

GTV to broadcast live Uganda football into success

By [Walter Wafula](#)

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Ugandan football fans will soon enjoy live local football league matches on television following a landmark deal between Gateway Television Broadcasting and the Federation of Uganda Football Association in Kampala.

"GTV will be showing live Uganda football. We want to get people back to the stadium to watch our own local football and those who cannot, we'll take it to them so that they appreciate our games," Daniel Kagwe, the general manager Gateway Television Broadcasting (GTV) Uganda told www.bizcommunity.com <https://www.bizcommunity.com>.

"The deal means we have exclusive media and commercial rights to all FUFA-organized games... the National Super League, the Kakungulu Cup and exclusive rights to show the Cranes on GTV live," he explained.

According to the agreement, FUFA and GTV will work together to increase the commercial value of the League. "Investment is required to increase the professionalism of the management, coaches and players, and to retain the best talent within the country. GTV will invest over US\$5m (over UGshs8.8b) in Ugandan football over the next five years," the agreement states. This will support the development of the game at all levels – working with the Association, its clubs and individual coaches and players.

The new TV service made its presence felt Uganda in June this year after it announced that it had clinched exclusive rights to broadcast 80% of the English Premier League - which pundits say is Africa's most watched foreign game.

Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) has been broadcasting the national team's live matches, but it has also been a disappointment on several occasions, due to technical difficulties.

"We want to revitalize Ugandan football, which I think is more or less a social responsibility from us because we will be broadcasting premiership football and Italian football. So it's just fair that we make it possible that even the local people can achieve that level of professionalism and that they can even play in those European leagues that we show," Kagwe explained.

According to him, part of the \$5 million to FUFA is to be passed on to the Cranes, Uganda's national team, the National Super League and Kakungulu league teams in the country for team development through training and purchase of sports gear.

Kagwe said GTV aims to see Uganda create its own world-class footballers who can play in the best leagues in the world and take Uganda to the World Cup.

If Uganda succeeds in sending a good number of football stars overseas, analysts say the soccer cash could contribute a reasonable percentage to the country's GDP.

Reacting to the deal, Moses Adonai, one of the national team's strikers, said, "The agreement is so good and is a privilege to us Ugandan footballers because it will market us to highly acclaimed teams in Europe."

The screening of the games starts in October this year when the national league resumes.

The 80% exclusive rights to broadcast the English Premier League have already given GTV a competitive edge in terms of sales. In past few months, the pay television has registered more than 4000 customers in the districts of Kampala, Jinja, Mbarara, Mbale, Gulu and Mukono among others. "... We expect to sign up more than 12,000 subscribers before the end of this year," Kagwe said.

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