

Case study title: Citizens around Busoga College Mwiri celebrate the new tarmac

Relevant assurance report(s) (if applicable): Recommendations to hold citizens' engagement meetings with other stakeholders and the Ministry of Works and Transport in the 2nd Assurance process in 2018.

CoST Features: Assurance and Social Accountability

Time Frame: July 2019 to 7th December 2020

Summary

The Busoga College, Mwiri is 109 years, unfortunately, the road to the school had never been upgraded until the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda visited during the celebration of 100 years of the school in 1999 as a former student of the school and implored the President through MoWT to upgrade the access road to the school. The upgrade would also enhance economic empowerment of the locals. However, important to note in Uganda is that, Presidential pledges have no standby budgets to implement these commitments, responsible entities are required to identify funds through the budgeting process to deliver the pledges /commitments. This is why since 1999, the road could not be worked on.

Following the instruction from the President, the MoWT identified funds years later to upgrade the road; the first phase was contracted however, the contractor was not forth coming in the implementation of key recommendations, implementation had a lot of short comings as identified in the CoST Uganda's 2nd Assurance report. These concerns such as destruction of citizens gardens/sources of livelihoods, no information wall/project sign post, poor drainage, speed humps/and warnings, road markings had not been addressed by the contractor; Multiplex Limited.

The contractor, had been informed formally following the Barraza held on 13th July 2019 with CoST Uganda and he had acknowledged that he would address the concerns by July 2020. Unfortunately, a follow up meeting on 12th September 2020, revealed that no work had been done.

The MoWT following their own internal assessment of the performance of the contractor, confirmed that there was poor performance of works, and damages observed, negligence of works and lack of disclosure on the project had charged the contractor 168M Ugx. One challenge and gap the MoWT had was that, the first phase had not been well documented and that, most engagements held could not be accounted for. Stakeholders such as National Water, UMEME- the Electricity Transmission Agency, and the citizens around the project area had not been well involved and engaged about the project. In addition, key findings from the Assurance Process included;

- *Some workers did not wear protective gear on site. Contractors are advised to deny entrance of all those who appear at work without their protective gears. This helps to protect the name of the contracting company and also to protect the worker against accidents on site.*
- *There was no resettlement action plan and citizen engagement on right of way.*
- *There were no drainage and waste material disposal and management plan.*

- *There was no environmental impact assessment conducted on the project even though the ministry noted of having environmental briefs which were not disclosed and not reflected upon during construction by the contractor.*
- *The contractor during the assurance process was advised to have quality and safety officers who have not been employed up to date.*
- *No project signboards showing project duration, cost and other relevant information for the public to know.*

Despite the disruptions from the contractor's lack of effective delivery and negligence, the project was well received by the community and; citizens are pleased to engage with it. They attribute upcoming economic growth of the community to the infrastructure development around them. The citizens were very informed and had built ownership of the project, key stakeholders that had been left out in the first phase, such as Kakira Town council, UMEME and National Water had been engaged and these in turn addressed the concerns the community raised. In addition, the MoWT had conducted an ESIA and shared findings with the local citizens. Meanwhile, there was one major challenge of lack of an information wall for the project and poor drainage systems; there were two accidents reported on the project and these required speed humps to be rectified; the MoWT committed to put these in place, where possible. Temporary humps would be erected as construction works were ongoing.

"People have been affected by the construction works, in my Local Council Office, there are reports and complaints that their gardens were destroyed and food crops destroyed to almost half an acre and in some cases an acre, Mr. Okello is an example of those citizens whose gardens of cassava were destroyed" Christopher, Area Local Council Chairperson during the Baraza of 13th July 2020.

"CoST should continue meeting with the contractors, consultants and other professional bodies alongside meetings with the citizens" Rogers Asiimwe Jude, Architect and Community member recommended.

"We were not involved in the implementation of the project; we were never invited to any stakeholder's meetings and not happy being involved at the finishing lane. However, we promise to cooperate and ensure that the project is successful as it would be maintained and managed by the same town council. The Client should adjust on the design of the roads to enable citizen access to their gardens. The project has had time overruns due to the delays by the contractor. In addition, the level of citizen engagement on the project was not effective; this would have catered for offshoots to overcome the storm waters. We need to see the Environmental Impact Assessment to identify gaps to address the concerns from the community" Town Clerk Kakira Town Council during the Baraza of 13th July 2020.

The MoWT expressed a lot of concern on the performance of the contractor which resulted to the use of the Force Account mechanism for the second phase which was at 65% by 12th September 2020. The lessons from the first phase curtailed with the need for citizen engagement, information sharing, documentation of work enabled the MoWT to plan effectively for the second phase extension which has been implemented steadfastly and with all stakeholders involved. The MoWT attributes this lesson and improvement in performance to the engagements and value CoST Assurance

process has added. Experiences from CoST Assurance process are also being used in planning and implementation of other projects within the MoWT.

Key stakeholders – please indicate if they are happy to provide quotes – these were included in our Activity report and no one expressed discomfort while being recorded, we also have a video recording on the same.

On an ESIA for the project; there was no ESIA done by the MoWT citing a lack of guidelines on how environmental management on small projects. The MoWT in 2019 used the New Environmental Act 2019 which requires that all projects to have ESEIAs and following CoST recommendations, they conducted an ESIA, findings and recommendations from the project were discussed in the initial meetings with citizens under the second phase of the project. Some of the issues were included in the contract document. Information in the communities was disseminated in February 2020, **“we started engagements with the citizens on environmental matters in February 2020 and we talked about issues of dust, breakage of drainage pipes among others. There is also a contact person on site who is responsible for information sharing”** said Mutemo Charles, Environmentalist on the Project, MoWT

We appreciate the new road that has come to my local council, however, there are stormy waters every time it rains, because the drainage is poorly done, this should be worked on. My village did not have a good road, this new road is here to help us. Because of the new road, we no longer have thieves attacking us, as they usually hid in the bad road we had. These community meetings usually supported by CoST Uganda and Ministry of Works and Transport help us get closer to the people who are constructing the road, the Engineers, know them and ask questions, sometimes we walk along the road to identify what has not been done well and recommend how to improve. We also have an opportunity to express other concerns, nothing is imposed onto our community when we have such Barazas” **Zarya Amisi, Chairperson Local Council one.**

A follow up Baraza was held on 12th September 2020, which revealed that despite the disruptions from the contractor’s lack of effective delivery and negligence, the MoWT had engaged the citizens and other respective stakeholders on the issues raised and as a result, the project was well received by the community and; citizens are pleased to engage with it. Out of their [negligence, the contractor was charged 160](#) Million Uganda Shillings. This is partly attributed to the engagements held by CoST Uganda in partnership with the MoWT. CoST Engagements and the Assurance process helped the MoWT identify the gaps the contractor had in project implementation thereby calling for action.

- The citizens attribute upcoming economic growth of the community to the infrastructure development around them. The citizens were very informed and had built ownership of the project.
- Key stakeholders that had been left out in the first phase, such as Kakira Town council, UMEME and National Water had been engaged and these in turn addressed the concerns the community raised.
- In addition, the MoWT had conducted an ESIA and shared findings with the local citizens and had procure an information board for phase one and two as recommended but, this was pending installation.

- The Ministry improved the drainage system and open manholes to enable *movement of rainy water through the main channels. As of 7th December 2020 stormy and run off water no longer flooded to people's gardens, and homes; some citizens had complained not sleeping whenever it rained during the Baraza of 12th September 2020, as the drainage system had been directed to people's homes. The MoWT further secured culverts securing atleast five homes, and Kakira had been asked to secure culverts for atleast 10 homes.*
- In response to citizens' concerns on access to roads, connecting to the main road under construction, the MoWT had graded the Weiraka Modern school road, compacted it with murrum. There was an added cost to the project budget which was not disclosed, but, this was justifiable as, the citizens needed it more urgently. The Mwiri Primary school walk ways – access roads were tarmacked as part of the road works on the Busoga Mwiri Access road, this additional cost was also justifiable.
- There were five accidents reported on the project, 3 of them had happened on 4th December 2020 and these required speed humps to be rectified; the MoWT erected following the Baraza engagement, had installed temporary speed humps and would install permanent humps following the completion of the tarmac rollout. Speed humps help manage drivers speed while on the road. Possible area for the permanent humps included; entrance to Mwiri Primary school, village of hope, river of hope school and old Kakira road. In addition, installation of educative materials around the project and creating awareness with citizens on protection of project signage materials, maintenance of the temporary speed humps was recommended for further action by the MoWT.
- The MoWT had strengthened supervision of works and had a *Site Fore Man* full time on the project.
- *“Temporary humps have helped reduce accidents, citizens are thanking MoWT for the humps, because trucks, cars and motorcycles are no longer speedy, there is also no more dust, and noise pollution, following the installation of the first layer of tarmac”* Site Fore Man.

Any other information to help build a unique story;

<https://www.cost.or.ug/multiplex-loses-160m-uganda-shillings-out-of-negligence/>

<https://www.cost.or.ug/press-release-3rd-assurance-findings-and-recommendations/>

<https://www.cost.or.ug/download/1st-assurance-report-on-busoga-mwiri-access-road-under-ministry-of-works-and-transport-nov-2018/>