



Call for Expressions of Interest

Opportunity for Harvest & Haulage Operators to Bridge SME Forests & Large Processors in Uganda





INTRODUCTION

Gatsby Africa is a private foundation established by David Sainsbury to promote job creation, increase incomes, and drive inclusive economic growth in East Africa. We work to transform high-potential sectors, so they are competitive, inclusive, and resilient- including commercial forestry.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Large-scale wood processors in the Mpigi and Wakisio regions of Uganda have a combined daily demand of at least 600 MT of pine and 300 MT of eucalyptus logs¹, with an indicative price range of \$ 30 – 50/MT² depending on the quality of supply.

In this region, commercial wood supply is heavily reliant on SME tree growers, who collectively manage at least 10,000 ha of planted commercial forests (mainly eucalyptus) around these processors (within a 40 km catchment radius from each).

Despite maturing wood resources, the industry suffers from unreliable/inconsistent supply to processors due to fragmented harvesting, low coordination among growers, and poor logistics.

This presents a unique opportunity for a specialized aggregator/operator to create a long-term, commercially viable model that connects dispersed growers to major wood processors.

¹ With diameter/height specifications ranging from 10-50 cm/260-270 cm, respectively, depending on the purchaser.

² As of August 2025

ROLE OF THE OPERATOR

We seek expressions of interest from operators experienced in:

- Acting as a commercial intermediary between tree growers and wood processors.
- Coordinating harvest scheduling across multiple dispersed woodlots.
- Managing aggregation, quality control, and grading at roadside or depot units.
- Organizing reliable haulage operations for industrial processors.
- Structuring and enforcing supply or offtake contracts/agreements between tree growers and wood processors.
- Supporting smallholder capacity building in harvest readiness and planning (and possibly replanting).
- Providing or subcontracting mechanized harvesting where possible.
- Using data systems for inventory management and traceability.



RECOMMENDED CAPABILITIES

Interested applicants must demonstrate the following:

- At least 5 years operational experience in either commercial forestry logistics, timber harvesting and haulage, or bulk agricultural haulage.
- Proven experience working with dispersed SME producers.
- Ability to coordinate harvest scheduling across multiple dispersed woodlots.
- Ability to structure and enforce harvest, supply or aggregation arrangements/mechanisms.
- Experience with regional processors of agroforestry products in Uganda, East Africa or Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Experience managing fleet operations or coordinating third-party haulage.
- Capacity to finance working capital and operational costs during ramp-up.

Additional Advantages:

- Prior experience with wood grading and quality management.
- Use of digital systems for supply chain coordination.
- Experience working with international investors.



HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should submit a brief Expression of Interest (maximum 5 pages) that includes the following:

1. Company Profile

- Legal name, registration details, and contact information.
- Summary of operational history and relevant experience (particularly in forestry logistics, timber harvesting, bulk haulage, or aggregation). Indicate operational footprint in the region.

2. Relevant Experience

- Description of past or current work with SME producers or dispersed suppliers.
- Summary of experience coordinating harvesting, aggregation, or haulage operations.

3. Capabilities Overview

- Brief outline of available or accessible equipment, logistics capacity, and digital systems (if any).
- Description of ability to structure and manage supply arrangements.

4. Initial Concept

- High-level description of how the applicant would approach the intermediary role, including coordination, aggregation, and logistics.



WHAT WE OFFER

Successful applicants will be invited to co-develop commercial models and receive:

- Access—during design and early ramp-up—to a regional supply-chain integrity partner that can assist with:
 - Piloting digital traceability (implementation support for inventory and movement tracking) and independent verification of volumes/quality.
 - Support to plan and establish aggregation nodes/depots (site selection, basic infrastructure layouts, indicative CAPEX) and dashboards suitable for processor and lender reporting.
- Technical assistance to develop operational SOPs, grading/quality standards, and logistics optimization.
- Brokered introductions to key processors and grower associations.

SUBMISSION & CONTACT

Please email your Expression of Interest to jason.oyugi@gatsbyafrica.org.uk

All enquiries regarding this EOI should also be directed to the same email address.

The deadline for submissions is **Thursday 2nd October** at 17:00 EAT.

