



Development-induced displacement

The impacts of the Kampala-Jinja Expressway on the women of Kinawataka, Uganda

By Teddy Kisembo¹



Introduction

The present study explored the social impact of the planned Kampala-Jinja Expressway, which will connect Uganda's capital to the city of Jinja in the Eastern Region and displace an estimated 30,000 people. We inquired into the experiences of local women in Kinawataka – an informal settlement in Kampala – who are facing displacement because of the planned highway. This working paper focuses on their challenges and concerns related to compensation, information and participation in project planning and provides feasible policy recommendations to eliminate or at least minimise future risks of development-induced livelihood disruptions. This paper was written in the context of the LANDac Professional Learning Network in order to share lessons learned with researchers, practitioners and policymakers.

Box 1: Key lessons

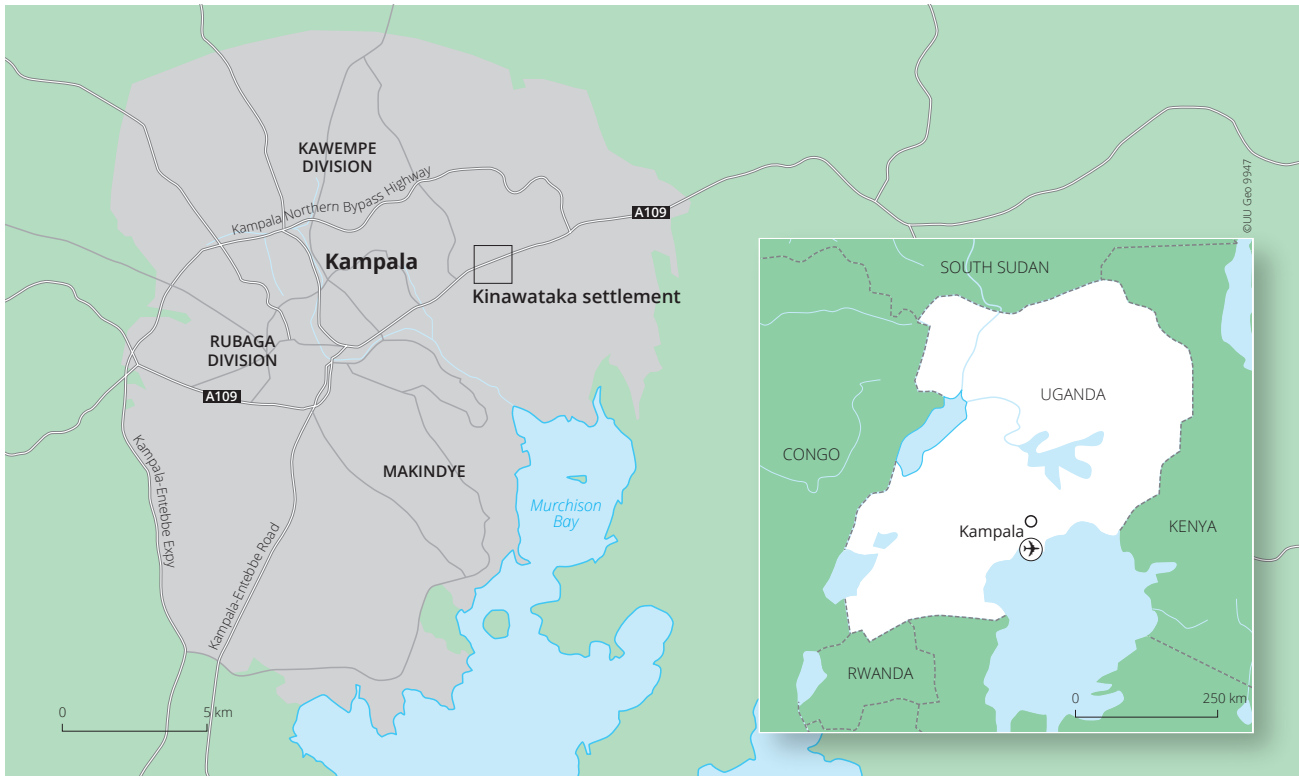
- Women, who are usually the immediate users of the land, do not have equal access to compensation money, as their husbands – as landowners – receive the money. Women also have a limited say in the use of the compensation money.
- Women lose their source of income due to the loss of access to common property resources.
- Affected people are not generally opposed to land acquisition for the KJE; however, they want adequate, fair and timely compensation. The compensation determination process systematically excludes them, which decreases their trust and confidence in the project.
- Inadequate information about and delays in the project have caused scepticism and psychological distress since its inception.
- There is a lack of meaningful participation of local people during the planning phase.
- Displacement as a result of the KJE leads to increased unemployment, and creating new jobs might be difficult in their new locations and might require substantial investment.
- It is difficult for the displaced to find suitable replacement land due to inflated local prices or because households will have used the compensation money to meet immediate survival needs that surface during resettlement.

The Kampala-Jinja Expressway

The Kampala-Jinja Expressway is one of five infrastructural development mega-projects that are expected to spur socioeconomic transformation. It is a proposed 95-kilometre,



Photo showing the RoW in the Katoogo zone



Map of Uganda and the Kinawataka Settlement

four-lane toll highway linking Kampala – Uganda’s capital and largest city – with the town of Jinja in the Eastern Region. The Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) is seeking to partner with the private sector to design, build, finance, operate, maintain and transfer the limited access tolled expressway (UNRA, 2018).

Impact on affected Communities

The project is expected to offer visible improvements in line with citizen’s expectations and the government’s vision. According to the UNRA, road users will experience a time saving of 70-120 minutes between Kampala and Jinja and reduced vehicle costs. A significant increase in regional and local employment opportunities was promised with approximately 1,500 jobs created during construction and 250 jobs during operations (Negatu, 2018). But while an infrastructure development like this is likely to achieve national-level objectives, it is also likely to have negative impacts on local and displaced populations. Being forcibly ousted from one’s land and surroundings carries with it the risk of becoming poorer, since a significant portion of displaced people do not receive compensation for their lost assets, or effective assistance to re-establish themselves productively (IDMC, 2006). The construction of the Kampala-Jinja Expressway (KJE) is expected to start in Kampala, where the creation of the right of way (RoW) will affect people in the informal settlements of Kasokoso and Kinawataka and the Nakawa market. Based on the 2018 census conducted for the KJE project, an estimated 29,983 people are living in 6,177 households within the RoW, the majority (67%) of whom live

below the international poverty line of USD 1.90 per day, while 43% live on less than half this amount (Cities Alliance, 2020). The Resettlement and Livelihood Restoration Plan states that the greatest number of structures within the RoW are in the informal settlements, representing close to 55% of the total number of structures that need to be relocated and nearly a third of the total number of affected households. Of these, some 70% (2,923 households) live in the Kasokoso and Kinawataka informal settlements. In these settlements, the KJE will displace many households and small-scale businesses, consequently impoverishing them.

Communities like Kinawataka that are facing displacement due to the KJE are often given minimal voice or say in decisions on displacement (Jason, 2013). If they consent, they have little say in the planning of resettlement and the impacts of infrastructure development like the KJE are often not equal. The different power relations within local communities create different opportunities for local actors to relate to the infrastructure project, how they are included in the processes associated with constructing the project (as well as the associated displacement), and their capacity to adapt to displacement and to secure sustainable livelihoods.

Impacts of development-induced resettlement on women

There is a growing evidence-based consensus among scholars that women bear the greatest brunt of development-induced resettlement (World Bank, 2019). Such resettlement can disproportionately affect women, as they are faced with more

difficulties than men while also coping with disruption to their families. This is particularly the case if there is no mechanism to enable women's meaningful participation and consultation throughout the project cycle in general and the resettlement process in particular. Women are often passive participants in or absent from consultation meetings. It seems that traditional assumptions about household divisions of labour prevent women from participating meaningfully. For example, men are considered better suited to attending resettlement-related meetings since it is assumed that men can better understand and access land market information (World Bank, 2019). These biases have constrained women's participation in resettlement-related decisions, for example in the design of compensation and restoration packages or new relocation sites, housing and construction timelines, with potentially negative implications for the overall success of resettlement programmes. Furthermore, a resettlement process that ignores the specific needs and constraints that women face can increase gender inequalities by, for example, reducing their access to property or assets, or limiting their capacity to restore their livelihoods. Therefore, this study sought to address the differentiated involvement and experiences of women among the affected people in the Kinawataka settlement. It investigated how affected persons can be understood and incorporated into planning before displacement takes place.

This study

The fieldwork was carried out in the Kinawataka settlement. We employed a qualitative approach to understand the differentiated involvement and experiences of women in the RoW of the KJE. The fieldwork consisted of participant observations and informal, semi-structured interviews with seven key informants. Six focus group discussions (FGDs) with women and one FGD with men were conducted. The interview sample was a purposive sample, that is, we selected respondents who were in the RoW. The main purpose of these interviews was to understand the lived experiences of the relocation process, as well as to gather information about people's situation before displacement. The interviewees ranged from landlords, tenants, business owners, community



FGD with women in the RoW

leaders, ACTogether staff and UNRA officials. Hence, the emphasis was on participants who could provide rich information about these issues. The women interviewed ranged in age from their mid-twenties to their mid-seventies and were among the main landlords, tenants, and business operators, which enabled socioeconomic differences to be taken into account. This enables us to present a generalised account of the displacement experiences of these women.

To understand the differentiated involvement and experiences, we employed thematic content analysis, using in-depth interviews to describe involvement and experiences, descriptions of pre-displacement life, gaps in xxx and recommendations. Some supportive data came from a literature review of reports on the KJE provided by ACTogether. However, the study mainly relied on the views and experiences expressed during the interviews, which promoted a nuanced understanding of involvement and experiences.

ACTogether Uganda (a partner of Urban Action Lab Makerere University) has been involved in various types of community work in Kinawataka, where the KJE is expected to displace thousands of people and businesses. Kinawataka is located in Nakawa Division, Kampala District. The total population of Kinawataka is 80,000 people living in 7,000 housing structures (ACTogether Uganda, 2017), of whom 718 are expected to be displaced by the KJE (Cities Alliance, 2020). The settlement has a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses: 3500 of the structures are used for residential, 500 for business, 2500 for mixed-use and 500 for other purposes; 40% of the land is owned by the municipality, while the Church and the Buganda Kingdom each own 30%. There have been two eviction threats, and there is currently a high-level threat (ACTogether Uganda, 2017).

Findings: women's perspectives

This section elaborates on the findings of this research, namely the perspectives of women in Kinawataka on their resettlement and its impacts on their livelihoods. First of all, all of the

About the LANDac Professional Learning Network

The LANDac Professional Learning Network brings together researchers and practitioners working on the impacts of land-based investments in sub-Saharan Africa. During monthly exchange seminars, fellows share their work and design and implement action and research on the ground to fill knowledge gaps, monitor trends and identify best practices. The goal of the network is to strengthen the position of local communities in negotiating for their rights and interests and to make land-based investments more sustainable and beneficial for local communities.

respondents in Kinawataka said that they do not oppose land acquisition for KJE. However, most people have been living there for many years and will lose their homes and sources of income. The women currently have a certain degree of control over their everyday lives, even though they have to work hard. It is through their active participation in various everyday life spheres that they acquire a sense of autonomy within a patriarchal society.

"I'm involved in the waste collection business; I've lived in this settlement for a long time and the waste collection business has enabled me to support my family."

[5 September 2020, 1st FGD]

The survey established that if they are displaced, women will lose incomes from petty businesses they have engaged in to support their families. Such businesses include selling homemade snacks, fresh vegetables, handicraft and poultry. Development-induced displacement disorients petty business channels and structures by dispersing clients, destroying business premises, cutting off credit and supply channels, and so forth.

"Women are always marginalised. We want to work but our capital is always little. You may want to start up something, but we have less capital with a lot of problems, the kid is sick needs medical attention."

[6 September 2020, 4th FGD]

"I'm going to lose a lot because I've lived in this settlement for 20 years. This place is my source of income and livelihood."

[5 September 2020, 2nd FGD]

This study identified three main concerns of women in Kinawataka settlement when it comes to their displacement. Their overriding concern is the lack of fair, adequate and timely compensation. Their second, closely related concern is the lack of information provided to them. Their third is the lack of meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

Fair, adequate and timely compensation

The Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) is responsible for providing people in the RoW of the KJE with fair, adequate and timely compensation. This is formalised in the Resettlement and Livelihood Restoration Plan (RLRP), which is in line with national and international compensation strategies. Thus, compensation must be provided prior to resettlement and affected persons must be given at least three months' notice. The livelihood restoration strategy is meant to improve or at least maintain people's living standards, income earning capacity and production levels (AfDB, 2018). Both formal and informal land ownership are recognised under this law, and different compensation mechanisms are in place for each type of land ownership. In the RLRP, it is stated that

vulnerable groups (which include women and female-headed households) should be given special consideration in terms of compensation. This entails training and capacity building, and each resettlement office is set to recruit female workers to support women's affairs in the resettlement process. (AfDB, 2018). People in the RoW will be compensated for the loss of their land and structures. Displaced landowners will be given cash compensation based on the market value of their property. Compensation for buildings and other structures will be calculated based on the type and age of the building/structure and the kind of development on the land. Although in theory the compensation process is thus fair, adequate and timely, in practice it is a different story. Land is often claimed by more than one person or entity, which leads to conflict and unfair compensation (AfDB, 2018). In most cases, it is men who are registered as the legal owners of the land and structures, which excludes women from receiving compensation, while women are often the main users of the land and structures (shops etc.). The UNRA recognises the equitable interest of spouses in family land, as spelt out in the Land Act of 1998, and emphasises that compensation is key and must be paid to all persons with an interest in land by advising couples to open a joint bank account to receive the compensation. However, after the compensation is paid, how it is spent and who spends it is another matter.

"Women will be most affected because the compensation money will be whisked away by men immediately payments are made, leaving us to suffer with the children on our own."

[12 September 2020, 2nd FGD]

"It scares us because there are land agreements with only the name of the husband, yet it's the wife that has built the house on that land. I heard that compensation will be given to the person whose name is on the land agreement."

[13 September 2020, 5th FGD]

The risk of losing wage employment is likely to be very high after displacement for those employed in enterprises and services within the RoW. And creating new jobs might be difficult in their new locations and might require substantial investment. This is why fair compensation is the main concern of most respondents.

Timely, clear and sufficient information

People in the RoW have already experienced five years of stress caused by worrying about being displaced from their current place of residence. This stress has been further exacerbated by the project's long gestation period and a lack of proper information about their situation. Such stress has had several psychological impacts on the local people, in particular the inducement of feelings of uncertainty and fear. As a result, people face dilemmas when making decisions about even basic household matters, such as whether to add a toilet or



Photo showing where the RoW will pass.

bathroom to their house, carry out repairs and so on. People still lack adequate information about the KJE project in terms of the exact proposed boundaries of the highway and when they are likely to be compensated.

"We don't have the right information and when the information comes, it reaches the wrong hands. For example, when the information gets to the chairman, he/she doesn't take responsibility to disseminate the information."

[5 September 2020, 1st FGD]

Limited information has caused local scepticism about the project from its very inception. According to UNRA, the affected persons are supposed to have access to all the project information through their local leaders, because UNRA communicates to the local leaders who are expected to communicate to the affected persons. However, the local/community leaders have not yet received adequate information about the project.

"I'll speak the truth: we do not have the right information about the project because UNRA has disappeared. We don't have any meetings with them."

[Local leader, 19 September 2020]

In addition, there is great uncertainty about compensation for landowners and tenants in different tenure systems. For instance, the residents claim that 70% of the compensation will be given to the landowners (who are absentee landlords), while the *kibanja* holders (customary tenants who hold equitable interest in the land in the case of a sales agreement with another party) will be given 30%. However, according to UNRA, the landowners will get 30% while the *kibanja* holders will get 70%.

"The government will compensate you according to the development that is currently on the land. So people are developing their properties by building permanent structures to attract big cash."

[13 September 2020, 4th FGD]

Affected persons said that they feel their lives are on hold. Although they cannot stop thinking about the project, they are not confident that it is going to get off the ground soon. Due to this dilemma, they are quite reluctant to talk about the project

with outsiders. They have many grievances with the concerned authorities and are eagerly awaiting answers to questions, such as whether or not the project will be launched, and if it is, when they will be compensated.

Meaningful participation

Respondents repeatedly said that they did not have a chance to participate in planning processes or discussions about compensation packages, and that they mostly listened to the talks and speeches given by project staff from UNRA and local leaders. This has made them feel vulnerable, that their fate is in other people's hands and that they are not valued as stakeholders. Respondents perceive that they have been overlooked by the government. They also feel vulnerable due to the absence of government authorities, who could provide timely and authoritative information and news about the project. According to local/community leaders, they have only had three meetings with UNRA since 2016.

Particularly female respondents were concerned that since most of them are not household heads, they are likely to be excluded from receiving compensation and assistance packages.

The women fear inadequate compensation because the process of determining the compensation rates is not participatory. The compensation committee that establishes the rates is made up of technocrats from various governmental departments, and it determines the rates without involving or consulting the people affected by the project – and, of course, by the rates. In addition to low compensation rates, on occasions the technocrats from UNRA have come to value property unannounced and not found the owners at home, which led to the omission of key items that the community/people perceive to be very important and should be on the compensation lists. This undermines the community's confidence that they will be compensated.

Recommendations for more inclusive investment

While many community members face similar issues when faced with displacement – such as the loss of their homes, jobs and social ties – we found that women in particular are excluded from receiving fair compensation and timely information, and especially from planning and decision-making processes. Speaking with affected women in the community enabled us to learn about these processes and ways to make development-induced resettlement procedures fairer and more inclusive. We learned that during project planning and implementation, it is of utmost importance to understand the intricacies of the impact of displacement on different groups within affected communities. For example, one should look at displacement through the experiential lens of the

women affected and those within different tenure systems. This approach also highlights their voices and concerns about resettlement and could be useful in formulating more inclusive programmes and policies. We believe that the following recommendations would be concrete and useful steps in both current and future projects towards addressing people's concerns regarding compensation, information and participation:

- Create an enabling environment for the meaningful participation of both women and men (venue, time, means and style of invitation).
- Ensure proper access and include gender-specific considerations in the implementation of compensation, resettlement and livelihood restoration.
- Ensure that communication and training programmes include content related to gender equality in accessing and using compensation money.
- Document the views and concerns of women and men expressed in consultation meetings.
- Disclose information about the compensation, assistance packages and policies in place and use means that are easily accessible to women.
- Establish several information centres in project-affected areas to address the concerns of local people and build public trust.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank ACTogether Uganda, LANDac's Professional Learning Network, Urban Action Lab for their support and contributions to this paper. In addition, many thanks to Joanny Bélair for her feedback and Judith Mbabazi for assisting with focus group discussions.

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Citation

Kiseembo, T. (2021) Development-Induced Displacement: The Impacts of the Kampala Jinja Expressway on the women of Kinawataka, Uganda. Professional Learning Network – Working paper 1. Utrecht: LANDac

Editors: Johanna Waldenberger and Romy Santpoort

Language: Text (Jeremy Rainer)

Pictures: Teddy Kiseembo

Maps and design: Margot Stoete (Utrecht University)

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