

## MUNICIPALITY DEVELOPMENT

New Vision  
ADVERTISER SUPPLEMENT

## Municipalities get facelift

By Vision Reporter

Five years ago, a survey established that there was no single street in Kampala without a pothole. The potholes not only translated into bumpy rides and impromptu stops, but they were also largely responsible for the increasing accidents statistics on city roads.

Kampala, however, was not alone. Other major towns such as Mbale faced a similar predicament. Over the years, Mbale slipped from cleanest town status down the rungs to a town characterised by clouds of dust spewed from roads that were once tarmac.

Fortunately, all that is set to change. In the last five years, Kampala residents, just like their counterparts in 14 municipalities around the country, have started witnessing positive changes on their roads.

The Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development programme (USMID) is writing a new chapter that does not involve clouds of dust and uncomfortable drives. The five-year programme's overall objective is to enhance the institutional performance of the 14 municipalities under USMID to improve urban service delivery. It was implemented with \$150m (about sh510b) from the International Development Association (IDA) and the World Bank.

Urban infrastructure improvement is done using the Municipal Development Grant (MDG) which the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development transfers to each municipality that meets the minimum programme conditions. This is after annual performance assessments were done by an independent agent. All municipal councils prioritised rehabilitation of roads except for Fort Portal and Moroto, which chose a lorry park and bus terminal respectively.

Implementation of infrastructure investment is in two batches. The first batch works are being implemented in the first two and a half years of the programme that commenced in June 2014 and they are in final stages of completion. Batch two will be implemented in the last two years of the programme. A consultant has been identified to design and cost Batch 2 projects in the 14 municipal local governments. Construction works for batch two are expected to start in October.

Under batch one, 43km of roads are to be rehabilitated in Arua, Gulu, Lira, Soroti, Mbale, Tororo, Jinja, Entebbe, Masaka, Mbarara, Kabale, Fort Portal and Hoima municipalities. About 24.426km of those were contracted. USMID road works include rehabilitation of the



Nalufenya-Clive Road West in Jinja municipality when it was under construction

road carriageway and provision of all ancillary works such as pedestrian walkways, cyclist lanes, street parking, street lighting, necessary road furniture and greening or beautification, wherever space permits.

Contracted works in Entebbe are complete, while Jinja, Masaka, Arua, Lira, Gulu, Mbale and Tororo are in the final stages. Contracting in Fort Portal and Hoima was delayed, while in Mbarara and Kabale, it has just

**THE PROJECT HAS A CAPACITY BUILDING COMPONENT TO FILL SKILLS GAPS IN MUNICIPALITIES**

been concluded.

In addition to works in progress, the ministry is developing solid waste management strategies and drainage master plans for all the municipalities. These will be prioritized for implementation in the subsequent financial years. They will see improvements in the management of both solid and liquid waste, which were not prioritized by the municipalities yet they pose a serious threat.

**Capacity building**

At the time of programme identification and preparation, capacity assessment of municipalities identified gaps in staff skills, equipment and systems that needed to be addressed to enable efficient implementation of the programme and to ensure sustainability of urban development. The programme, therefore, has a component of capacity building for the municipalities and the Ministry

of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. Implementation of capacity building activities is done using the Municipal Capacity Building Grant (MCBG). The capacity building component emphasises institutional capacity strengthening, but also allows individual career development that specifically targets training related to the current jobs of the trainees.

Under the capacity building component, the offices of the town clerk, head of finance, municipal engineer, physical planner, environment officer, procurement officer and community development have been fully equipped with ICT equipment such as computers, scanners, printers etc. Other activities include provision of systems to enhance, own source revenue generation, improved efficiency in administration, physical planning, procurement management and environment and social management. Each municipality has also been supported to establish a functional grievance and complaints handling desk to receive, record and handle all complaints. As support to career development, a total of 50 staff in the municipalities have benefitted from various training in the fields of financial management, public administration, procurement management, urban governance and management, continuous professional development and international exposure.

**Financial efficiency**

In order to enhance financial management efficiency and in line with the government's objective to streamline financial management in government operations, USMID has rolled-out the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) in the 14 municipalities. This has enabled automation of financial operations to increase efficiency and to minimise the possibility of fraud. All 14 USMID municipalities operate on IFMS and do not transact financial business using paper cheques.



Maruzi Road in Lira was completed



Final touches on Alokolum Road in Gulu municipality



The new Church Road in Entebbe municipality