



## **KIIRA MOTORS CORPORATION**

### **From an Extra-Curricular Activity to a National Initiative for Automotive Industry Development**



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Kiira Motors Corporation (KMC) is an initiative for Automotive Industry Development, supported through the Presidential Initiative for Science and Technology Innovation. The KMC equity partners are Uganda Development Corporation, the principal equity partner representing the Government of Uganda as the investment arm of Government, and Makerere University. KMC is aimed at setting up and operating a vehicle plant in Uganda. The KMC Plant shall be designed with a Multiple Line and Multiple Model Assembly Shop for Pick-Up Trucks and Light & Medium Duty Trucks. Production is projected to commence in 2018 with Pick – Up Trucks. The plant shall operate in partnership with a seasoned auto manufacturer with a product foot print on all six continents.

The three strategic pillars projected to drive business value and success for KMC are: **1) *Value for the Customer***, envisaged to be realized through assembly of vehicles with proven technology competitively priced to enable the progressive customer shift from imported used vehicles to brand new vehicles assembled locally; **2) *Opportunity for the Community***, realized through a diverse spectrum of sustainable jobs created directly within KMC and diversification of the economy through industrialization resultant from investments in domestic parts manufacturing and the service industry relevant for supporting the KMC plant; **3) *Profit for the Shareholders***, the KMC investment is crafted based on a positive business case to ensure that ultimately the Shareholders realize an early return on investment.

The genesis of KMC dates back to 2007 when a team of students and staff (Prof. Sandy Stevens Tickodri-Togboa and Mr. Paul Isaac Musasizi) at Makerere University were invited to be part of an international consortium. This was part of a Vehicle Design Summit (VDS), a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) initiative with the goal of designing and producing the Vision 200 – a 5-passenger plug-in hybrid electric vehicle targeting the Indian market. Makerere University the only participant from Africa was responsible for the design and integration of the Low Power Electronics and Data Networking Systems. The team participated if not for the advancement of scholarship, perhaps for such simple reasons as the associated international exposure and acquisition of exciting skills in Automotive Development.

The team's selfless effort in carrying out the task at hand against all odds saw Vision 200 completed and displayed at the Dream Exposition in Torino, an event celebrating automotive history and future opportunities and the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile, Turin, from 22<sup>nd</sup>

September until 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. Given the experience in building the Vision 200, other global experiences through collaborations, and best practices benchmarking, the Makerere team resolved to embark on a project aimed at designing and building a vehicle in Uganda.



**Figure 1: Part of the Makerere University VDS Team Poses for a Picture in the Vision 200**



**Figure 2: The Vision 200 on Display at the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile in Turin, Italy**

The Center for Research in Transportation Technologies (CRTT) was conceived in December 2008 and approved as part of the University Structures effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011. The strategic goal of CRTT was to advance research and innovation in transportation technologies on land, air and sea with specific emphasis on green mobility solutions for Africa. The Kiira EV Project was the first project implemented under CRTT.

Considering the student members of the Vision 200 team had completed their studies and left the university, Prof. Tickodri-Togboa and Paul Isaac Musasizi recruited a new student team to start

work on designing and building a two-seater plugin electric vehicle – the Kiira EV. It's important to note that the name Kiira EV was recommended by the President of Uganda during interactions with the team in December 2009. This was at a meeting following the President's visit at Makerere University resulting into the Presidential Initiative Fund for Science and Technology Innovations which took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010.



**Figure 3: H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the Faculty of Technology Delegation after a Meeting at State House, Entebbe, December 2009**

The Presidential Initiative Fund for Science and Technology Innovations provided the necessary finances for the building of the Kiira EV to start in January 2011 through to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011 when the Kiira EV was completed. The President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, launched the Kiira EV, the first electric vehicle designed and built in Africa, at a very high profile world class event on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011.



**Figure 4: Paul Isaac Musasizi takes H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for an Exhibition Drive in the Kiira EV at its Launch on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

The successful execution of the Kiira EV Project was celebrated by Ugandans at large, recognized across the world and graciously welcomed by the President who invited the team to develop a proposal for Establishing a Vehicle Plant in Uganda as a way of commercializing this stellar innovation. The Kiira Motors Project (KMP) was therefore developed by the team and presented to the President with a selection of Government Officials at Statehouse Nakasero on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The project proposal was well received resulting into government's commitment to implementing the Kiira Motors Project as a government initiative for Automotive Industry Development aimed at, "Establishing a Vehicle Plant in Uganda".

Kiira Motors Project (KMP) on top of working toward the establishment of a vehicle plant in Uganda is implementing the Kiira Vehicle Technology Innovation Program through which the Kiira EV SMACK, the first Electric Hybrid Vehicle designed and built in Africa was developed and unveiled at a very high profile event at the Kenyatta International Convention Center in Kenya in November 2014; and the Kayoola Solar Bus, the first Electric Solar designed and built in Africa, launched by H.E. Yoweri K Museveni on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016. These concept vehicles we developed to emphasize the importance of green mobility especially for Urban Mass

Transportation and the Role Africa can play in the realization of decarbonized Urban Mass Mobility. KMC was recognized for the initiatives for Green Mobility by Frost and Sullivan with the prestigious 2016 Frost and Sullivan Visionary Innovation Leadership Award in Sustainable Mobility. The project contributed to the scientific body of knowledge through a number of publications presented at high profile international conferences on the Automotive Industry including being part of the team contributing to the East African Community Automotive Industry Development Policy.



Figure 5: Her Excellency Angelina Wakapabulo, Uganda's High Commissioner to Kenya tests the Kiira SMACK in Nairobi, Kenya



**Figure 6: H.E Yoweri K Museveni Congratulates KMC CEO Paul Isaac Musasizi at the Kayoola Solar Bus Launch**

Kiira Motors conducted a Pre-Investment Analysis (The KMC Business Case) to affirm the viability of mission Vehicles Made in Uganda. The Pre-Investment covered the Market Analysis; Business Opportunity Analysis; Market Entry Product Concept Analysis; Product Feasibility (Manufacturing, Logistics, and Engineering & Facilities); Financial and Economic Impact Analysis; HR Plan and Business Implementation Strategy. This informed the development of the Kiira Motors Corporation Business Strategy and subsequently Business Plan. The KMC Pre-Investment Analysis (Business Case) was launched by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015, at the Office of the President Conference Hall.



**Figure 7: Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda inspects the Kiira EV SMACK at the Launch of the KMC Business Case**

Government of Uganda, acting through Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), allocated 100 Acres of land for the KMC Plant located at UIA’s Jinja Industrial and Business Park on Plot 701, Block 2 Kagogwa village, Mawaito Parish, Kakira Town Council. The Site Cadastral and Topographic Survey, Geotechnical Analysis, Deed Plans have been completed, and Certificate of Title (Land Title) issued to KMC.

Excellence and relevance form the foundations of the KMC go-to-market strategy. To deliver near-absolute value to the customer, the KMC product vehicle technology should be mature, reliable, proven and competitively priced. KMC shall work with a reputable Automotive Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) to start assembly of vehicles, and progressively enhance local content participation informed by a positive business case. The KMC Plant shall have sufficient capacity to cater to OEMs seeking to leverage production ready infrastructure through Contract Manufacturing Services, a key ingredient for securing optimal plant resource utilization.