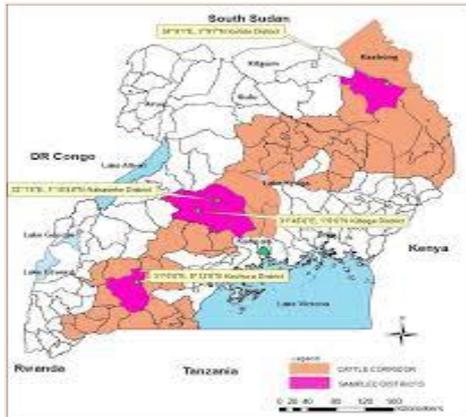


# UGANDA'S DRY CORRIDOR CAN CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO THE ECONOMY

*How and why the dry corridor should be put into more use to support on the country's economy.*

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Uganda's dry corridor is a broad zone stretching from South-Western Uganda in Mbarara District to North-Eastern through Kiruhura, Lyantonde, Sembabule, Mubende, Kiboga Nakasongola, Amolatar, Kaberamaido, Soroti and Katakwi Districts, dominated by pastoral range lands. It is not currently classified as semi-arid, though it has many semi-arid characteristics some of which include; periodic late onset rains/droughts; and historical reliance on mobile pastoralism as an important strategy to cope with resource variability. Other



activities carried out in this corridor are crop production, fishing and large scale industrialization which is on a small scale.

On a large scale of the corridor, variety of crops are grown on small areas of cultivated land and the main staple crops are maize, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, cassava, banana or plantain. In Nakasongola, farmers have orchards where they grow cash crops of citrus fruits, mangoes and avocado.

However, increasing temperatures and less reliable rainfall in the future could put all these mixed farming systems under pressure where by farmers in Nakasongola District have already experienced an increase loss of orchard trees which they attribute to declining soil moisture.

Given the dry corridor's vulnerability to unfavourable climate change, it has been supporting the national and local food security where individual farmers produce both for home consumption and selling the surplus commodities of which some are exported to outside countries.



It's clear that if farming in this corridor is transformed to modern agriculture like irrigating crops, supplying of water to livestock, modern fishing means and setting up of processing industries in the area, it would automatically boost the production capacity to support the economy and increase on the food security for the country and the region.



This would be possible but the only challenge with farmers is majority of them are poor and cannot afford the costs of modern Agriculture.

If the government, investment bodies could step in and work together with these farmers living in this corridor, there is no doubt that this would automatically boost the production capacity that would hence support the country's food basket, improve their living standards and as well as increasing on the country's revenue.