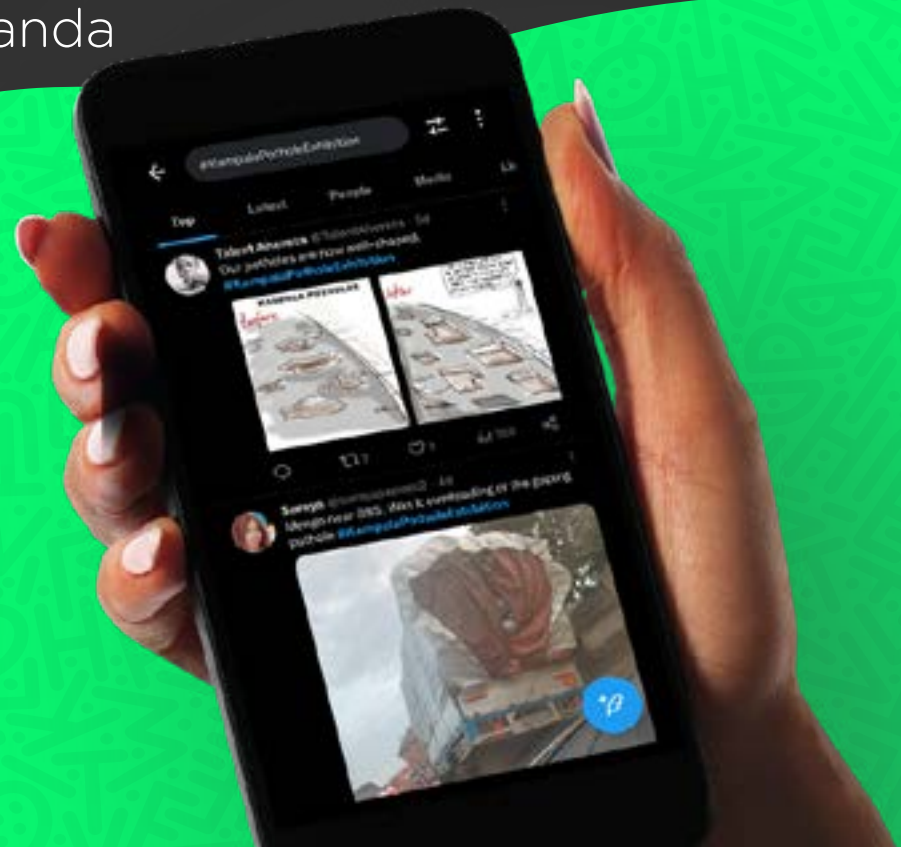


Charting the Path to
Accountability in Uganda

Report on #KampalaPotholeExhibition

April 2023



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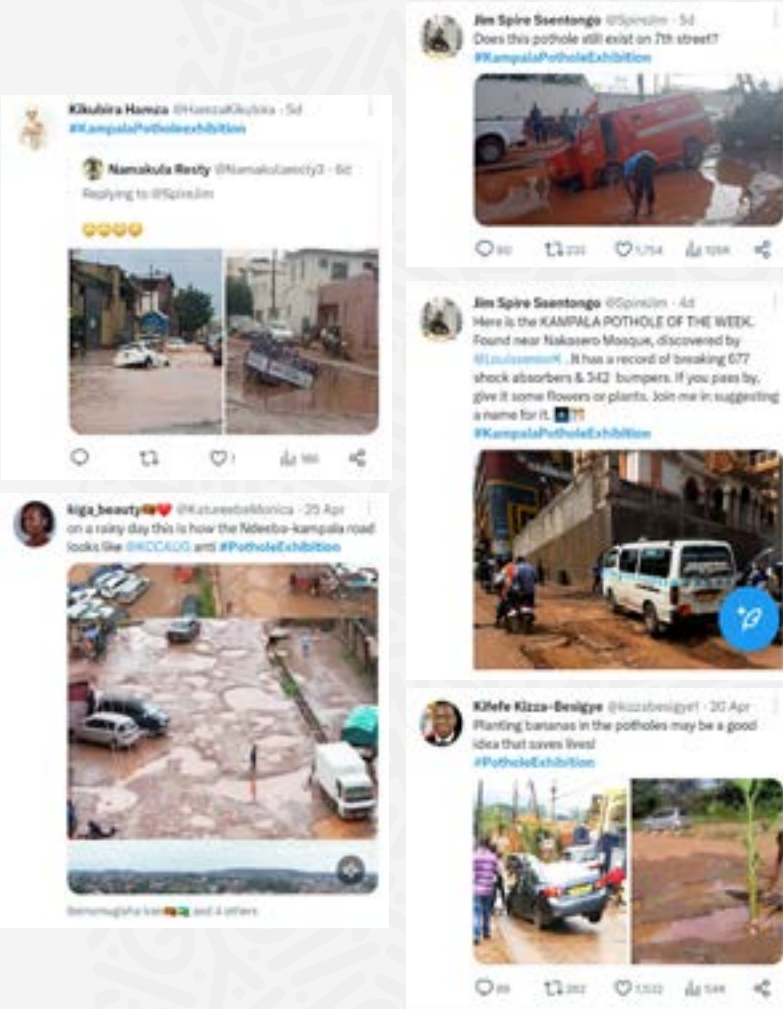
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Executive Summary

The [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#), a powerful social media campaign launched on Twitter in April 2023, had a profound impact on raising awareness about the appalling state of roads in Kampala, Uganda. Through the use of the hashtag [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#), Ugandans actively participated in the campaign, sharing compelling photos and videos of the numerous potholes plaguing the city. The campaign swiftly gained momentum, captivating the attention of thousands as tweets flooded in.

This impactful initiative achieved its objective of shedding light on the dire condition of Kampala’s roads and exerted significant pressure on the government to take necessary action. In response to the public outcry, the government announced a substantial increase in funds allocated for road repairs. The resounding impact of this campaign serves as a testament to the power of public engagement and activism in driving tangible results, compelling governments to prioritize the well-being and safety of their citizens.

In our comprehensive methodology, we meticulously analyzed 326 tweets using advanced social media monitoring tools. The campaign’s reach was extensive, with a social reach of 569.1K and social engagement of 96K. Our sentiment analysis revealed 27.1% positive, 18.4% negative, and 41.7% neutral responses, providing a nuanced understanding of the ongoing conversation surrounding the campaign.

With a two-week data collection period, we ensured the accuracy and reliability of our findings, capturing a significant portion of the discourse surrounding the campaign. The insights gleaned from the campaign demonstrate the potential of social media activism in driving positive change and inspiring governments to prioritize essential infrastructure improvements. The [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) stands as a powerful reminder that the collective voice of citizens can pave the way for a safer and more sustainable future.

Campaign
Reach
569.1k
Accounts

Social
engagement
96k


The campaign’s mentions
unveiled a diversity of
reactions

Positive	Negative	Neutral
27.1%	18.4%	41.7%



1. Introduction

The [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#), a powerful social media campaign that took the virtual world by storm in April 2023, ignited a passionate conversation about the deplorable state of road infrastructure in Kampala, Uganda. With the hashtag [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#), thousands of concerned citizens utilized Twitter as a platform to share striking images and videos of the countless potholes plaguing the city. This collective outcry rapidly gained momentum, sparking unprecedented public engagement and activism. As the campaign resonated far beyond the digital realm, it compelled the Ugandan government to face the pressing issue head-on, leading to a substantial increase in funds allocated for road repairs. The report delves into the profound impact of the campaign, analyzing its reach, sentiment, and the emergent issues surrounding the state of Kampala's roads. It highlights the significance of citizen engagement and the potential of social media activism to drive positive change and create a safer, more sustainable transportation system for the city's residents.



With the hashtag [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#), thousands of concerned citizens utilized Twitter as a platform to share striking images and videos of the countless potholes plaguing the city.

2. Context:

Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, is a rapidly growing metropolis with a population of over 1.7 million people. As the city has grown, so too has the demand for transportation. However, the city's road infrastructure has not kept pace with this growth, resulting in a network of roads that are in a state of disrepair. Potholes are a common sight, and many roads are simply impassable during the rainy season. This has a number of negative consequences, including:

- [Increased travel times and delays: The poor state of the roads makes it difficult for people to get around, which can lead to delays and frustration.](#)
- [Increased risk of accidents: The potholes and other road defects make it more likely that accidents will occur, which can result in injuries and fatalities.](#)
- [Damage to vehicles: The poor state of the roads can also damage vehicles, which can be costly for both individuals and businesses.](#)
- [Negative impact on the economy: The poor state of the roads has a negative impact on the economy, as it makes it difficult for businesses to operate and discourages tourists from visiting the city.](#)

There are a number of reasons why Kampala's roads are in such poor condition. One reason is that the city has not received enough funding from the government to maintain its road infrastructure. Another reason is that the city's roads are simply too old. Many of the roads were built in the 1960s and 1970s, and they are now past their lifespan.

In addition, the city's road maintenance system is inefficient. The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) does not have enough resources to properly maintain the city's roads, and the system for managing road maintenance is fragmented.

There are a number of things that can be done to improve the state of Kampala's roads. The government needs to increase funding for road maintenance. The city also needs to invest in new road construction. In addition, the city needs to develop a better system for managing its road infrastructure.

There are a number of comprehensive plans that have been proposed to improve the state of Kampala's roads. These plans include:


- [The Kampala Road Infrastructure Development Program \(KRIDP\): This is a \\$1.5 billion program that was launched in 2021 by the government of Uganda. The program aims to improve 611km of roads in Kampala, including the construction of new roads, the rehabilitation of existing roads, and the improvement of drainage systems.](#)
- [The Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area Urban Development Program \(KAMPADU\): This is a \\$2.3 billion program that is funded by the World Bank. The program aims to improve the road infrastructure in Kampala and the surrounding areas.](#)

- [The Kampala Capital City Authority \(KCCA\) Road Maintenance Plan: This is a plan that was developed by KCCA to improve the efficiency of the city's road maintenance system. The plan includes measures to increase funding for road maintenance, to improve the coordination of road maintenance activities, and to develop a better system for managing road assets.](#)

In addition to these comprehensive plans, there are a number of other initiatives that are being taken to improve the state of Kampala's roads. These initiatives include:

- [The use of road user fees to generate revenue for road maintenance.](#)
- [The development of public-private partnerships to finance road construction and maintenance.](#)
- [The promotion of sustainable transportation alternatives, such as walking, cycling, and public transportation.](#)

These initiatives are all part of a broader effort to improve the quality of life in Kampala and to make the city more sustainable. It is important to note that these initiatives will take time to implement and to have a significant impact. However, they represent a positive step forward in the effort to improve the state of Kampala's roads.



The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) does not have enough resources to properly maintain the city's roads, and the system for managing road maintenance is fragmented.



3. Methodology

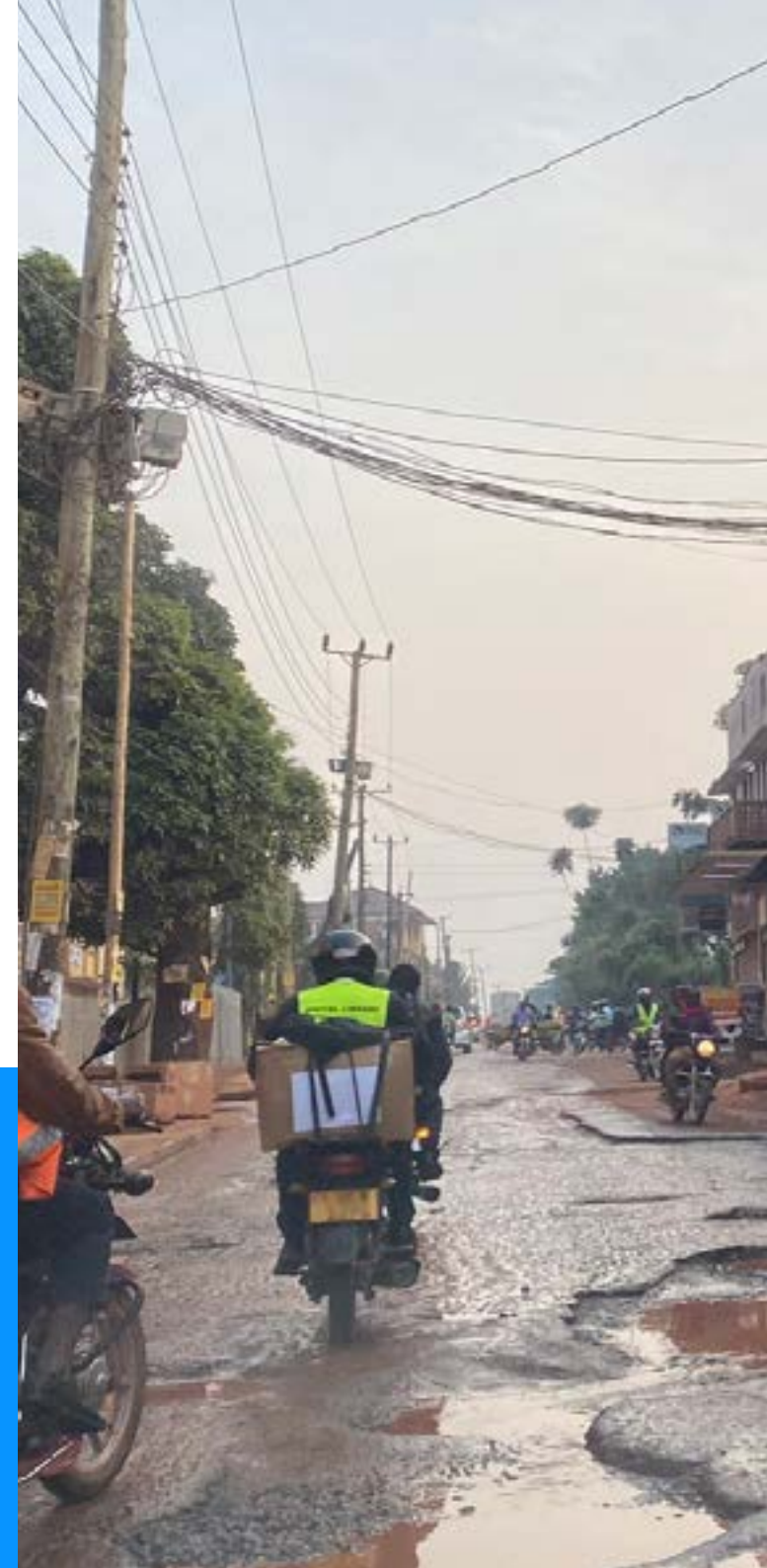
1. Data Collection Process:

To compile the necessary data for this report, we meticulously analyzed a total of 326 tweets and comments by participants on other channels like YouTube, utilizing advanced social media monitoring tools. The impact of these tweets was substantial, with a social reach of 569.1K, social engagement of 96K, and a sentiment analysis revealing 121 (27.1%) positive, 82 (18.4%) negative, and 186 (41.7%) neutral responses. Despite recognizing the existence of related dialogues on other digital platforms, we concentrated our analytical focus on Twitter, known for hosting vibrant societal debates. This information was gathered using automated data scraping technologies, enabling us to systematically retrieve all tweets containing the targeted hashtags.

2. Data Elements Collection:

The data scraping tools not only ensured our dataset was extensive and accurate, but they also collected a broad array of data elements for each tweet, such as its content, timestamp, user profile information, and associated engagement metrics. This comprehensive dataset formed the foundation for our analysis, allowing us to gain a detailed understanding of the discourse surrounding the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign.

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3. Content and Sentiment Analysis:

Once the data was compiled, we executed thorough content and sentiment analyses. Content analysis assisted in identifying and categorizing key emerging themes related to road conditions in Kampala and citizen advocacy efforts. Our focus was primarily on tweets that incorporated the hashtag [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) and other relevant keywords. This deliberate approach allowed us to gather a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing conversation surrounding the campaign. Sentiment analysis offered insights into the dominant emotions conveyed by the Twitter users, providing a nuanced understanding of the overall sentiment expressed regarding the state of roads in Kampala and their participation in the advocacy campaign.

4. Duration of Data Collection:

To ensure the accuracy and reliability of our findings, the data collection period spanned a duration of two weeks, specifically from April 09, 2023, to June 29, 2023. This extended timeframe enabled us to capture a significant portion of the discourse surrounding the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign, providing us with a robust foundation for our analysis.

5. Limitations:

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations of the methodology. Social media data may not fully represent the views of the entire population, as not all individuals participate in online discussions. Additionally, the analysis focused solely on tweets related to the campaign on Twitter, and thus may not encompass sentiments shared on other platforms or offline conversations. Lastly, this being the first edition of the exhibitions and the promoters having requested for photos, primarily, there was less text to analyze making it hard to gauge opinions of most of the participants.

Despite these limitations, the combination of data scraping, content analysis, and sentiment analysis provided valuable insights into citizen advocacy and its impact on the discourse surrounding Kampala's road infrastructure. The findings presented in this report accurately reflect the perspectives, emotions, and advocacy efforts shared by citizens concerned about the state of roads in Kampala.

Emergent Issues

Poor quality of road infrastructure and prevalence of potholes:

The poor quality of road infrastructure and the prevalence of potholes were prominent concerns in the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign. Potholes pose risks to road users, causing damage to vehicles and increasing the likelihood of accidents.

The poor quality of road infrastructure is attributed to inadequate maintenance and repair, which is further exacerbated by heavy rainfall. These issues emphasize the necessity of improving the overall quality of road infrastructure in Kampala to ensure safer and more reliable transportation for its residents.

Lack of accountability and transparency in the allocation and use of funds for road maintenance:

The lack of accountability and transparency in the allocation and use of funds for road maintenance is another significant theme in the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign. Twitter user @LukwagoZulah raised concerns about the European Union's (EU) funding, questioning accountability for past funds and stating. Like a number of

others, expressed skepticism surrounding the effectiveness and transparency of funds allocated for road maintenance. The lack of accountability undermines public trust and hampers efforts to improve road conditions. Greater transparency and accountability in the allocation and use of funds are crucial to effectively address the road infrastructure challenges in Kampala.

Need for citizen engagement and participation in addressing road infrastructure issues:

The [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign emphasized the importance of citizen engagement and participation in addressing road infrastructure issues. Some participants underscored the power of citizen engagement in creating a sense of collective responsibility and promoting public accountability. Social media platforms like Twitter provide a space for citizens to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and contribute to finding solutions. Citizen engagement is seen as a powerful tool in holding authorities accountable for road maintenance and repair. The campaign recognizes the potential for positive change when citizens are actively involved in addressing road infrastructure challenges.



The campaign also sparked a call for action and solutions:

People emphasized the need for practical measures to address the road issues. Suggestions included community fundraising and citizen engagement in road maintenance. One tweet highlighted the potential of Ugandans coming together to fundraise for their own roads, stating, “[I am almost certain that if a campaign was held for Ugandans to fundraise for their own roads area by area, they would do an excellent job](#)” . Another tweet emphasized the importance of citizen feedback, stating, “[A lot of things have gone astray indeed. As Mr. Ssentongo put it, it's feedback from the people. Simple solutions like that would be effective](#)” .

“My other take is if we can critic/ cite the issues then we can also give some sound solutions because from where I stand it seems as though people in those spaces have lost trajectory of even the bare minimum. They really have no immediate solutions, always thinking about the bigger money, foreign labour, etc. What happened to the days when prisoners were part of the workforce. They worked in construction under supervision as a reform but also as cheap labour for such projects. That way, the budget would be affordable ad this community service for those prisoners of

petty crimes would pay off and they would be let go after they serve (tackling the issue of over population in prisons which is a story for another day). The Engineers draw the plans, and the prisoners follow instructions from the few professionals around. Not everything should be complicated but they make it that way because they have been at it for years now. I am almost certain that if a campaign was held for Ugandans to fundraise for their own roads area by area, they would do an excellent job. And if given permission to work on them, where we can hire equipment etc, we would do it. But that is not our job, we pay taxes to cater for that.” - @sunshineheaven1802 on YouTube

Criticism of leaders and civil servants:

People expressed frustration with the complacency and corruption among leaders and civil servants. They called for responsible governance and accountability. One person in a comment on YouTube highlighted the need for change, stating, “[The nation has complacent leaders and corrupt civil servants. Lazy and without interest, there are small things each person can do!](#)” - Sunshine Heaven.



4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign has served as a powerful platform to highlight the pressing road infrastructure challenges faced by Kampala. The campaign brought attention to the poor quality of road infrastructure and the prevalence of potholes, posing significant risks to road users and the overall transportation system. Furthermore, it raised crucial concerns about the lack of accountability and transparency in the allocation and use of funds for road maintenance, signaling the need for responsible governance and efficient resource utilization.

The campaign's significance lies in its emphasis on citizen engagement and participation in addressing road infrastructure issues. Through social media platforms like Twitter, citizens voiced their concerns, shared their experiences, and contributed to the discourse surrounding potential solutions. This collective involvement showcased the power of public advocacy and demonstrated the importance of fostering a sense of collective responsibility in the pursuit of effective and sustainable road improvements.

The [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign sparked a call for action and practical measures to tackle the road issues in Kampala. Suggestions ranged from community fundraising for road repairs to demanding better governance and accountability from leaders and civil servants. The diverse perspectives and opinions expressed in the tweets underscored the urgency of the situation and the need for a multifaceted approach to address the road infrastructure challenges.

Ultimately, the campaign's impact extends beyond social media interactions, prompting both citizens and policymakers to reevaluate the state of road infrastructure in Kampala. The collective voice of the public has placed immense pressure on the government, leading to an increase in funds allocated for road repairs. The lessons learned from the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign demonstrate the potential for public engagement and activism to drive tangible results and inspire positive change in addressing crucial societal issues. To ensure a safer and more reliable transportation system, sustained efforts in transparency, accountability, and citizen participation are essential to transforming Kampala's road infrastructure.

5. Recommendations:

- 1. Increase Funding for Road Maintenance:** The government of Uganda should prioritize allocating sufficient funds for road maintenance in Kampala. Adequate funding is crucial to address the existing potholes and ensure timely repair and maintenance of roads. By investing in road infrastructure, the government can enhance road safety, reduce travel times, and improve overall transportation efficiency in the city.
- 2. Enhance Transparency and Accountability:** To address concerns about the lack of accountability in the use of funds for road maintenance, the government should implement measures to enhance transparency. Regular audits and public reporting of road maintenance expenditure can build public trust and ensure that funds are allocated and utilized efficiently. Transparent financial management will also foster public confidence in the government's commitment to improving road infrastructure.
- 3. Engage Citizens in Road Maintenance:** The success of the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign highlighted the power of citizen engagement in advocating for road infrastructure improvements. The government should actively involve citizens in road maintenance initiatives, encouraging community participation and ownership. Community-led efforts, such as fundraising for local road repairs, can supplement government resources and expedite infrastructure improvements.
- 4. Implement Comprehensive Road Development Programs:** The government should prioritize and expedite the implementation of comprehensive road development programs like the Kampala Road Infrastructure Development Program (KRIDP) and the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area Urban Development Program (KAMPADU). These programs focus on improving existing roads, constructing new ones, and enhancing drainage systems. Timely execution of these initiatives will lead to significant improvements in the city's road infrastructure.

The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) should develop a more efficient and coordinated road maintenance system. Strengthening KCCA's capacity, resource allocation, and asset management will enable better planning and execution of road maintenance activities.



5. Foster Public-Private Partnerships: Leveraging public-private partnerships can provide additional financial resources and expertise for road construction and maintenance. The government should encourage collaborations with private entities to enhance infrastructure development efforts. Well-structured partnerships can expedite project implementation and ensure the efficient use of resources.

6. Promote Sustainable Transportation Alternatives: Encouraging sustainable transportation alternatives, such as walking, cycling, and public transportation, can help alleviate the strain on road infrastructure. Investing in public transportation systems and promoting non-motorized modes of transport can reduce the reliance on private vehicles and subsequently decrease wear and tear on roads.

7. Improve Road Maintenance Management: The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) should develop a more efficient and coordinated road maintenance system. Strengthening KCCA's capacity, resource allocation, and asset management will enable better planning and execution of road maintenance activities. An effective maintenance system will ensure that road infrastructure remains in good condition over the long term.

8. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular monitoring and evaluation of road maintenance projects and initiatives are essential to gauge their effectiveness and impact. By consistently assessing the outcomes of implemented measures, the government can identify successes, address challenges, and make necessary adjustments for better outcomes.



9. Educate the Public on Road Safety: Promoting road safety awareness among citizens is crucial in fostering responsible road use and reducing accidents. Public awareness campaigns on safe driving practices, adherence to traffic rules, and reporting road hazards can contribute to creating a safer road environment.

10. Long-Term Vision for Road Infrastructure: To address the longstanding issue of Kampala's road infrastructure, the government should develop a comprehensive, long-term vision for road development. This vision should be integrated into broader urban planning strategies to ensure sustainable and efficient transportation networks that cater to the city's future needs.

By implementing these recommendations, the government of Uganda can significantly improve the state of road infrastructure in Kampala, enhance road safety, and provide its citizens with a reliable and efficient transportation system. The success of the [#KampalaPotholeExhibition](#) campaign demonstrates the power of collective advocacy, and with sustained efforts, Kampala can witness positive and lasting changes in its road infrastructure.

Source data can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/KampalaPotholeExhibitionData>



Plot 13 Kenneth Dale Lane, Kamwokya
Kampala, Uganda
+256 783 474784
hello@evidenceandmethodslab.org
www.evidenceandmethodslab.org

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