

Understanding key policy and programmatic aspects in the process of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of existing interventions to reduce the incidence of pedestrian road traffic injuries in Uganda

BACKGROUND

Road traffic injuries (RTIs) are currently amongst the leading causes of death globally. Every year about 1.3 million lives are lost due to road traffic crashes (RTCs), with the highest road traffic fatality rates reported in low- and middle-income countries¹. Nearly half of road traffic deaths involve “vulnerable road users” which include pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. Uganda is among the top-ranking countries for RTIs, with road traffic deaths at 28.9 per 100,000 population². From a study that examined Uganda Police data from 2016, pedestrians comprised the largest group of road users killed, accounting for 40% of all casualties, followed by car passengers at 27%, and motorcyclists (23%).

Several road safety interventions such as speed limit, policies, infrastructural modifications, following the UN resolution on pedestrian safety³ have been implemented around the world. However, such implementations have not resulted in the expected level of reduction in pedestrian risk as pedestrians are still highly susceptible to accidents on the roads. This can be attributed to several factors that also include the failure of pedestrians to use the few availed facilities. In Uganda, some road safety interventions have been implemented (e.g. periodic breathalyzer testing for drunk driving by the Uganda Police, traffic fines for speeding and reckless driving, and road safety awareness campaigns) to curb the burden of road traffic crashes. These and more interventions and programmes are usually implemented in silos by the different stakeholders and a clear understanding of the policies, guidelines, rules and regulations as well as existing evaluation strategies is needed for better design of more effective pedestrian targeted interventions in Uganda.

OBJECTIVE

To identify key policy and programmatic aspects in the process of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of existing interventions to reduce the incidence of pedestrian RTIs in Uganda

¹ The Global status report on road safety 2015

² Road traffic incidents in Uganda: a systematic review of a five-year trend. Balikudembe et al, 2017

³ UN Resolutions on road safety 62nd session April 2008

METHODS

We conducted three qualitative studies to understand the landscape of road safety interventions in Uganda especially those targeting pedestrians. We collected and synthesized data on the design, implementation, and evaluation of road safety interventions from three primary sources: road safety documents (e.g. national road safety policy and traffic and road safety act 1998), key informant interviews with key individuals involved in design, formulation and implementation of road safety interventions, and focus group discussions with road users (e.g. pedestrians and motorcycle taxi drivers). The procedures for the document review, key informant interviews, and focus groups are discussed below.

Document review

The document review looked at both government and private-sector documents on transport and road safety. Documents for review were either provided by participants in the key informant interviews or downloaded online. An inventory of all documents was created for tracking purposes.

During analysis, we developed desk review screening and data extraction forms to ensure consistency in the review and data extraction processes. Before extraction, two study members used the screening form to independently review each document for relevance to the study. Documents deemed irrelevant were excluded at this stage. All documents that were excluded by the first two reviewers were reviewed by a third study member to confirm the decision to exclude. The study identified 50 documents of which 25 were found to be relevant. These documents were gathered from 9 different agencies which included Insurance Regulatory Authority (1), Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) (1), Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (1), Ministry of Works and Transport (11), Parliament (1), Safe Way Right Way (6), United Nations (1), Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) (1) and Uganda Police Force (2). The remaining 25 documents were excluded from the review list since they were silent on pedestrian issues (see appendix). Similar emerging codes from the extracted data were categorized into themes.

Key informant interviews

We conducted key informant interviews using a semi-structured interview guide (see guide appendix) with representatives of key agencies involved in road safety including traffic police, the national road safety council, road safety non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national road agencies, Ministry of works and transport and ministry of lands, housing and urban development. Two interviewers conducted each interview during which consent was first sought. If consent was given, the interview was audio recorded.

The team also took handwritten notes, especially to capture non-verbal responses. All key informant interviews were conducted in English.

Upon completion, the audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim into Microsoft Word. Once transcription was completed, the transcripts were proofread for typing errors and then combined into a master file. The master transcript was imported into Atlas.ti (version 7) for analysis.

We created 14 topical codes (e.g. implementation decision criteria, stakeholders, and program impact/outcome) based on the questions from the interview guide.

For the key informant interviews, the 14 topical codes were independently applied to the master transcript by two groups in the study team. Upon completion of the initial coding by each group, the two groups met to discuss their coding decisions and to harmonize the codes. Where there were differences in the codes applied, a decision on the appropriate code was made by consensus. From the coding process and the memos, the team combined similar codes to come up with themes.

Focus groups

We conducted four focus group discussions using semi-structured interview guides with pedestrians, commuter taxi drivers, boda-boda riders and private car drivers around areas with a high concentration of pedestrian RTIs in Kampala. We used the recent Uganda Police report results to identify areas these areas. (Reference) Consent was obtained from each participant before a team comprised of a moderator and a note-taker conducted the focus groups. All focus groups were conducted in Luganda, the local language and audio recorded.

Upon completion, the audio recorded focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim into Microsoft Word. The transcription translated Luganda directly into English. Once transcription was completed, the transcripts were proofread for typing errors and then combined into a master file. The master transcript was imported into Atlas.ti (version 7) for analysis.

We created eight topical codes (e.g. pedestrian road safety concerns, community involvement, impact of interventions, implementers, pedestrian risk, and pedestrian-suggested interventions) based on the questions from the interview guide (see guide appendix).

For the focus groups analysis, the eight topical codes were independently applied to the master transcript by four members of the study team. Upon completion of the initial coding by each member, the members met to discuss their coding decisions and to harmonize the codes. Where there were differences in the codes applied, a decision on the appropriate was made by consensus. From the coding process and the memos,

the team came up with overarching themes, which were not mutually exclusive, with some of the issues applying to more than one theme. Further in-depth analysis of the emerging results of the desk review, KI and FGD was carried out to determine how they relate to each other through differentiating, organizing and attribution. The combined results are summarized in table 1 below.

COMBINED FINDINGS FROM THE DESK REVIEW, KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Emerging themes from the Desk review, Key informant interviews and focus group discussions

| Code | Theme |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking is a dominant mode of transport • Inadequate pedestrian facilities • Mixing of traffic and pedestrian • Poor road use behavior • Poor operation and maintenance of pedestrian facilities | State of pedestrian transport |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uganda police • KCCA • Line ministries (MoWT, UNRA) • NGOs (Safeway Right Way) • International agencies (Irap, WHO, UN) | Stakeholders involved in pedestrian road safety |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road safety campaigns and sensitization • Enforcement • Technical support and Supervision • Provision of pedestrian facilities • Road safety audits | Pedestrian safety activities/interventions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road use behavior • Following traffic signals • Insurance • Provision of pedestrian infrastructure | Policy and legislative Environment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic crash reports • Regulations • WHO statistics | Evidence of implementation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low penalties • Flaws in licensing procedure • Delay in commencement of pedestrian safety activities • No dissemination mechanisms for policies • Financial constraints • Lack of collaboration mechanism among stakeholders • Inadequate capacity by police to enforce • Political interference • Limited land for infrastructure development | Challenges/gaps in implementation of road safety interventions/programmes/policies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement in road safety sensitization • Strengthen the National road safety council and the PAFROS • Increase funding towards road safety • Establish functional district road safety committees | Priority Action areas and recommendations |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct road safety supervision | |
|---|--|

State of pedestrian transport in Uganda

Walking is a dominant mode of transport in Uganda [1]. Despite this, there are inadequate safe walking and crossing facilities. Most roads were designed and constructed without considering the needs of pedestrians and other non-motorized modes of transport as emphasized by a key informant below.

“There are planners who think that roads are for vehicles and there are some designers who design with the thinking that roads are for vehicles only” - Key informant

Kampala lacks dedicated pedestrian facilities, and where they exist they are encroached on by other activities like street vending, parking and motorists who drive on pedestrian walkways⁴. The coexistence of different types of road users and the poor state of the roads creates competition among road users for the limited space putting pedestrians at risk. Physical attributes of the road such as existence of potholes and narrow roads further exacerbate the competition among different road user groups hence increasing the risk for the pedestrians⁵. Such was also highlighted in the qualitative interviews where the poor state of the roads was further emphasized and the poor road user behavior.

“... the design of our roads too, our roads are narrow, full of potholes and congested. For instance, in the evening if you are to come to the park, there are hawkers, boda boda riders, someone is crossing and there is a pothole in the middle of the road so as you try to dodge this pothole you knock this pedestrian” - Commuter taxi driver FGD

“Pedestrian facilities are occupied by either street vendors or by parked vehicles and therefore pedestrians end up walking in the middle of the road”- commuter taxi driver FGD

Pedestrians were also reported to be continuously distracted while walking on the roads with mobile handsets being implicated.

“You may find someone is on WhatsApp, she is using her phone with headphones in the ears and is moving carelessly so this may cause accidents because when you brake so that he/she goes to a

⁴ Kampala Physical development plan

⁵ Non-Motorized Transport Policy

certain direction, the person ends up going to a different direction because she/he has not paid attention” - Commuter taxi driver FGD

Pedestrian crossings were barely available and where they were available, they were more or less invisible. This was partly attributed to poor operation and maintenance of pedestrian facilities. This was especially cited for zebra crossings.

“...they will come, and paint one or two zebra crossings and they don't come back.” - Private driver FGD

Stakeholders in pedestrian road safety

Several stakeholders who were directly or indirectly involved in pedestrian safety activities included local governments like KCCA and representatives from the ministry of works and transport and the ministry of internal affairs, which houses the traffic police department that oversees enforcement of road safety. Other government agencies like the UNRA were also highlighted. Non- governmental organizations such as Safe Way Right Way, the Uganda Red Cross, the United Nations agencies like WHO and other international agencies like the international road assessment programme (iRAP) also contributed to pedestrian road safety activities.

Ministries like ministry of lands oversee planning through providing supervisory roles. UNRA and Ministry of works and transport provide technical capacity, manpower and assistance in the formation ensuring provision and maintenance of pedestrian facilities.

The discussions with the participants in the focus groups revealed that Kampala Capital City Authority was the main implementer of pedestrian targeted interventions, with the Uganda Police Force playing a key role in enforcement. Other implementers identified included the Uganda Red Cross Society and other private companies which often stepped in from time to time to give support in setting up or maintaining certain intervention sites.

“KCCA is the one which is responsible for those things such as road signs. It is the one which organizes them and is responsible for ensuring that pedestrians are provided for on the roads to reduce accidents”. -Boda boda rider FGD

“Possibly Red Cross, sometimes they are the ones who paint those zebras and at times help people to cross”. – Private driver FGD

“It's the traffic officer who helps the pedestrians to cross the road”. - Commuter taxi driver FGD

Pedestrian safety interventions/activities

The interventions and activities identified from the documents and interviews included enforcement; technical support and supervision; provision of pedestrian facilities; road safety audits and assessments; and community sensitizations and campaigns.

Sensitizations and road safety campaigns were carried out among car drivers, motorcycle drivers and school children. However, children were the primary target for many of the road safety interventions. Children were targeted because they were not only vulnerable, but also willing to learn and be used as a vessel to pass on this information to their peers and elders.

“...for you (adults) you’re beyond redemption but these children of primary when they learn to respect the road they grow with it.” - Key informant

“If a child is built from the bottom, he/she will be a better driver in future. In future we think we shall have better drivers than the drivers we have today because they didn’t acquire knowledge as kids. Now these children know that if I get a motorbike I must get a driving permit.” - Key informant

The Uganda Police, MoWT and UNRA develop policies and guidelines that stipulate the type and nature of pedestrian facilities, their dimensions and guidelines on using pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian interventions included provision for pedestrian access routes, prohibition of parking on kerbs, keeping walkways safe, clear and well lit. For roads without provisions for pedestrians, it was stipulated that pedestrians walk as far as practicable from vehicular traffic and against traffic flow.

Road safety audits and assessments were conducted by different stakeholders including Safe Way Right Way⁶⁷ and the United Nations⁸. The parliamentary forum on road safety whose core mandate is to develop a legislative action plan on road safety is participating in Road Safety campaigns⁹. The Uganda Police is also reported to be engaged in several enforcement activities like vehicle inspection and enforcement on the road and this was also acknowledged by the participants in the interviews,

“...they (drivers) don’t respect the zebra crossing at all ... there is no police officer but if the drivers know that the police officer is there they reduce the speed”. - Commuter taxi driver FGD

⁶ Road safety Inspection of Kampala Malaba Highway

⁷ Road safety Inspection of Kampala Hoima road

⁸ International Road Assessment Programme, Uganda

⁹ Concept note: Induction of the parliamentary forum for road safety

Policy and legislative environment

Guidelines, rules and regulations to cater for pedestrians

The team reviewed the following guidelines and regulations

1. National physical planning standards and guidelines
2. The traffic and road safety (rules of the road) regulations, 2004.
3. The traffic and road safety (speed limits) regulations, 2004
4. The traffic and road safety regulations
5. The Uganda national roads authority (general) regulations, 2017.
6. The highway code
7. National transport master plan including a transport master plan for the greater Kampala metropolitan area (NTMP/GKMA)
8. General specifications for road and bridge works
9. Ministry of works and transport Strategic plan (2011/12—2015/16)

These guidelines, rules and regulations stipulate how pedestrians should behave while using the road and the role of motorists in safeguarding pedestrians and other road users¹⁰, Issues like following traffic signals portrayed by traffic lights signs and personnel and using pedestrian facilities whenever available are highlighted in these documents. Compulsory insurance against third party risk and driving on the road without this is prohibited and it is hoped that this caters for post-crash care of pedestrian victims among others. They also guide implementers on how to design¹¹ and set up pedestrians provisions¹². Some of the key informants affirmed to the fact that they use the existing guidelines in designing interventions.

“...usually when we are considering the planning we use what we call the physical planning standards and these standards we consider the size of the road you know that the road should be of a minimum, that the road should be of this size. And under - within the sizes of those roads we know that this road is in position to cater for a carriage way, to cater for services and infrastructure and even to cater for the pedestrians the walk ways and so on depending on the planning which is available. “

¹⁰ The Highway code

¹¹ General specifications of roads and bridges

¹² National Physical planning guidelines

Policies

The two policies reviewed included the Non-motorized transport policy (NMTP) and National road safety policy. These policies provide for incorporation of Non-Motorized Transport infrastructure to cater for all categories of pedestrians. Walking is to be recognized in transport planning, design and infrastructure provision. These policies further promote pedestrian safety and call for development of suitable medium-distance pedestrian and bicycle routes with appropriate infrastructure¹³. Such infrastructure is envisioned to allow easy Non Motorised Transport access to Bus Rapid Transport stops and terminal. There is need to put in place an effective road safety management and coordination institution¹⁴. This institution will aim at improving user behavior through increased awareness of road traffic regulations.

Evidence for implementation of interventions

There were numerous sources of data that were identified as having led to the formulation of the various documents and interventions. These sources included traffic crash reports from the Uganda Police, primary regulations as provided for in the laws of Uganda¹⁵, and statistics from international bodies like the United Nations and World Health Organization¹⁶. Some documents were formulated to cater for pre-existing gaps in policy, guidelines and regulations¹⁷.

Evaluation of interventions/ policies

Majority of the documents reviewed were regulations and guidelines. These rarely reported methods used in the evaluation of effectiveness of interventions. However, the policies had phases and expected milestones and so these could be used in evaluation. Some of the policies like the National Road Safety Policy had timelines after which they were to be reviewed to compare targets and achievements. However, there was limited documentation on the procedures and indicators to use for evaluation. This lack of documented formal evaluation procedures and guidelines was evident, as anecdotal evidence gathered informally from members of the public was used.

“Uhhh there is quite some work to do in that area we don’t have very robust monitoring and evaluation. All we know is that when we do some intervention we get some feedback from the public that now the danger has been averted. If for example there is an accident spot and people are complaining about it many times and there’ve been accidents and say we come in with

¹³ Non-motorized transport policy

¹⁴ National road safety Policy

¹⁵ Traffic and road safety Act 1998

¹⁶ International Road Assessment Programme, Uganda

¹⁷ National physical planning standards and guidelines

something like a road hump to slow down traffic we get feedback that now there is no problem”-
Key informant

Aside from the lack of formal evaluation, participants who tried some form of evaluation such as conducting interviews and focus group discussions, found difficulty locating appropriate members in the community, as many of the interventions were placed in highly mobile communities.

“For these market vendors and trading communities many of them are not even there three months later and so if you’re to use some methods of evaluation like interviews and discussions you’ll find a totally new group”. – Key informant

Despite the lack of formal evaluation systems in place, communities also felt the impact of some of the interventions as was highlighted during the FGDs.

“Zebra crossings have been put wherever there are many roads and from my view there is an improvement, so we should give credit where it should be”. - Pedestrian FGD

“In Bwaise, when traffic lights had just been put, the situation was bad, accidents were rampant. However, after numerous sensitizations campaigns over the radio, the crashes at the junction reduced. People now obey the lights and even boda boda riders obey the lights. They have seen their importance”. – Private driver FGD

Challenges/Gaps in implementation of pedestrian road safety interventions/ programmes/ policies

A number of challenges and gaps in the implementation of pedestrian road safety interventions were identified and these included;

One of the limitations identified in the rules and regulations is that the penalties for contraveners were too lenient to deter individuals from engaging in activities that could endanger safety of pedestrians. For example, the minimum possible penalty for some traffic offences ranged from 2 to 5 currency units¹⁸¹⁹ and since each currency unit is 20,000 Uganda shillings, it means that this penalty ranges from 40,000 to 100,000 Uganda shillings which can easily be undermined by some offenders. This can be attributed to the fact that some of these regulations have not been revised in a long time. The fines could have been high back in the day but currently are not that much, given the inflation and increase in social economic status of the urban population where road pedestrian road safety issues are more pronounced.

¹⁸ The traffic and road safety (rules of the road) regulations, 2004

¹⁹ The traffic and road safety (speed limits) regulations, 2004

A flaw in the procedure of licensing drivers was identified where individuals do not undertake the right procedures to get licensed to drive on the roads.

“...how do we get these permits? even you, did you really go through a rigorous test? That is the biggest mistake, we have good systems, good infrastructure but enforcement is poor. when we did “fika salaama” 50% of Ugandans with permits were forged. This is what we found out, people on the roads, who were on the wheel around 30% didn’t have permits. we have statistics and that was just on Masaka and Gulu road that is where we were acting by that time the entire year. The 70% with permits, 50% of them had forged ones, so the other 50% is me and you who know that even the way we got genuine one in principle is not a genuine permit when nobody tested you. You bribe your way and you came to learn on the job. Now if you come to learn on the job, a wrong person is teaching you and you come out as a wrong driver as well so generally it is a crisis.” - Key Informant

“At renewal nobody ever does tests what is supposed to be rechecked, the eyes are supposed to be rechecked to see whether you still see, an oral exam you pass or whether to an interpreter even to be re-tested, so the whole administration of the driving permits both initial and renewal is a big problem and then we don’t have a demerit system”- Key Informant

“Nowadays drivers no longer get driving licenses but instead buy them. You just get your money, go and see someone who issues driving permits, he asks you for 350,000/= and the moment you give it to him you’ll have your permit within a week. Then he/she goes and bribes the officers supposed to test and gets that document that verifies that you’ve passed the test and your permit will be worked on in no time”. -Boda boda rider FGD

Many of the activities highlighted in the policies and regulations had not commenced by the time of the review even though these policies/ regulations were launched a number of months or even years prior to the review. The same trend was reported from the interviews where implementers noted that they were either not implementing interventions or implementing them partially.

“Well that’s according to the law we are supposed to. I want you to mark my words very carefully when I say we are supposed to, there is a theory and the practical. Practical is very bad; every area is bad practically. we try to do awareness campaigns its really what

we can afford. It's the most important but is what we have found more affordable and even that is not well sustained. - Key informant

The policies and regulations have no clear strategies aimed at ensuring their dissemination and subsequent comprehension by the population. For that reason, the population barely knows its rights when adverse events happen²⁰ or even the desired behavior on the road yet it is stipulated by the Highway Code.

Some of the regulations do not cater for all categories of potential offenders; a case in point is the third-party insurance act which excludes government vehicles.

Findings revealed limited financial resources as a major hindrance to the implementation of road safety activities.

“Haa challenges are many somewhere you know, at times funds are not enough. I would wish to reach every school, but funds are not enough yeah but that's my target if possible if they would say this is only for sensitization of schools I can't get tired of moving to schools and I wish to go to those schools but no transport no what”. – Key informant

“One I would say the most common one that would be finances because with road safety you need a lot of finances you need posters you need fliers you need to write the messages if you look at target populations now we have different categories if you look at primary kids it means you need posters you need fliers you will need to have a children theatre basically you have to inject in money”. - Key informant

Findings revealed a lack of formal coordination mechanisms among the key stakeholders involved in road safety. Several organizations were involved in road safety both in the private and public sector (e.g. UNRA, Red Cross, and Safe Way Right Way) and yet they were working in silos.

*“...the challenge here we get is that some of the interventions are not coordinated (hmmm)so you have this one is ending with Twedekko then this other one is something similar instead of touching another certain group so to be reached is hard, so the programs are not coordinated they all compete for visibility. For example, you may have something that you would feel is most urgent but then they come with something different because it will give them **visibility**”.*

²⁰ Motor vehicle insurance (third party risks) act 1989

The National Road Safety Council which is the main government agency mandated by law to be the custodian of road safety is limited in capability, financial and human resources, which has rendered it ineffective in carrying out its mandate. Other agencies like the Uganda police whose mandate is enforcement is limited in capacity of finances and human resources.

“The main challenge of the council is funding and the funding because I will give you a difference between national road safety council and let me give you three I can give you three organizations national road safety council, UNRA, CAA. Now CAA gets most of its money from airport collections. They don't have what we call a vote in government. UNRA has doesn't generate money like CAA money so it gets money from consolidated fund as a vote, it's a vote of its own. National road safety council is not a vote. It is somewhere in the ministry of works; the vote is in ministry of works so the money goes to ministry of works so we start fighting for it with other competing interests even more politically shinny activities. I mean if MPs want culverts they will not give you money if MPs want ...”

An unexpected recurring theme that came out was that of the role of politics in road safety. It was noted that politics was both an enabler and a hindrance to various aspects of road safety. Participants alluded to the need for political support in road safety to improve road safety aspects such as financing of road safety activities and campaigns.

“Government does not take care of road safety as a priority. Let me tell you about 30 or more people died last week in crushes according to this paper. If these were from nodding disease you even heard parliament was up in arms because they wanted money for nodding disease. If it was an epidemic wouldn't government go in immediately? 30 people died in a week isn't road safety an epidemic in sub-Sahara in Africa! so if government does not come in and all we need is not a big deal. Children want safer places to cross from when they go to school. The answers are there they are straight forward. Even a child of primary three will give you solutions that we need zebra crossings which are respected, we need safer places to cross from bridges, we need drivers who respect shoulders, but government does not put in money. The recommendation was that at least is it 1% of the GDP should be put in road safety because about 3% of GDP is lost due to accidents. If you put 1% you will not lose 3% so government does not think of road safety as a priority and it is not only the government of Uganda but Sub Sahara Africa as a whole”.

Politics was also identified as a deterrent especially in the implementation phase of road safety intervention as politicians often interfere with enforcers and implementers.

“...there are scenarios where the enforcement officers can go and they are chased away because of certain politics. If an officer is required to enforce the use of helmets for motorcyclists and their passengers, an enforcer should be allowed to do that. If the enforcement agency requires to enforce, or the transport licensing board for example requires to impound a fleet of buses because of poor road safety record for example then that company should cease carrying out operations until you are able to meet with these without the interference of politics, or financial issues, yes.” – Key informant

A relationship that was identified was the potential backlash that politicians may face for supporting road safety decisions that may not be popular amongst members of the public.

“So, I think I have not specifically gone to review these laws that are there but what I can say is even when we pushed for fines we pushed for the traffic police to make sure there are instant fines which are given and that led to a lot of strikes that time. And I suffered because they went to my constituency and said when they were on strike the head of traffic said you ask your MPs they are the one who have said we must enforce. So now everyone said it is XXXX causing us problems ... and they said they were going to show me during elections. So, I had to really go an extra mile to explain to them that as their leader I cannot run away from my obligation of seeing them safe whether it needs punishing you, I must do that. I want you to know that I am not your enemy, but I just want you safe”. - Key informant

As regards implementation, we identified land shortage for developing pedestrian facilities as a hindrance

“You may want roads that provide for pedestrians, cyclists and all other road users and you subsequently plan for them. The challenge is acquiring land that caters for all those since in Uganda land belongs to the people and so you must compensate them. This is even worse in places where we have the mailo land tenure system”. - Key informant

“Roads that take into consideration government design requirements require large portions of land to implement. Due to the current land tenure system, the cost of compensating landowners drives construction costs high leading to the exclusion of pedestrian facilities and focus being kept on motorized transport users.” – Key informant

“Sometimes a challenge comes in compensation to acquire those corridors, and they are quite huge pieces of land and acquiring those corridors comes at a cost to the councils yet in a number of cases councils can’t meet those costs”. - Key informant

“I must also admit that due to the tenure we have, the land tenure we have especially in this central region makes achieving the recommended road sizes difficult because of the ownership of land. People here believe that having a road 10 meters wide is a waste”. – Key informant

There is inadequate attention put on road safety and the road safety challenges are most highlighted in urban areas. The technical and political wings have limited commitment to road safety. There is poor land use planning and the country lacks a sustainable traffic enforcement plan. This was further emphasized by the qualitative interviews that highlighted the insignificance of road safety among the priorities of the Ugandan government.

“Government does not take care of road safety as a priority. Let me tell you about 30 or more people died last week in crashes according to this paper. If these were from nodding disease you even heard parliament was up in arms because they wanted money for nodding disease. If it was an epidemic wouldn’t government go in immediately? 30 people died in a week isn’t road safety an epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa! so if government does not come in and all we need is not a big deal. Children want safer places to cross from when they go to school. The answers are there they are straight forward. Even a child of primary three will give you solutions that we need zebra crossings which are respected, we need safer places to cross from. We need drivers who respect shoulders, but government does not put in money. The recommendation was that at least 1% of the GDP should be put in road safety because about 3% of GDP is lost due to accidents. If you put 1% you will not lose 3% so government does not think of road safety as a priority and it is not only the government of Uganda but Sub Sahara Africa as a whole”. – Key informant

This has subsequently led to limited funding for the line ministries and agencies. The existing road safety curriculum is not currently being implemented and vulnerable road users are not considered during planning and budgeting for roads.

Study Limitations

Some of the documents that certain stakeholders pointed us to were not readily available, meaning that some important information could have been missed from the review.

Another limitation identified was the fact that some of the documents identified as being used by stakeholders in their day to day work were documents meant for other countries like the United Kingdom.

The participants for the interviews were selected from within Kampala and therefore some useful information could have been missed from road users outside Kampala. This approach was taken because Kampala is known to have a higher incidence of road traffic crashes and a higher concentration of road traffic interventions.

Priority action areas/ recommendations

Recommendations

To government

1. Need to empower the National Road Safety Council to be able to ensure that all the regulations, policies and guidelines in place are followed and implemented appropriately. This body should have the mandate to supervise and report on all issues pertaining road safety.
2. Increase funding for road safety activities and projects for the line ministries and other stakeholders involved in promoting pedestrian safety
3. There is need to establish district road safety committees to identify and implement road safety initiatives around the country.
4. Government should supervise all road works from planning, design and implementation of the proposed road designs with provision for pedestrians to ensure adherence to the proposed designed. For example, clear demarcation of pedestrian crossings, pedestrian pathways should be put in place. In addition, pedestrian needs should be incorporated in design, planning and setting up of road infrastructure.

To Communities

Communities need to be sensitized further about road safety legislation and use of pedestrian facilities. Some of the documents reviewed emphasized the need to sensitize the communities about existing legislation and how to use existing pedestrian facilities. The need for Road safety education and road safety curriculum from primary school children from classes one to four was highlighted and setting up appropriate signage highlighted. This need was also emphasized by the interview participants as road safety education was one of the key strategies to promoting pedestrian safety.

"...putting zebra crossing without sensitization is time wastage". -Commercial taxi drivers FGD

Parliament

1. The parliamentary forum for road safety (PAFROS) should strengthen its commitment on the political wing by encouraging more politicians to join the fight and advocate for increments in the funding for road safety activities.

Conclusion

Despite the existence of regulations, policies and guidelines that aim at reducing the incidence of pedestrian road traffic injuries in Uganda, it is evident that there is a huge gap when it comes to implementation. There is need to empower the National Road Safety Council to supervise and enforce the implementation of these existing regulations, policies and guidelines.