

FOCUS PUT ON ACCESS TO FINANCE, SKILLS AND CLEAN ENERGY

By Prossy Nandudu

In a move that seamlessly blends finance with social transformation, Equity Bank Uganda and UN Women have partnered to advance women's economic empowerment, inclusive financial systems, clean energy access, and climate resilience across Uganda.

The deal was sealed at Equity Bank head office in Kampala recently.

Running from April 2026 to October 2028, the partnership is anchored in shared priorities around financial inclusion, sustainable livelihoods, and community resilience, with a strong focus on underserved populations including women, youth, refugee communities, and agribusiness co-operatives.

Catherine Psomgen, the director of public sector and social investment at Equity Bank, underlined the transformative intent behind the partnership: "This partnership reflects our belief that financial inclusion must go beyond access. We are committed to designing solutions that meet women where they are, supporting them to thrive as key drivers of Uganda's economic growth."

She said many women remain excluded from formal financial systems due to lack of collateral, limited, credit histories, and gaps in financial

EQUITY, UN WOMEN BACK FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

PHOTO BY PROSSY NANDUDU



Ndieli (left) and Psomgen after signing a partnership agreement at Equity Bank head office in Kampala to support women's economic empowerment last week

literacy.

"This collaboration seeks to dismantle those barriers by merging UN Women's grassroots reach with Equity Bank's financial expertise," she said.

Under the agreement, UN Women will spearhead

community mobilisation, capacity building, and policy advocacy, equipping women and youth with financial literacy, entrepreneurship skills, and climate-smart practices, while linking them to appropriate financial and non-financial services, according

to Adekemi Ndieli, the deputy country representative at UN Women.

"Women are architects of resilient economies and communities. This partnership is about unlocking their potential at scale by addressing systemic barriers and

equipping them with the tools, resources, and confidence to lead change in their households, businesses, and communities," Ndieli said.

Under the period of the partnership, Equity Bank Uganda will roll out tailored financial solutions including savings accounts, affordable credit, and digital banking tools, ensuring accessibility while maintaining sustainability through robust credit assessment processes.

The bank will also finance women-led enterprises in green technologies such as solar energy systems, water-efficient irrigation, and clean cooking solutions, which are expected to improve household incomes, enhance health outcomes, and reduce environmental degradation.

Ndieli added that they will further embed climate adaptation strategies within its programming, particularly in vulnerable and refugee-hosting communities.

Stakeholders stress that access to credit alone is not enough. The partnership adopts a holistic approach, integrating financial services with skills development, digital literacy, and institutional strengthening to ensure long-term, sustainable impact.

Valued at approximately \$280,000 in in-kind contributions, including technical expertise, training

resources, and advisory services, the collaboration is further strengthened by Equity Bank's pro bono support through staff engagement and facilitation.