

Makindye leaders, residents negotiate over Busabala road

Optimistic. Makindye-Ssabagabo mayor says most of the residents on the road are ready to give away their land to allow expansion.

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MAKINDYE. Authorities in Makindye-Ssabagabo Municipality, Wakiso District, have entered into negotiations with residents on Busabala road to convince them to offer part of their land to pave way for expansion and tarmacking of the road.

The leaders say if residents buy the idea, the road works will commence and they claim their compensation later.

Mr Gerald Lumbuye, the Makindye-Ssabagabo mayor, says most of the residents on the road are upbeat about the project and ready to give away their land to allow the project to take off.

"After all, these people have already been promised that they would be paid. We should not wait when money for actual construction is available. Compensations will get us along the way," Mr Lumbuye says.

Mr Lumbuye urges government to adopt the system of negotiating with residents to donate land for road infrastructure projects so that the national road network can be expanded rapidly.

But Uganda National Roads Authority (Unra), a government agency mandated to develop and maintain national roads network, says construction works can only start after people are compensation for their land.

"The policy is that, we pay landlords, acquire land and give way to the contractors to undertake road construction. It



Paving way. A resident demolishes part of his shop in Kanyanaya Village, Makindye Ssabagabo to pave way for the expansion of a road.

PHOTO BY JAMES KABENGWA

will be a new trend for people of Busabala to give their land on credit. We will look into their request if they inform us," Unra's media manager, Mr Allan Ssempebwa, says.

Construction of the 11km stretch has failed to take off in the past two decades due to lack of funds, which has sparked off numerous demonstrations in the area, with residents protesting over the dusty road.

The road starts at Najjanankumbi on Entebbe Road and ends at Kaazi near Lake Victoria.

Of the entire stretch, only two kilometres are tarmacked and this is because they are within the boundaries of the Kampala

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Capital City Authority.

Makindye-Ssabagabo MP Ssempebwa Kigozi says the central government has for long attributed the delay to tarmac the road on high cost involved in compensation and it is a step in the right direction if residents are willing to offer their land before they are compensated.

"People are tired of dust

and they have agreed to donate their land so that works commence. Let them start the works," Ssempebwa says.

The legislator claims that he has held a series of meetings with officials from Ministry of Finance and Unra who he says have indicated that Shs4.5b was allocated towards the construction of the road.

He does not, however, mention the financial year when this allocation was made.

According to their work plan, Mr Ssempebwa says Busabala road will be tarmacked next year when all funds required for the project are available.

However, he does not divulge the amount of money required for the project, but he disputes Mr Ssempebwa's figure of Shs4.5b.

"That road (Busabala) is in our mid-term priorities. We will have it done next year. Designs are complete and we are moving into the phase of procuring the contractor," he adds.

Unlike residents in Makindye-Ssabagabo who are willing to offer part of the land to expand roads in the area, some in Kampala have frustrated progress of various road projects, insisting that government has to first give them compensation before construction works commence.

Mr Geoffrey Ndiwalana, the Makindye-Ssabagabo chief engineer, says Busabala road is one of the crucial roads on the outskirts of Kampala and if tarmacked, it will help lessen traffic jam on Kampala-Entebbe road.

He says so far, two major roads in the municipality have been expanded and tarmacked.

They are Namasuba-Ndejje-Kitiko road and St Noah Nfuufu-Seguku road. Mr Ndiwalana says currently only two per cent of the entire road network in the municipality is tarmacked.