

Buwaate residents raise funds to build sh1b community road

By Taddeo Bwambale

Buwaate village in Kira Town Council, Wakiso district, is a fast-growing suburb, with high-end commercial and residential apartments springing up at every corner.

It is also one suburb where residents are taking charge of their community, but for the right causes. Concerned about the delays to fix a 2.2km road, the residents have started a drive to tarmac it themselves.

Buwaate community road serves over 2,800 people, who have settled in the village and connects to two major roads – Kira-Kasangati and Najjera-Ntinda roads.

Through a crowdfunding drive, the residents are seeking to raise sh1b to tarmac the road. The ambitious effort has since raised over sh30m.

"We could not wait for the Government to build the road, yet there is no budget for it. So we set up a committee to rehabilitate it ourselves," explains Joseph Zziwa, the chairperson of the project team.

The first phase of the project, which involved widening the road, was completed two months ago, with support from the works ministry and Kira Municipality. Before its expansion, it was a narrow, four-metre municipality road, which could hardly accommodate two cars on either side. That width has more than doubled to 8.5 metres, with no compensation given to claimants, except the promise of a better living.

Both the ministry and the municipality endorsed the road project and offered road



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equipment and engineers to supervise works as residents mobilised funds for materials, including culverts.

Godfrey Nsubuga, the deputy mayor of Kira, says the community's determination to build the road prompted the municipality council to allocate sh300m for the project.

"We are happy that the residents have agreed to construct the road. It is a unique model that we encourage all other villages to adopt," Nsubuga told *New Vision*.

"Their contributions will be used to buy materials. We shall provide the machinery and also ensure supervision for the

project."

The road project initially faced resistance from some residents since it cut into their land. Hajji Kassan Ssebunza, an 85-year-old landowner, allowed the road to cut into two of his plots.

Edward Mukibi, a city businessman, says he lost about an acre to the road, but still contributed money to the road project.

"I do not count it a loss because what we all want is harmony and a good road that will attract development to our area," he told *New Vision*.

Residents believe crowdfunding will reduce Uganda's backlog for paved roads. With a network of 20,544km, only 20% (4,157km) was tarmac, while 16,388km was unpaved (murrum) by March this year.

Community model

For the team of residents that is spearheading the road project, their motivation is more about drawing the community together around a social cause, than about the money.

It all started with a monthly community cleaning exercise that began two years ago. Every last Saturday of the month, the residents gather to clear the bushes and unclog the drainage channels.

With the monthly sanitation drive having taken root, the residents soon discovered that they were faced with an even more pressing challenge, that of insecurity.

A door-to-door campaign helped to raise some funds to build a police station, which was opened last year. Since



Buwaate Road, which is being constructed by the community. Inset is the Police station the community fundraised for and built. Photo by Ramadhan Abbey

WHAT RESIDENTS SAY



Hajji Kassan Ssebunza Ssenfuka

A community cannot develop without infrastructure. We have schools, health facilities and water, but a bad road. It is good for residents to do something that future generations will be proud of.



Winters Nkangi, resident
I was the first person to contribute to the project because I was born and raised here. The area has changed rapidly since 2013. We believe the road project will transform the area.


Apollo Segawa, resident


I have lived in Buwaate for the last two years. It is impressive to see residents joining hands to build a road. It shows that communities can start something on their own and seek support from the Government.

then, security in the area has significantly improved.

The residents are updated about the security situation in the area through an active WhatsApp group shared with security forces.

Like most urban suburbs, Buwaate is largely a 'gated' community, whose residents have limited regular interaction. Besides stimulating development, residents are convinced the activities will unite them.


American Refugee Council


UNHCR

ADDENDUM

Reference is made to the advert that appeared in the *Newvision* on Thursday 31st August 2017 that:

ARC with funding from UNHCR desires to carry out construction works in Nakivale Refugee Settlements in Isingiro District, Rakai District and Ntungamo District. This is to notify the public that the closing date has been adjusted from 15th September 2017 to 22nd September 2017.

Bid documents for all the works can still be collected from the two ARC offices (Kampala and Nakivale).

For further details refer to the advert published on the above mentioned date. The rest of the information remain the same.

MANAGEMENT