

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Brief by Permanent Secretary

**On Government commitment on addressing
findings and recommendations from CoST 4th
Assurance report.**

Protea Hotel, Kampala

10th February 2021

**The Hon. Ministers,
Hon. Members of Parliament,
Permanent Secretaries,
Ambassadors and Heads of Delegations,
Heads of Government Agencies and Departments,
Representatives from CoST MSG Uganda,
Representatives from the Private Sector and Civil Society,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I wish to appreciate the invitation by COST to this vital workshop to share with colleagues Government commitment and plan to address various recommendations that are highlighted in the Assurance Report that is being disseminated to day.
2. Since FY2016/17, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has been partnering with COST in promoting good governance through jointly conducting activities for enhancing effective performance assessment of public service delivery. We therefore, enormously commend the good work of CoST in Uganda.
3. COST has often kept OPM well-informed through timely submission of reports established through independent assessments and research especially on Infrastructure projects and levels of open contracting by procuring entities for public sector projects.
4. In regard to the previous reports that OPM has received from COST, we have taken keen interest in the findings and recommendations. The recent recommendations have been incorporated into the Government Annual Performance Review (GAPR) Action Matrix that was generated by Cabinet in September 2020 during the Cabinet retreat to review the Government performance of FY2019/20.

Brief on the GAPR

5. The COST initiative undertakes independent performance assessments with overall focus on the public Infrastructure development projects, and in selected beneficiary sectors, MDAs and local Governments that include; Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water & Environment, Ministry of Education, National Water & Sewerages Cooperation, Wakiso DLG, KCCA among others.
6. However, In line with Article 108A of the constitutional, OPM carries out Annual (GAPR) and Half-Annual (GHAPR) performance assessments of the whole of Government and reports to Cabinet.
7. It is now close to a decade since OPM started to undertaken these national assessments. In preparation of the GAPR, we link functionality of the various Government programmes and results.
8. We critically look at the performance of sectors against planned outcomes in relation to the medium-term strategic objectives of the National Development Plan and this time around we shall be looking at the Third National Development Plan (NDP3) and her 18 Programmes. We also assess the output targets, resource utilizations and planned actions to improve service delivery across all Sectors.
9. The GAPR is discussed at the Government Performance Retreat, attended by Cabinet Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments, and Local Government representatives. The discussion of this report is done prior to National Budget Conference and the first Budget Call Circular for the subsequent Financial Year. Which makes the GAPR an instrumental performance assessment tool in informing the planning and budgeting process.
10. In light of the above therefore, Stakeholders and initiatives such as CoST Uganda, are critical in an inclusive Development, the Office of the Prime Minister takes particular interest in ensuring that, such initiatives working on critical sectors get all the necessary support to deliver to their mandate to contribute to the planning and budgeting process.
11. By Joining and partnering with CoST International, Government of Uganda saw a value of promoting good governance through transparency, value for money

and accountability. As already portrayed in the 4th Assurance process, the remarkable increase in levels of information disclosure is a good gesture that the initiative is steadily recording good results.

12. As leader of Government business in Parliament and coordinator of Government policies and programmes across Sectors, Ministries, Departments, Agencies & local Governments, OPM has noted with deep concern the following predicaments which we must address through the normal Government management procedures and administrative structures to give a timely update to stakeholders accordingly:

- i. That, until now, Public officials still conceal the otherwise regarded public information, that is meant to inform various stakeholders to guide in policy decisions. This is despite global and national efforts and measures to push for easier and faster access to public information.
- ii. That despite the available legal frameworks within Government, and the invested efforts in monitoring, evaluation and learning across the various sectors, it has been found that we still record massive delays in procurement, cost overruns, challenges in construction quality management etc.
- iii. That there are still many projects implemented without health, environmental and safety safeguards. We have many examples of Infrastructure investment projects that have raised or had issues with social safeguards and environmental concerns within the region.
- iv. Adherence to quality control and risk management is also low. Issues of local content have been on the table for quite some time, even the recent reservation guidelines by PPDA of 2018, have not been adhered to.

13. I therefore, once again congratulate those entities that have embraced infrastructure transparency, public participation in participatory monitoring of outputs through Barazas and adherence to procurement guidelines.

14. The Office of the Prime Minister has taken note of the issues and recommendations in the CoST report, and will continue to take the following actions;

- i. Ensure that there is full disclosure of infrastructure data preferably using the Infrastructure Data Standard (IDS).
- ii. Enforce the alignment of the Government procurement portals with the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS) to inform procurement transparency. This will be accompanied by issuing regulations for infrastructure data disclosure.
- iii. Strengthen monitoring, evaluation and learning across sectors, and MDAs especially for infrastructure projects.
- iv. Enforce and monitor the aspect of citizen engagement at all project delivery phases as part of the contracting processes.
- v. Working jointly with the Ministry of Works and Transport, through the NDP3 Programme of Integrated Transport Infrastructure and services, strengthen oversight in project planning, design and supervision.
- vi. Working jointly with PPDA, strengthen oversight and monitoring compliance with procurement guidelines, and ensure the aspect of integrity in procurement is taken care of.
- vii. Working jointly with the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development through the NDP3 Programmes of Human Development and Community Mobilization and Mindset change and PPDA, enforce, compliance with inclusion and participation of women and young people in infrastructure delivery processes. This will also necessitate that there is establishment of some reforms in the policy framework.

15. The Office of the Prime Minister, re-assures CoST Uganda and other similar partners of Government's continued support and partnership. We are pleased to engage with CoST and commit to taking action on the findings and recommendations from this and more of your prospective reports.

Thank you all

For God and My Country