



Urban Roads Resealing Project (URRP) under Ministry of Works and Transport: Are the outputs and outcomes being achieved?

Overview

The Urban Roads Resealing Project (URRP) was instituted in June 2011 and will end in June 2020. It aimed at rehabilitating or upgrading some of the major roads and streets within urban centres by force account. The Force Account Policy was introduced in 2012 and entails having internal skilled personnel, equipment and funds for road activities. To this effect, the Government of Uganda (GoU) acquired a loan from the Republic of China amounting to USD 100 million which was used to purchase 1,425 pieces of new road equipment.

The project cost was estimated at Ug shs 147.9 billion which was revised to Ug shs 134.42 billion and was to be financed by the GoU. Given the project life-span of nine (9) financial years (FYs), the annual releases in the range of Ug shs 11.50 -17.5 billion had to be released to the project for it to achieve its intended output and consequently, contribute to improved transportation system as an outcome.

The Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) as the implementer plans to rehabilitate or upgrade to bitumen standard, roads in at least three (3) urban councils in every FY. Other works undertaken arise from directives and pledges to construct tarmac for government institutions and agencies. The project also fulfills some of the President's directives relating to road works that are outside the UNRA's mandate and beyond the scope of Local Governments (LGs).

This **Briefing Paper** elucidates the level of achievement of the URRP key planned outputs by 31st December 2018; and assesses whether the project is likely to achieve its planned outputs and the expected National Development Plan (NDP) II outcomes by June 2020. It further highlights key obstacles faced during implementation, lessons learnt and possible recommendations.

Performance Rating: A quantitative scoring method was used to rate the extent to which the planned outputs were achieved. The performance scores are as follows: Very Good (90% and above); Good (70%-89%); Fair (50%-69%) and Poor (Less than 50%).

Key Issues

- 1. Under funding:** The total budget allocation by the end of December 2018 was at Ug shs 39.89 (29.6% of the original funding plan), of which Ug shs 29.66 (24.33%) was disbursed to the project against the planned financial progress of 80.57%.
- 2. Lack of sound, complete and adequate road equipment units:** This affected timely and effective implementation of the planned road works throughout the elapsed project time.
- 3. Unidentified target beneficiaries and increasing demand:** Although the target output per year was in the range of 10-14 km, the beneficiary urban councils were not predetermined for each FY. Additionally, the cumulative target beneficiaries of 27 urban councils may not be significant, since more councils have been created.

Introduction

Urban roads deteriorated dramatically during the 1970s and early 1980s, largely due to dwindling resources and poor management in the urban authorities for maintenance. Strenuous efforts have been made to rehabilitate and repair some of the major roads and streets within Kampala City since 1987. During phase I, which ended in 1989, 41km of bitumen roads were rehabilitated in Kampala financed by European Union and Kampala City Council.

In 1991, the Japanese Government extended a grant of USD 2.4 million in form of construction plant and equipment spares for rehabilitation of urban roads. Consequently, the Japan International Corporation Agency



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(JICA) II URRP was formed under the Ministry of Local Government and it was charged with rehabilitation of the dilapidated roads in the urban centres. The project was co-funded by the JICA (development element) and GoU (recurrent element).

The URRP under MoWT was set up as a successor project to the JICA II URRP upon expiry of the latter.

The project objectives are to: create a better working environment by reducing mud and dust in urban areas; reduce vehicle operating costs and transport charges; improve traffic movement and circulation within urban areas; and attract the investment in urban areas to boost the economy.

Relevance of the project with respect to the NDPII and sectoral policy objectives

The project intends to achieve the first objective of the Works and Transport Sector which is *to develop adequate reliable and efficient multi-modal transport network in the country* using intervention iii which is *to rehabilitate and maintain the district urban and community access road network*.

The project is also relevant to the country's sector goal of improving the efficiency of the transport in order to support economic growth and poverty reduction.

Planned Outputs and Activities

The project was intended to pave (tarmac) a total of 107.9km of urban roads countrywide and improve drainage systems. Activities involved are: survey and design of proposed roads; procurement of construction materials and other inputs; physical works execution including earthworks and road formation

works; pavement layer constructions; surface dressing works; and drainage works.

Findings

- **Limited funding and absorption capacity**

The total funding for the URRP was at 24.33% of the required funding (Table 1) by 31st December 2018. The financial disbursements for the project were in the range of 17%-32% of the original annual plan up to FY 2017/18. Hence, the project was not prioritized as the annual budget allocations and disbursements were not commensurate to the original plan for the same period. However, the annual budget allocation for FY 2018/19 was increased by about 350% and disbursements at the half year were at 37.54%. On the other hand, the absorption performance was very good at 90% for the previous FYs and was fair at 68.7 % for the first half of FY 2018/19. Hence, the project has the capability to absorb funds within the financial year.

Table 1: Financing of the URRP up to December 2018

FY	Planned funding (Ug shs billions)	Budget allocation(Ug shs billions)	Actual disbursement (Ug shs billions)	% receipts to original funding	Absorption
2011/12	11.500	2.340	3.700	31.887	3.560
2012/13	12.000	3.600	2.560	17.958	2.550
2013/14	13.200	3.420	3.410	20.258	2.730
2014/15	14.000	4.000	3.850	27.414	3.840
2015/16	15.500	4.000	3.498	22.574	3.500
2016/17	16.200	4.100	3.050	18.846	3.050
2017/18	17.200	3.332	3.050	17.733	3.050
2018/19	17.420	15.100	6.540	37.543	4.490
Total	117.020	39.892	29.660	24.334	26.77

Source: MoWT



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Achievement of Outputs: The achievement of outputs was poor as only 29.14% against time progress of 83.33% (7.5 years out of nine). Considering the current level of financing of Ug shs 15 billion and target annual output of 13.4km, it will take the project another six (6) FYs after the current FY for the project to achieve its planned outputs. Table 3 shows level of achievement of outputs up to December 2018.

Table 3: Achievement of outputs of the URRP up to December 2018

F/Y	Planned Scope (km)	Achieved Output (km)	Deficit (Km)	% of Achieved Output	Remarks
2011/12	10.0	5.4	4.6	54.0	1.5km in Lukaya; 0.6km Lyantonde; 2.2km Gulu (Churchill roads); 0.5km Kyenjojo Town Council (TC) - Kajara and Taxi park roads were tarmacked.
2012/13	10.5	4.6	5.9	43.8	0.7km of Julius Ave road in Katakwi TC; 1.1km of Chemonges Road in Kapchorwa; and 2.8km of Bwanda Convent Road in Masaka (single seal) were tarmacked.
2013/14	11.0	3.8	7.2	34.5	0.8km of Moi Road in Kapchorwa; 1.5km of roads at the National Leadership Institute (NALI) in Kyankwanzi and 1.5km of roads in Lyantonde TC (second seal).
2014/15	11.7	3.2	8.5	27.3	Tarmacking of 1.0km at NALI (Kyankwanzi) with drainage works and 2.2km on Kagongo road in Ibanda TC.
2015/16	12.1	5.4	6.7	44.6	2.3km of NALI estate road; 1.0km road section on Namasuba-Ndeje ; and 2.1km in Masindi TC tarmacked.
2016/17	12.8	3.2	9.6	25.0	1.2km on NALI estate roads and 2.0km in Bwanda Convent road (2nd seal) were tarmacked.
2017/18	13.0	2.5	10.5	19.2	0.35km Mityana Diocese Access; Drainage and shoulder improvement works on 1.0km of Bwanda Convent road section were tarmacked. Construction materials for Station Road (0.65km) in Mityana MC and Nyakasharu road (0.5km) in Rubirizi TC were tarmacked.
2018/19	13.4	3.351	3.1	25.0	Achievement of planned output was at 26.25% by 31 st December 2018. Tarmacking works were planned on Chebrot Road (1.0km) in Kapchorwa TC; Movit Road 1.2km in Makindye Ssabagabbo MC, Kira Bulindo-Nakwero (2.0km) in Kira M.C; Church and Cathedral roads (1.1km) in Bugembe TC; Nyakasharu road (0.5km) in Rubirizi TC; Internal Roads (2.2km) at the National Agricultural & Trade Show Grounds in Jinja MC; Old Kampala & Station roads (2.3km)
2019/20	13.4	0	13.4	0	FY not yet started
Total	107.9	31.45	69.5	29.14	Poor performance

Source: MoWT Q4 Reports FY 2017/18, MoWT URRP Review Report November 2018, BMAU Semi-Annual Monitoring Reports FY 2018/19 and author's compilation

¹ This is at half year; construction works on most projects however procurement of materials had been executed.



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Project Management Challenges

- 1) Incomplete and unsound road maintenance equipment to carry out the planned road works throughout the elapsed time of the URRP. The equipment from China that was procured in 2012 could not efficiently carry out the scope of works. For instance, the bitumen boilers were always impounded because they could not work effectively. In addition, the new Japanese equipment that was purchased last FY did not include road equipment for tarmacking. Hence, the URRP has relied on equipment hire for some works which undermines the force account concept.
- 2) The late initiation of procurement processes for road construction materials such as gravel, stone chippings, bitumen and culverts which is in most cases concluded late in each FY. Specifically, physical works of FY 2018/19 for most roads had not started by the end of December 2018 due to ongoing procurement.
- 3) Increasing demand due to increased urban centres and overwhelming requests from institutions and Presidential pledges.
- 4) Depletion of road construction materials such as gravel (murrum) and aggregates (stones) which makes construction expensive.

Lessons Learnt

- i. Proper project planning is key to effective implementation. Besides finance, other resources such as equipment that may be required ought to be sourced prior to commencement to ensure their availability, and adequacy for efficiency.
- ii. Timely project reviews with stakeholders are vital so as to respond to emerging concerns. For instance, the funding for the project was only stepped up this FY after all projects in the Public Investment Plan were reviewed for exit or consideration.
- iii. A good sustainability plan is vital on the URRP. After the roads have been completed, they are

handed over to the LGs for maintenance. However, the low funds allocated and unsound equipment cannot enable them to niftily maintain these roads.

Conclusion

The project is way behind schedule as less than 30% of the outputs have been achieved at a time progress of over 80%. This is mainly due to inadequate funding. Although funding was increased to Ug shs 15 billion in FY 2018/19 and the same budget allocation is projected to hold for FY 2019/20, the project is unlikely to achieve its outputs on time. Implementation is further bogged down by lack of appropriate equipment, procurement delays and depletion of materials. Consequently, the timely achievement of outcomes is frustrated.

Policy Recommendations

- 1) The MoWT should prioritise the URRP within the sectoral allocations so as to avail adequate funding to enable timely achievement of targets.
- 2) The MoWT and MoFPED should procure equipment for paving works to supplement the newly acquired road maintenance fleet to ease execution of planned activities.
- 3) The MoWT should review the project for extension or redesign since the urban councils are exponentially increasing.
- 4) The MoWT should redesign alternative technologies that are low cost yet effective for tarmacking roads.

References

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- ii. MoWT-URRP Project Review Report, November 2018
- iii. Semi-annual Budget Monitoring Report FY 2018/19, March 2019; Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit
- iv. MoFPED release and expenditure figures from the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) for FY 2011/12 to December, FY 2018/19

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