



UGANDA'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT; A SCRUTINY OF TRANSPORT PLANNING AND MOBILITY IN TOWNS AND CITIES

BY

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Introduction & Background

Uganda like most African countries is experiencing exponential urban growth and expansion at a very alarming rate.

Uganda's population stands at 34 million people with an annual growth rate of 3.4%. Urban population is about 3.5 million people growing at an annual rate of 5.1%.



Introduction

Urban planning is not yet up to the required standard with poor coordination among government agencies responsible for the same and other stakeholders. Cities and towns are not zoned to allow organized human settlement, economic centers and industrial areas to grow in an orderly fashion.



Uganda's Urban Areas

- According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the urban population in Uganda has almost doubled from 2002 which was reported to be over 2.9 million people and now is reported to be around 4.8 million.
- Uganda's urban population is accommodated in one city, 13 municipalities, 95 towns, and 76 town boards which make up the gazetted urban



Uganda's Urban Areas

- Conflict of interest between politicians and bureaucrats in urban local governments also make running of urban affairs difficult.
- Some towns are mere trading centres which have been upgraded with administrative structures of a town boards.
- Decentralization has enhanced the process of haphazard growth of urban areas as local governments barely have the capacity required to effect orderly urban development and rapid urbanization.



High Rates of Population Growth

- Uganda is one of Africa's most rapidly urbanizing countries, with a population base of 34 million, a high population growth rate of 3.4 percent and a high rate of urban growth estimated at 5.1 percent per annum.
- This rapid urbanization is taking place not only in the context of a history of conflict, widespread poverty and a modernizing shrinking agricultural economy, but also one of limited and unreliable energy supply and an acute scarcity of resources for local authorities



High Rates of Population Growth

It is projected that by the year 2035 Uganda's population will have grown to 68.4 million, of which 30 percent will be in urban areas.

The country's economic development has been growing at an average of 7% per annum



Kampala the Capital City

Kampala is relatively a small city compared to other cities in Africa like Nairobi, Johannesburg Addis ababa Lagos and Cairo.

The city remains with narrow colonial streets with winding roads across the hills and valleys. The roads cannot accommodate the ever increasing traffic volumes



Kampala the Capital City

Although the colonial administration left behind a master plan that detailed the expansion trend the city was to take, this was not implemented which partly explains the current poor infrastructure and uncoordinated physical planning.





Kampala the Capital City

- Other towns and municipalities are taking the same trend as Kampala because of politicization of urban development by successive governments.
- Urban planning which is supposed to be championed by technical people has been largely hijacked by politicians both at local and national levels. It is not uncommon for politicians to make pronouncements that affect smooth operations of cities and towns because of selfish reasons.



Kampala the Capital City

In early 1990's local governments including Kampala owned assets including land.

Currently however much of the said assets have either been sold off or given out freely to investors and other people.

There is a common phrase in Kampala today known as “Land Grabbing”. Most public land has been sold to private investors



Kampala the Capital City

Although the city is expanding outwardly in all directions at a fast pace, the expansion is mainly limited to residential rather than commercial structures which would relieve the current pressure on the CDB .

Although office commercial and office buildings are being constructed, they cannot match the demand and as such, many companies and institutions have of recent relocated to the nearby suburbs to get cheap office spaces. These are mainly occupying houses which were hitherto used for residential purposes.



Transport in Kampala

- Public transport has largely been neglected by government and has thus not been well managed.
- 14-seater commuter taxis were introduced mainly to serve Kampala and its environs.
- Uganda Taxi drivers and Operators Association (UTODA) an association of mainly semi-illiterate persons, manages commuter transport in major towns
- UTODA is the dominant organization responsible for collecting and managing commuter transport services.





Transport issues in Towns of Uganda

- During the 1970s and early 1980s, the economic crisis and civil strife that affected the country greatly hindered the development and maintenance of urban transport infrastructure.
- There are approximately 800,000 vehicles in the country, with a potential of additional 20,000 vehicles per year. Over 70% of these vehicles are registered in Kampala City and ply the city roads daily.



Transport issues in Towns of Uganda

- There are no finances and adequate capacity to build public transportation systems or to expand roads to handle the new traffic.
- The challenge is how to plan for an increasing importation of second hand vehicles in the city of Kampala which in essence has created high levels of traffic congestion, parking difficulties, difficulties for pedestrians, massive air pollutants and an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.



Boada Boadas

- *BodaBodas* are quite common in most towns and trading centres they are costly and to a great extent risky. According to Police statistics, the National referral hospital causality ward at Mulago receives an average of 5 people per day with injuries caused by *Boda boda*.



Towns and Trading centres in Uganda

- Towns and trading centres in Uganda start as weekly or monthly congregation markets which may later transform into daily markets depending on demand for commodities being traded.
- The creation of new districts has also contributed to sprout of new urban and trading centres.



Towns and Trading centres in Uganda

- In mid 1990s, Uganda had only 45 districts. Currently Uganda has 112 districts most of which were created recently. More are yet to be created.
- At the time of writing this paper government had just announced the creation 25 new districts bringing the total number of districts in the country to 137



Challenges of Planning Urban areas in Uganda

- The level and quality of services does not match the needs of the population in many urban areas in the country.
- Environmental conditions in many urban areas in Uganda are appalling.
- Accessibility to environmental services ranges from total inadequacy to non-existence in most urban areas.



Challenges of Planning Urban areas in Uganda

Inadequate planning or lack of it in some areas and the resultant development in inappropriate areas such as open spaces, swamps, and steep slopes is causing serious environmental problems such as water pollution, disease outbreaks, etc.



Africa's Urban Road Transport

According to the Africa Development Bank (ADB), Africa's urban road density is low by developing-country standards, limiting the areas that are readily accessible to urban transport services and thereby restricting the mobility of inhabitants.



Africa's Urban Road transport

- Few countries capture adequate financial resources to develop and maintain their urban road network. Urban transport services are dominated largely by informal minibuss operators, following the demise of large-buss services in many cities. Services are costly, and availability inadequate..



Africa's Urban Road Transport

In most African cities, the number of available vehicle seats per 1,000 residents is far below the average in other parts of the world. *With a* road density, or road coverage, of about 7 kilometers per 100 square kilometers, Africa's road infrastructure is far less well developed



Africa's Urban Road Transport

- Africa's national road density is substantially lower than that in other developing regions: only 204 kilometers of road per 1,000 square kilometers of land area, with only one-quarter paved, compared with a world average of 944 kilometers per 1,000 square kilometers, with more than half paved.



Africa's Urban Road Transport

- That density is less than 30 percent of the next-lowest region, South Asia.
- With accelerating urbanization, Africa needs to develop intra-urban roads, and networks within countries and regions.



Conclusion

- The challenge of urban mobility in Uganda is closely linked to lack of proper planning by both the central government and local authorities.
- Uganda is currently facing the challenge of increased urbanization without corresponding increase in road infrastructure development and planning.
- So many districts being created without comprehensive planning