

Notes by UWABA
Regional Roads Meeting
12th May 2010
Karimjee Hall

Background

In January 2010 seven representatives of UWABA met with the Mayor of Dar es Salaam, Hon Adam Kimbisa, at his office. At this meeting, UWABA made the point that there is a lack of coordination on issues relating to transport, and non motorized transport in particular, in Dar es Salaam, among the many Government institutions (city council, three municipalities, Ministry of Infrastructure, TANROADS, traffic police, DART agency and many others) as well as donors (JICA, World Bank, EU, DANIDA and others). UWABA proposed a monthly forum where these and other relevant institutions would meet and coordinate their policy on non-motorized transport. Hon Kimbisa told us that there is such a meeting already, although it deals with roads in Dar es Salaam region generally and not non-motorized transport in particular. He said we would be invited to this meeting which takes place every six months, with the next one due in May 2010. This was the first time we had heard about this type of meeting.

UWABA subsequently did extensive follow up to get an invitation including writing to the city council director who referred us to the regional administrative secretariat which chairs the meeting; we then wrote to, visited the offices of and phoned the regional administrative secretariat numerous times over the five intervening months following up to get an answer to our letter. Towards the end, we were helped by Ryan Whitney of Sustainable Cities NGO. Just the week before the meeting, we managed to get our names included on the invitation list. We were allowed only two representatives so UWABA was represented by Elaine Baker-Guni (secretary) and Dominata Rwechungura (committee member).

Attendees at the meeting

Although we did not get a full list of the attendees at the meeting and there was no general round of introductions, we noted that the meeting was chaired by the Regional Commissioner assisted by the Mayor of Dar es Salaam (Hon Kimbisa), and was attended by, among others, Hon Azzan Zungu MP of Ilala, Hon Leonidas Mgamba District Commissioner of Ilala, officials from the office of the regional secretariat, representatives of all three municipalities (engineers and other representatives), representative of DART (Engineer Enock Kitandu), representative of TANROADS, representative of the traffic police, representative of SUMATRA, representatives of TANESCO and DAWASA (in their capacity in interaction between electricity, water and drainage infrastructure with roads infrastructure). Therefore it is very positive that indeed these institutions which have a bearing on transport and roads in Dar es Salaam region all do meet on a regular basis to coordinate. As far as we know, UWABA was the only NGO represented. No donors organizations were present. Therefore it appears this is primarily a meeting among Government institutions.

Some media representatives were invited to film the opening of the meeting and again at the end to film a short summary of the meeting given by the regional commissioner, which was broadcast that evening on television.

General notes

The meeting was conducted entirely in Kiswahili language and all those in attendance were Kiswahili speakers.

Newcomers to the meeting were given a chance to introduce themselves and UWABA did and thanked the Mayor for telling us about this meeting, and we were welcomed to the meeting. In general UWABA was given a warm reception and our points were listened to.

There was a large document circulated to the main regular members of the meeting containing minutes of the previous meeting as well as copies of reports submitted to this meeting – UWABA did receive a copy but only at the end of the meeting so had some difficulty following some of the proceedings.

The main agenda of the meeting was to receive financial reports and projections on roads expenditure from each of TANROADS, three municipalities and DART and each had prepared reports for this purpose and summarized them for the meeting. The Regional Commissioner complained that the TANROADS report included only work done by TANROADS Dar es Salaam regional office and not TANROADS headquarters. Another financial discussion was about the Ilala budget for roads – the regional commissioner said that Ilala municipality has a lot of own revenue sources and should contribute more rather than relying on central Government revenue.

Many other topics also came up in the course of receiving these reports, however, which are summarized below. Note – these topics are grouped by subject area and not necessarily in the order they were discussed in the meeting – some topics were discussed several different times during the meeting.

Topics discussed which were relevant to UWABA / non-motorized transport

Drainage

The issue of drainage was discussed including poor drains, broken drains and rubbish blocking the drains. The TANROADS representative requested more cooperation from the municipalities on drainage and said that there is often no where to drain the water collected on roads to.

Zebra crossing and speed bumps

There was a previous decision to put a zebra crossing near the Regional Commissioner's office Kawawa Road Msimbazi Centre where school children are crossing. It was claimed that the zebra crossing was put there but the paint faded. Hon Azzan Zungu MP of Ilala said that a zebra crossing is not enough as drivers do not respect them, that children are in danger crossing Kawawa Road, and that speed bumps should be put there. The Regional Commissioner and the TANROADS representative disagreed with him (overruled him) saying that speed bumps cause traffic jams and that there should just be a zebra crossing policed by traffic police. It was agreed however that there should be speed bumps at Kibada school in Mjimwema. The TANROADS representative at one point said that speed bumps cause holes to develop in the road.

Small business people

Efforts to remove small business people from the roads were discussed. The issue of bars on the sides of the road was also discussed (raised by TANROADS).

Holes in the road

The issue of holes in the roads and regular repairs was discussed, in particular, it was argued that this causes traffic jams. Later in the meeting UWABA suggested that there should be a reporting system for citizens to report holes and other hazards. The Regional Commissioner said they should report through the mtaa Governments, and also that the holes are already known about - the problem is fixing them.

DART

The issue of the DART project was discussed. The Regional Commissioner said that he requires DART to be represented by its director at these meetings in future and not only an engineer. He also said that it was not acceptable that DART project is taking so much longer than planned to implement. The DART representative said that TANROADS is responsible for starting to build the first stretch from the ferry/fish market to Morogoro Road, and DART is only responsible for supervising. The Regional Commissioner said that it is DART which has the primary responsibility for following up on this. It was mentioned that there is a monthly meeting on DART project between DART, World Bank and TANROADS.

DART phase II and III was also discussed.

UWABA requested reassurance that Morogoro Road will have separate pedestrian footpaths and also separate cycle lanes as promised before (as other promises have not been kept to). The DART representative said that there will be separate lanes for each category – private cars, buses, cycles and pedestrians.

Kigogo-Ubungo Road

The Kigogo-Ubungo road is currently under construction and was discussed at the beginning of the meeting and also later on. Later in the meeting UWABA raised the point that currently the parts of the road which have already been worked on are simply a tarred two-way road for vehicles with drains on either side and absolutely no provision for either cyclists or even pedestrians, who are currently using the main road together with fast moving vehicles. TANROADS responded that they have planned to put service roads outside the drains but have not started this due to processes of compensating land owners.

Road to Tegeta

There is a plan to improve the road from Mwenge to Tegeta. It was discussed whether this should be from Moroco junction to Tegeta and not just from Mwenge. It is supposed to start in October. The Japanese are involved (JICA is the donor?). It will be a four lane highway. UWABA requested that the designs for this road be made public so that stakeholders can comment and so that we can make sure there is provision for pedestrians and cyclists. TANROADS said UWABA should call to their office about this.

Uhuru Street

There is a plan to expand Uhuru Street to make it a dual carriageway from Msimbazi to Buguruni. Again UWABA requested that these designs be made public and stakeholders given a chance to comment before finalization.

TAZARA flyover

It was briefly mentioned that there is a plan for a flyover road at TAZARA junction.

Sam Nujoma and Kilwa Road

The Regional Commissioner asked if Sam Nujoma Road is now officially finished and TANROADS said it is.

UWABA made the point that we was also promised (in writing from executive director of TANROADS) that there would be separate cycle lanes for Sam Nujoma and Kilwa Road but this promise was not implemented, instead service roads were put in. At the moment the service road is so narrow in places on Kilwa Road so as to force cyclists to use the dual carriageway, and that the service road for Sam Nujoma road is currently used by vehicles to speed (a pedestrian was killed on the new service road of Sam Nujoma Road by a speeding pickup). We requested speed bumps on the service road as an interim measure but there was no response to this. TANROADS said that speeding is a matter for the traffic police.

Parking and trucks and lorries

The regional commissioner and others discussed the problem of trucks and lorries parking on the sides of the roads and the service roads. The traffic police representative said that they have already started arresting vehicles who do this. It was discussed about having parking areas on the outskirts of the city for lorries and trucks, such as at Mbezi. The regional commissioner strongly supported this, as well as forbidding the lorries and trucks from coming to the city centre during rush hours so as to allow the office workers to get to work more easily. It was also discussed how parking areas in the outskirts of the city could generate revenue and also be used by small business people such as car-washers and mechanics. There is an area being prepared in Mbezi but it is not permanent and there is some problem with the entrance to do with water pipes.

Council meetings

The regional commissioner made the point to UWABA that meetings of the municipal councils are open to the public. (We did not get time to make the point that the schedules of when these meetings take place are not easily obtained).

Other topics discussed

- Hon Azzan Zungu MP said that Ilala Municipality has a lot of revenue but the citizens do not see the results, and that there are many possibilities for low cost measures to make the municipal area into a pleasant environment.

- The issue of compensation for land owners was discussed. The district commissioner of Ilala complained that people are being evicted and buildings knocked down without being compensated. TANROADS said that these people have been warned not to build there and do not have land ownership documents. In addition, it is not clear how far the road reserve (where building is not allowed) should extend for major roads in urban areas and whether this should be the same as for major roads in rural areas.
- The issue of making sure traffic lights are working was discussed.
- Quality of buildings being built, in particular in Kariakoo, and the case of a recent building collapse and the subsequent investigation into it.
- The Regional Commissioner followed up on a previous order that street (mitaa) leaders be informed about building permits issued in their areas by municipalities.
- Revenue potential from advertising billboards was discussed.
- TANESCO representative said there is a big project to extend electricity lines from Gezaulele to Kimbiji. There is also a project from Ubungo to Kurasini(?).
- The city council reported on the project for dumps at Mtoni and Pugu.

Next meeting

The next meeting was not discussed at this meeting, but after the meeting UWABA asked Mr Mungaya who is a person in the RAS office responsible for organizing the meetings, and he said that the next one would be in November or December. He also thanked UWABA for attending and for our contributions.