



Gender Responsiveness in the Transport Sector

Overview

The 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals) highlights *gender equality and empowerment of women and girls* (Goal number five) as one of the issues to be addressed in pursuit of sustainable inclusive growth and development across the globe. The Agenda was adopted in September 2015 at the United Nations Summit and Uganda was signatory, hence, gender and equity budgeting is a key strategy to the realization of the global prerequisite of leaving no community, economy or country, behind.

Budgeting is a tool through which policies, programmes and development strategies of government are translated into public service delivery. The budget needs to be allocated and utilized to deliver public services equally to all segments of the population. Particular focus is on the disadvantaged groups such as women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), ethnic minorities, the chronically poor, the older persons, youth, orphans and other vulnerable children (OVCs), as well as people living in rural areas and disadvantaged regions, including hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay places such as islands.

To ensure compliance to the gender and equity requirements, the Budget Framework Papers (BFPs) and Ministerial Policy Statements (MPSs) are assessed by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) using a pre-defined scoring criteria. A pass mark of 50% was set by Parliament to qualify for the Gender and Equity Certificate which is issued by the Minister responsible for Finance, in consultation with the EOC (Section 13(15) of the PFMA).

This policy brief gives key highlights on the level of compliance of the BFPs and MPSs for ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in the Works and Transport Sector over the last three financial years. The brief also explores the current gender and equity issues in the sector, and makes recommendations.

Key Issues

- **Vulnerable groups such as women, PWDs, and children among others are still under-catered for in the Transport Sector.** In particular, women remain under-represented in the Transport Sector agencies, and their voices are not heard in the sector policy and planning processes.
- **Technical engineering specialists focus is more directed to technical and physical design elements** and less on transport users, social benefits, or maximizing access and benefits for different groups of users.

Introduction

Transport infrastructure and services are a means to improve the well-being of people by facilitating access to economic and social benefits. Thus this infrastructure should be designed to best meet the needs of all users in ways that are equitable, affordable, and responsive to all groups. To achieve this, the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transport infrastructure and services should involve the participation of all key stakeholders, including transport user groups and affected communities.

The Government of Uganda (GoU) initiated gender and equity budgeting in Financial Year (FY) 2004/05. However, the uptake was limited due to weak institutional gender and equity capacities, and the lack of policy tools for enforcement. To strengthen its commitment to equitable planning and budgeting, the GoU adopted the Public



Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2015 with gender and equity clauses. The Act requires all sectors to ensure that their BFPs, MPSs and budgets are gender and equity responsive.

Section 9 (1) of the PFMA, 2015 requires each Accounting Officer in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, to prepare a BFP and MPS for their Vote, taking into consideration balanced development, as well as gender and equity concerns. Section 13 (11) (e) mandates the Minister for Finance to present the Gender and Equity certificates with the annual budget. The main objective of the assessment is to establish the level of compliance of the Votes with gender and equity requirements for the FY.

Compliance of Works and Transport Sector BFP and MPS to Gender and Equity Requirements

Over the last three FYs, the Works and Transport Sector BFPs have been averagely compliant with the gender and equity requirements. However, the compliance has varied negatively and positively by about 10% as seen in Figure 1 from the required minimum score of 50%.

The average Vote compliance per FY of 49% and 60% in the FYs 2016/17 and FY2017/18 consecutively was inconsistent with the BFP compliance in the same year with variance of about 10%. This was brought about by the assignment of less or more resources to the gender and equity requirements in the MPS than in the BFP. However, the average compliance of the MPS is 58% and varied by 1% from the BFP compliance in the FY 2018/19.

However, notable is the steady increase in compliance of the Uganda Road Fund (URF) Vote MPS since FY2016/17 and the decline

in compliance of the MPSs of Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT), and the Uganda National Road Authority (UNRA) in FY2018/19.

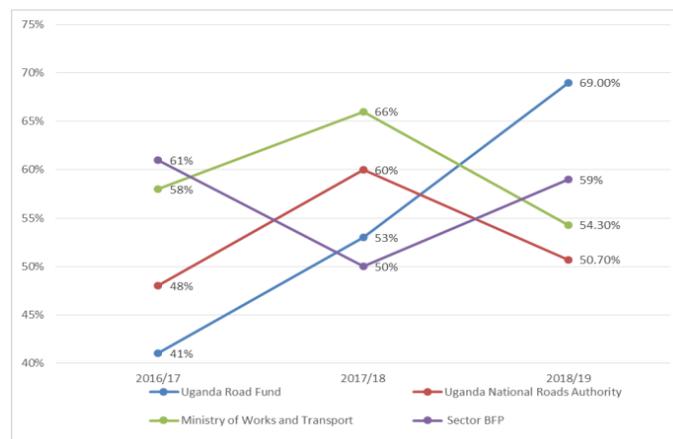


Figure 1: Trends of Works and Transport Sector BFP and Vote MPS Compliance with Gender and Equity Requirements

Overall, there has been improvement in the level of compliance of the sector MPSs with gender and equity requirements. The improvement is attributed to: capacity building efforts, change of attitude, development of guiding tools on gender and equity planning and budgeting such as the gender and equity compacts, and the National Compendium on Gender and Equity.

Gender and equity issues/concerns in the Works and Transport Sector

Design of transport projects often do not sufficiently consider the vulnerable groups’ travel needs, concerns, priorities, and preferences. For example, several resources are being invested in the sector towards infrastructure development, however most roads outside trading centres do not have provisions for pedestrians and sometimes cyclists. On several occasions, school children are found walking in trenches while going to school.



Women largely remain under-represented in the transport sector agencies, and their voices are not heard in transport sector policy and planning processes. As regards the Works and Transport Sector public institutions, only one in every four (26%) employees is a woman (*MoWT, 2016a*). Women are nearly absent in decision-making positions of the MoWT, comprising only 4.3% and 20.2% of the top, and senior management, respectively.

A number of hard-to-reach areas remain inaccessible, although the sector is commended for the work so far done. There are very few islands that can be accessed with a ferry. For instance, Buvuma has 52 islands, of which only one is accessible by a ferry. Kalangala has 87 islands, of which about 67 are habitable but only one island is accessible by a ferry.

Inadequate maintenance towards rehabilitation of community access roads in both urban and rural areas is an equity issue. According to the National Household Survey (2016); a significant proportion of households (87%) experience constraints in using these roads due to poor condition. Only 9.1% of the community access road network provides all-season access and yet most of the agricultural related trips are predominantly undertaken on community access roads or footpaths.

Safety of women and girls living near construction sites or along transport corridors is a growing concern. The influx of temporary construction workers as well as cash in the communities increases the risk of sexual violence against women and girls. There have been reported incidences of defilement of girls by road workers as well as sexual harassment of female employees in road projects in Uganda. In 2015, the World Bank cancelled funding to the Uganda

Transport Sector Development Project due to allegations of sexual abuse and misconduct by construction workers and mistreatment of female staff working on the project.

What ought to be done?

Different sub-sectors offer different opportunities for gender mainstreaming during design of their projects. For example, rural road projects that directly meet the mobility needs of rural women are far more likely to lend themselves to gender-inclusive design, whereas national roads designed primarily for transporting goods and commodities within and across borders may offer limited opportunities for integrating gender equality issues.



Alex Sebowa Road in Masaka Municipality constructed to meet equity requirements such as providing pedestrian walkways with access for PWDs, solar street lighting and cycling lanes on both sides

However, even the design of national highways requires some level of gender analysis to assess needs and constraints, and identify opportunities and potential social risks.

A detailed gender analysis should be undertaken for projects identified with potential to directly support gender equality objectives. A less detailed analysis can be carried out for projects that are unlikely to provide direct benefits but can deliver some



indirect benefits. However, even with projects likely to provide only indirect benefits, every opportunity should be explored to include gender-inclusive design features, such as reducing women's vulnerabilities through mitigation measures - making provision for employment opportunities, where feasible, or improving the working environment for women and men in the transport sector.

Due diligence and mitigation measures to address potential risks such as HIV, trafficking, resettlement, and labor standards should specifically address gender and equity differences in vulnerability.

Challenges

- Limited numbers of women professionals in the sector, and failure by the sector to attract and retain them due to low salaries.
- Negative attitude of stakeholders including women on the nature of work in the sector. Many stakeholders continue to assume that construction activities are labour intensive and therefore unfit for women.
- Inadequate budget to implement gender related activities and also undertake regular monitoring for compliance.

Conclusion

There has been improvement in the level of compliance of the sector MPSs with gender and equity requirements. Transport investments designed with due consideration to gender dimensions bring significant benefits to users.

However, the designs of transport projects in Uganda often do not sufficiently consider the travel needs of vulnerable groups. Gender capacity development of the transport sector

executing and implementing agencies is therefore necessary to develop the skills for designing and implementing gender-inclusive projects.

Policy recommendations

- The implementing agencies (MoWT, UNRA and Local Governments) should involve all key stakeholders, including user groups and affected communities in planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transport infrastructure and services. Gender analysis should be undertaken to inform the design of transport investments.
- Gender capacity development within the transport sector executing and implementing agencies should be undertaken to build ownership and commitment, and to develop the necessary skills for designing and implementing gender-inclusive projects.

References

- i. Equal Opportunities Commission, Assessment Report on Compliance of Ministerial Policy Statements with Gender and Equity Requirements for FY 2018/2019, April 2018.
- ii. Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and UN Women, Gender and Equity Compact for the Works and Transport Sector 2016/2017 – 2019/2020, 2017.
- iii. Ministry of Works and Transport, Annual Sector Performance Report, FY2015/16.

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