigation systems, storage infrastructure, farm equipment, and agro-processing capabilities.

Bank representatives described the recognition as a reflection of the institutionâ??s broader commitment to bridging financing gaps within Ugandaâ??s agricultural sector, which remains central to employment generation, food production, and economic growth.

In addition to institutional recognition, the central bank also honored individuals and operational teams involved in processing and implementing financing applications under the schemes. Pearl Bank Supervisor for Agriculture and Partnerships Julius Akais received individual recognition for his contribution to the Agricultural Credit Facility programme.

The latest recognition further strengthens Pearl Bankâ??s standing within Ugandaâ??s financial sector, where it has previously received awards linked to agricultural financing, agro-processing support, and small business recovery initiatives.

Industry observers note that expanding access to affordable credit remains one of the most critical factors shaping agricultural modernization and SME growth across East Africa, particularly as governments seek to strengthen food systems, rural incomes, and enterprise resilience in an increasingly uncertain global economic environment.