

Remarks of the Senior Regional Manager, Africa at the CoST Uganda Stakeholder Forum for Contractors, Consultants and oversight bodies on integrity in public infrastructure procurement **17th February 2021**

- Permanent Secretaries
- Heads of Government Agencies and Departments
- Engineer-in-Chief, Ministry of Works and Transport
- Senior Staff of CoST Uganda Chapter
- Senior Government Officials
- Members of the Private Sector and Civil Society
- The Press
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to welcome you all to this forum, where we discuss matters of integrity in public infrastructure delivery processes.

Transparency and performance of infrastructure procurement processes in Uganda have been associated with integrity issues and corruption risks. Some of the key integrity issues include collusion in procurement, bribes, lack of competition, influence peddling, inefficiencies, mismanagement of funds and construction sites and theft of materials among others.

Lack of transparency in procurement has also been associated with low disclosure levels. Limited access to and use of procurement information has been one of the inhibiting factors to the realization of transparency in infrastructure procurement, as revealed by the previous studies by CoST Uganda and other stakeholders.

The CoST Uganda 4th Assurance Report released on 10th February 2021, presents an opportunity for growth, the report reveals an improvement in the levels of disclosure up to 61%. Increased disclosure is the roadmap to increased access to available business opportunities for the private sector to engage, and thus, increasing competition, and creating a level playing field for the private sector to engage.

The CoST Uganda reports present an opportunity for the stakeholders to engage. Today, among others, we will be receiving, discussing and validating draft findings from a study on factors affecting private sector participation in public infrastructure procurement processes; this study is key in the sector, as it provides us an opportunity to influence reforms that will better the sector.

As we work towards the realization of full disclosure within the legal and policy frameworks and practice, it is more important that stakeholders take into consideration key integrity issues affecting performance of infrastructure projects.

Today is the day, we need to talk about how to better deliver infrastructure projects as the private sector, better delivery, will inform accessibility to more business opportunities. In the panel discussion, we will be looking at how to sustain the fair business practices agenda;

I encourage all stakeholders present to identify strategies that will enable us keep this agenda on the table, it is an opportunity for us all to harness the potential in the sector and deliver to our best capacity, while creating ourselves new opportunities.

As CoST International family, we congratulate CoST Uganda upon being a platform that both stakeholders – Government, the Private sector and Civil

Society can engage engage. We encourage all stakeholders to work towards making this platform to flourish.

Colleagues at CoST Uganda, the Champion Ministry of Works and Transport, and all stakeholders, be assured of our continuous support.

Stakeholders, Friends of CoST Uganda, and all colleagues, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Gilbert Sendugwa,
Senior Regional Manager, Africa
CoST International