**To**: To: President Museveni, Minister of Finance Kasaija, The Ugandan Cabinet, Prime Minister and The Speaker of the Parliament

**From**: Michael Ross (916) 923.2215 **Date**: December 31, 2024

**Subject: Perspectives of Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy on Foreign Aid, Africa, and Uganda**

**Introduction**: This memo examines the perspectives of Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy on foreign aid, Africa, and Uganda. Both figures have increasingly influential voices in U.S. policy discussions and technological development, and their views could impact global narratives and policy directions.

1. **Elon Musk’s Views on Foreign Aid, Africa, and Uganda Background:** Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla, SpaceX, and other innovative ventures, is an influential entrepreneur with global influence in technology and economic policy.

**Key Perspectives:**

* Musk has emphasized technological innovation as the key to solving systemic global problems rather than relying heavily on foreign aid. He believes foreign assistance programs often fail to create sustainable growth and self-sufficiency in recipient nations.
* In 2022, Musk suggested on social media that African development should focus more on clean energy initiatives, technological infrastructure, and internet connectivity rather than cash-based aid programs.
* Musk's company, SpaceX, has already made strides in improving African internet infrastructure through its Starlink satellite network, which is available in Uganda as of 2023.

**Implications for Uganda:**

* Uganda could benefit from Musk's focus on technology and connectivity, positioning itself as a partner for innovative projects in renewable energy, transportation, and satellite communications.
* Musk's approach may align with economic diversification strategies that reduce dependence on traditional forms of aid, favoring partnerships rooted in infrastructure development.

**Sources:**

* Musk's public statements via Twitter (now X) and interviews.
* Starlink press releases and rollout schedules.
1. **Vivek Ramaswamy’s Views on Foreign Aid, Africa, and Uganda Background:** Vivek Ramaswamy is a biotech entrepreneur, author, and 2024 Republican presidential candidate with a focus on economic nationalism and reducing foreign aid.

**Key Perspectives:**

* Ramaswamy has advocated for reducing U.S. foreign aid and focusing on domestic priorities. He argues that aid should be limited to cases directly advancing U.S. strategic interests.
* While supportive of humanitarian efforts, Ramaswamy favors trade and economic partnerships over dependency-based models of aid.
* Ramaswamy views Africa as a region with economic potential but believes aid should be tied to reforms that promote free markets and reduce corruption.

**Implications for Uganda:**

* Uganda may face reductions in direct U.S. financial assistance if Ramaswamy’s views gain traction, but there could be new opportunities to form trade-based partnerships aligned with his philosophy.
* Uganda could emphasize governance reforms and market-oriented policies to attract private investment and leverage Ramaswamy's emphasis on economic development.

**Sources:**

* Ramaswamy's speeches and debates during the 2024 presidential campaign.
* Articles from The Atlantic and Foreign Policy covering his policy views.
1. **Recommendations**: Given the perspectives outlined above, Uganda should consider the following actions:
* **Engage Elon Musk:** Proactively pursue technology partnerships (**I can help with this**).
* **Address Ramaswamy's Concerns:** Highlight Uganda's market reforms and anti-corruption measures to appeal to policymakers emphasizing trade over aid (**I have made suggestions in other documents**).
* **Diversify Strategic Partnerships:** Reduce reliance on foreign aid by strengthening economic and technological alliances.
1. **Conclusion**: Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy represent shifting U.S. perspectives on foreign assistance, **focusing more on self-sufficiency and economic reform**. Uganda can only position itself as a technological and trade partner if they align with these evolving priorities, restructure their economy to fit today’s international environment and adopt new business models that benefit the people while helping to build an effective and influential middle class.

*This memo is intended for internal review and to inform future discussions on U.S.-Uganda relations.*