

3.5million passengers annually



One of the drainage channels at the new cargo area



The silo used to mix aggregate and cement



Officials from CAA and CCCG tour the area where the new cargo terminal will be built

DESIGN-AND-BUILD

Ding Jianming, CCCG's Project manager, said the airport upgrade and expansion work is a design-and-build undertaking, and that a great deal of time had to be invested in the designing before the start of the actual construction business.

this upgrade and expansion will give Uganda a new face," he added.

Once the revamped airport is linked to the Kampala-Entebbe expressway, which is also being built by CCCG, Jianming noted that movement between Entebbe and Kampala for Ugandans and visitors will be fast. A good airport and an expressway, he explained, are important components of each country's infrastructure stock in connecting the area hosting the airport and the city.

"Each country needs an airport and an expressway," Jianming added. Eng. Patrick Muleme, the head of design at Uganda National Roads Authority, explained that the Entebbe-Expressway project inspired the major upgrade and expansion activities at Entebbe International Airport.

"The airport is being expanded because of the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway. The Kampala-Entebbe Expressway is essential for the airport because it will enable visitors and Ugandans to easily get to Kampala from the airport and vice versa," he added.

Now that the design is almost ready, we are dealing with the sites for the new cargo centre and access roads. Inside the airport, a lot of work is actually being done. It has taken us 10 months to complete the design," he added. Ding Jianming, the project manager for CCCG, said the airport upgrade and expansion work is a design-and-build undertaking, and that a great deal of time had to be invested in the designing before the start of actual construction business.



A worker operating the gravel testing machine

Inside the laboratory

The section of the laboratory where soil is tested before use

Revamped Entebbe airport to handle

By Pascal Kwesiga

When travelling to a new country by air, one's first impression about that nation is formed at its airport. People often look out for the quality of airport facilities, how they are treated on arrival at the airport and the nature of services they get as they exit the country.

Entebbe International Airport, located in Wakiso district, will in a few months' time, redefine the country's image. The airport, which was commissioned in 1951, is currently undergoing a major upgrade and expansion.

The China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), the firm contracted to upgrade and expand the airport, is currently carrying out preliminary engineering activities, including earthworks and grading in preparation for the commencement of actual construction work. The first phase of the upgrade and expansion programme is being funded by a \$200m (about sh7130) loan from the Exim Bank of China.

In the first phase, the old runway (12/30) and the main one (17/35) will be strengthened with a new asphalt overlay. A runway is the surface designed for the aircrafts to use for takeoff and landing.

The old apron 2 (parking area) for planes of VIPs, including one for the President, will also be strengthened with a new asphalt overlay. The apron 4 for UN planes will have a new concrete pavement added. Apron 1, which is located near the existing terminal building, will also be strengthened and expanded to accommodate six aircrafts. Another cargo centre that will be constructed to accommodate three large and three small cargo planes.

According to the design, the taxiways, the path between aprons and runways, will be expanded and strengthened with an asphalt overlay. Carsten Kaergaard, the project director for COVIL, an international firm that developed the upgrade and expansion design, said the airport will be upgraded and expanded in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) regulations.

New terminal building

It is anticipated that the upgraded and expanded Entebbe International Airport will be able to handle 3.5 million passengers each year, up from the current estimated 1.5 million travellers. For this to happen, the existing terminal building will be expanded by bringing down parts of the existing terminal building and creating more space for more passengers to exit through the complex with ease. The new terminal building will also have more boarding gates and bridges than the existing facility. It will sit on 20,000 square metres.

"The new terminal building will be connected to the old one and they will function as one facility. That means we shall have one central security scan and there will be no need for being checked more than once," Kaergaard explained.

The old cargo centre, which is located near the existing terminal building, will be demolished to facilitate the expansion of the terminal



An artist's impression of how the new terminal will look like when complete

New cargo centre

A new cargo building sitting on 10,000 square metres will be set up some metres away from the existing one. Civil works are being carried out on the site, and there will be a new route between the new cargo facility and apron 1.

A new terminal will also be established at the new cargo centre. The number of bays (marked parking spaces allocated to each plane) will be increased from the current 11 to 21.

John Macdonald, the team leader for Dar Al-Handasah Shair & Partners, a consultant firm on the project, said the construction will involve more than just upgrading, but construction of two new structures - a terminal and cargo facility.

"Phase one is like designing a new airport. The airport will be a lot better than it is today after the upgrade and expansion," he explained, adding: "An airport is a key infrastructure. The design has to be well prepared and all the construction materials have to be tested to ensure they conform to the standards."

The size and infrastructure of the airport is determined by the volume of passengers and cargo it handles. Because of the current cargo and passenger traffic, even after the upgrade and expansion, Entebbe airport will not be as big or as busy as Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi or Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar-es-Salaam that still record a higher number of passengers and cargo traffic than Entebbe due to several factors, mainly economic ones.

Expect comfort

Eng. John Kagono Tusubira, the director of airports and aviation security at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), said, if the facility's capacity is enhanced to handle 3.5 million passengers, it means travellers will go through means comfortably. "That means the contractor has to work during the nights because the airport is busiest during the day. We have to work and constantly clean the runway so that the aircrafts do not

suck in the dust," he added. Tusubira, the director airports and aviation security at the CAA, said flights to enable engineers undertake civil works on some sections of the airport.

He explained that the new facility will have capacity to hold 100,000 tonnes of cargo. The current cargo handling handles 55,000 tonnes, about half of which is fresh produce, including fish and horticultural products.

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Leveling the area into which the airport will expand. Photos by Roderick Ahimbazwe