

Commitment. Through loans and grants, the international financial institution is helping Uganda improve its infrastructure.

BY JOSEPH BAHINGWIRE
jbahingwire@ug.nationmedia.com

World Bank supporting Uganda's road sector

The main mission of the World Bank is to see world free of poverty, the reason it has embarked on strengthening the capacity of different countries to end extreme poverty and to promote shared prosperity.

In Uganda, the World Bank is supporting government to fulfill its mandate of providing better services to its citizens by funding several infrastructure projects such as roads.

One such project is the Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development (USMID) programme.

In 2013, the World Bank through the International Development Association, approved a loan of \$150 million to finance urban infrastructure and improve service delivery in 14 municipalities in Uganda under the USMID project.

The six-year project was to expand urban infrastructure and enhance the capacity of the 14 municipal local governments to generate own source revenues, improve urban planning, and strengthen financial management, procurement, environmental and social systems.

The 14 municipalities that benefited from the project are Arua, Gulu, Lira, Soroti, Moroto, Mbale, Tororo, Jinja, Entebbe, Masaka, Mbarara, Kabale, Fort Portal and Hoima.

The core of the programme comprises two grant flows to municipalities. The first one is the Municipal Development Grant which provides additional funds to the targeted municipalities for investment in urban infrastructure, designed in such a way as to leverage and incentivise improved institutional and delivery performance of these bodies.

Support to municipalities

The other is the Municipal Capacity Building Grant, amounting to about 7 per cent, to provide municipalities with the resources to access the capacity building inputs that are required for them to achieve the performance.

The programme also involves a range of administration, oversight and support activities undertaken by the relevant central government entities responsible for various elements of implementing the programme.

The first phase of the USMID is running for six years (FY 2013/14-FY 2018/19) at a total cost of \$160 million to enhance the capacity of the municipalities to improve urban service delivery in a rapidly urbanising society where service delivery responsibilities have been decentralised.

The World Bank is also financing the Kampala Institutional Infrastructure Development Project (KIIDP) to enhance infrastructure and institutional capacity of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to improve urban mobility for inclusive economic growth.



A section of Kira Road in Kampala. Under the Kampala Institutional Infrastructure Development Project funded by the World Bank, major city roads have been beautified and widened. PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA

Among the beneficiaries is Makerere University where the project funding has changed face of the university with nine newly constructed roads with inbuilt drainage.

Ms Agnes Biribonwa, the communication specialist for the KIIDP project, says the new university roads stretch is 3.5 kms.

The new and well-lit roads are a result of a negotiated in-kind compensation with Makerere University management. The university consented to offer some of its land for the upgrade and expansion of Makerere Hill Road, which runs from Wandegaya to Nankulabye.

"KCCA is also constructing a perimeter wall around the campus to further secure the university. Furthermore, a new administrative block was built at Makerere College School. This two-storied block is nearing completion except for minor works such as painting and tiling. Also, a signalled pedestrian crossing will be installed near Makerere College School to ensure

safety of students," says Ms Biribonwa.

Another in-kind compensation the university is receiving is a remodeled and wider university main gate. This will help serve the high volumes of traffic and numbers of students entering and leaving the University during rush hours.

The road to the main gate is also set to fitted with traffic lights at the junction with Makerere Hill road to regulate traffic. It will have six lanes, walkways plus islands for enhanced safety of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. Some of the new roads in Makerere University are around University Hall, Mary Stuart Hall, Lumumba Hall, Mitchel Hall, Livingston Hall, and the Institute of Technology.

"Meanwhile, work on Makerere Hill Road is progressing with a completion rate of 40 per cent. This road will be a dual carriage with clear signage and three signalled junctions at Makerere University Main Gate, Sir Apollo Kagawa Road and Gaddafi Road," Ms

Biribonwa adds. Mr Charles Tumwebaze, the KIIDP 2 project coordinator, says the project has two components; one for constructing city roads, drainage and associated infrastructure and the institutional and systems.

The five-year project funded by the World Bank and the government of Uganda started in May 2015, and is worth \$183.7 million. The project is being implemented in five divisions of Kampala; Central, Nakawa, Makindye, Kawempe

and Rubaga.

"This project is aimed at improving connectivity, reducing traffic jam and wider designed roads with pedestrian walkways, reduced cost of doing business, improved air and water quality, reduced flooding," says Mr Tumwebaze.

Through this project, he says they are upgrading roads in Kampala, widening traffic junctions, constructing drainage channels, preparing a Multi-Modal Urban Transport Master plan and updating the Kampala Drainage Master plan, among others.

The others include beautifying neighbourhoods, increased property values from improved infrastructure, easy location of houses and better route planning.

According to the Country Partnership Framework 2016/ 2021 by the World Bank Group, scaling up public-private partnership models, attracting private sector investments in infrastructure is required to close Uganda's infrastructure deficit.

THE NUMBERS

The World Bank is the largest financier of development projects in Uganda. The World Bank country manager, Ms Christina Clavo Malmberg, says the current financial institution's total portfolio to Uganda is \$2.5b (Shs8.5 trillion). Of this, about \$200m (Shs677b) is grants, while the rest \$1.8b (Shs6.1 trillion) is a loan.