

QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

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INCREASING PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH, WOMEN AND PWDS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT THROUGH RESERVATION SCHEMES



PPDA Executive Director, Benson Turamy (seated front row in neck tie) and Mr. Gilbert Sendugwa of Africa Freedom of Information Center (AFIC) (seated 2nd right), in a group photo with staff of PPDA and women entrepreneurs during the LIFT Program training conducted at the PPDA Head Offices in Kampala.

The LIFT programme is designed to, among other things, address the challenges of low participation of Women-Led Businesses (WLBs) in public procurement.

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INCREASING PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH, WOMEN AND PWDS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT THROUGH RESERVATION SCHEMES



By: Cris Magoba & Ronald Tumuhairwe

Procurement of goods, services and works by government is a key policy tool that governments world over use to advance social-economic goals as a global development agenda. In the Ugandan context, more than 60% of the national budget is expended through public procurement processes. In spite of this expenditure, studies have shown that only a small section of citizens do participate in the processes, leaving out a substantial segment of the population, notably the youth, women and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

It is against this background that the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA) continues to invoke provisions of the law to remedy this situation. In pursuance of its vision as a dynamic facilitator of the public procurement and asset disposal system for sustainable national development, the PPDA has thus issued guidelines to create avenues for the participation of the hitherto marginalised groups in public procurement.

The issuance of the guidelines that became effective March 22, 2024 is anchored on Section 97 of the PPDA Act which provides that for the better carrying out of the objectives of, and functions of public procurement, the Authority



PPDA Executive Director, Benson Turamy emphasizes PPDA's commitment to compliance with the set reservation schemes to promote youth, women, & PWDs in the different Procuring and Disposing Entities (PDEs).

shall issue and Gazette guidelines. These guidelines on reservations schemes operationalise Section 59B of the Act which dwells on promoting the participation of marginalised groups in public procurement.

The main thrust of the reservation schemes (guidelines) is to require Accounting Officers in all Procuring and Disposing Entities (PDEs) to facilitate the participation of these groups in procurement proceedings and contract award decisions. And for avoidance of doubt, the PDEs are to implement these schemes through the categories of procurement budget execution and value.

Thus, in a procurement budget execution context, according to the guidelines, a PDE is expected to reserve at least 15% of its annual procurement plan budget for award to registered associations of women, youth and PWDs. The PDEs are to disclose in their respective plans the procurements that are subject to reservation to registered associations of youth, women and PWDs. Moreover, a procurement plan is a public document which will be displayed on the Entity's notice boards, and website and should be accessible by all interested parties. Section 58 of the PPDA Act obliges PDEs on this disclosure and transparency.

With regard to value, all Central Government entity

procurements whose value does not exceed Uganda shillings 30 million, are to be reserved to registered associations of women, youth and PWDs. And for all Local Governments, they are to reserve procurement requirements whose value does not exceed Uganda shillings 10 million to registered associations of women, youth and PWDs. Where there are no registered associations of women, youth and PWDs to be invited for provision of required supplies, works, or services of the above values, in a given locality, the PDE shall refer to the shortlist of national providers.

Cognizant of the hinderances to participation in public procurement for these groups, a number of measures have been put in place and some include;
 No bid securities in cash expected from these groups. Rather, bids will be secured with

duly signed bid securing declaration forms. In procurement lingua, a bid securing declaration is an undertaking by a bidder, committing to the rules of the process failure of which, the defaulting bidder may attract punitive consequences. Furthermore, the scheme also waives the requirement for payment of bidding fees by registered associations of youth, women, youth and PWDs to obtain bidding documents.

Additionally, normally, in public procurement there are considerations that all bidders may be subjected to. These include previous experience in executing similar projects and the annual turnover of the bidder. These are important if government must tease out the best providers for the different projects. However, as earlier mentioned, if the women, youth and PWDs must be supported to build their capacity and be competitive, the scheme provides for a middle ground.

Thus, the requirement for average annual turnover for works shall not exceed half the estimated value of procurement and the requirement for similar experience should not exceed one substantially completed contract of the half the value of the procurement requirement. As part of its mandate, the PPDA will monitor the implementation of the reservation schemes by PDEs on a quarterly basis and will undertake an annual assessment based on predetermined indicators. There are other progressive provisions in the guidelines, which we cannot fully delve into here because of space, but which will, for sure, support the different groups as envisaged. The duty to PDEs and respective associations of women, youth and PWDs is to ensure that they implement, and actively participate to ensure that the scheme succeeds for national development.



Senior Officer, Procurement Capacity Building, Mariam Baluka, (standing with microphone) facilitates a practical session on the preparation of responsive bids during the LIFT Program training for Women entrepreneurs in Kampala.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

PPDA BOARD AND MANAGEMENT INSPECT SEED SCHOOLS' CONSTRUCTION IN BUNYORO SUB REGION



The PPDA team joined by the media and civil society, interact with the Contractor, P&D Traders, at the construction site of Kidukuru Seed Secondary School in Hoima City

By: David Matovu

In a bid to ensure adherence to the PPDA mantra, "Procurement That Delivers," the PPDA Board and Management in April 2024 embarked on a 3-day inspection exercise to get appraised of the ongoing construction projects of seed secondary schools in Masindi District and Hoima City. This visit was aimed at assessing compliance with public procurement standards and responding to public and civil society organization concerns about delays, particularly from the Rwenzori Anti-Corruption Coalition (RAC).

The PPDA leadership, led by the Board Chairman, Mr. Julius K. Ishungisa and the Executive Director, Benson Turame, visited three selected seed secondary schools funded under the Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UgIFT) programme. The schools included Kijunjubwa Seed Secondary School in Kijunjubwa Sub County and Pakanyi Secondary School in Kasomoro Village, Miirya Subcounty, both in Masindi District, and Kidukuru Seed Secondary School in Buhanika Sub County, Hoima District.



Disappointment in Kijunjubwa:

The PPDA delegation, guided to the construction site of Kijunjubwa Seed Secondary School by the Accounting Officer of Masindi District, (Chief Administrative Officer, CAO), Ms. Robinah Sanyu, was dismayed to find significant delays. With the contract nearing expiry, the site showed no signs of activity, and the unroofed structures were abandoned. Efforts to reach the Director of the contracted construction firm, CMD Investments Limited, were unsuccessful.

"He has been uncooperative even with us," explained the CAO. "We have issued three warning letters, but none have been responded to."

CMD Investments Limited signed a contract in January 2023 for 18 months at a sum of Uganda shillings 3.3 billion, expecting completion by June 2024. However, the PPDA delegation observed that with less than two months remaining, the project's physical progress was under 60%. The Site Engineer, the only CMD Investments Limited employee present, could not

account for the delays or explain why other works stalled.

The PPDA leaders tasked the Accounting Officer and Project Management Team to make decisive actions to complete the project, even considering terminating the current contract. Failure to complete on time would negatively impact Masindi District's performance and future funding from UgIFT.



The half-roofed, construction site of Kijunjubwa Seed Secondary School in Masindi district. It seemed less likely that the contractor, CMD Investments Limited would complete the project by the end of June 2024 when their contract expires.

Better Performance in Pakanyi and Kidukuru:

In contrast, the performance of Semwo Construction Limited at Pakanyi Secondary School in Masindi District impressed the team. With the contract ending in December 2024, the contractor had active workers on the site. Environmental, Social, and Health safeguards were also in place, with physical progress aligning with the timeline at 70%. There was high anticipation that the contractor would deliver the Uganda shillings 2.1 billion project ahead of time.

Similarly, good performance was noted at Kidukuru Seed Secondary School in Hoima City. P&D Traders and Contractors Limited began the project in December 2022, and was expected to complete by December 2024. The project includes constructing of an administration block, classrooms, staff quarters, a computer lab, a library, and a playground. Currently, the contractor was roofing the structures, with physical progress at 69%.

Julius K. Ishungisa, the Board Chairperson of PPDA, expressed satisfaction with the construction work at the school and

General Recommendations:

The PPDA Board and Management called on beneficiary Procuring and Disposing Entities (PDEs) of the UgIFT Seed Secondary School Construction Projects to intensify monitoring for timely delivery. Dr. Levi Kabagambe, the Procurement Specialist on the PPDA Board, emphasized the need for timely accountability to ensure value for money and urged local communities to take ownership and report any corruption or shoddy work.

PPDA also committed to continue collaborating with Civil Society Organizations like RAC, which use PPDA's Digital System, the Contract Monitoring System (CMS), to report on ongoing public projects. Mr. Ismail Kusemererwa, the Executive Director of Mid-Western Region Anti-Corruption Coalition, was also present during the inspection visit.

PPDA CONFIRMS INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH PERFORMING STUDENTS



The outgoing President of the Makerere University Business School Procurement Association (MUBSPA), Fauza Sebyanzi (R) hands over instruments of power to the incoming president, Simon Peter Musiito(L). PPDA Executive Director, Mr. Benson Turamye (standing second right) witnessed the handover.

On Thursday May 9, 2024, the serene ambiance of Esella Country Hotel in Najjeera, (Kira Municipality), was enlivened and vibrant as the Makerere University Business School Procurement Association (MUBSPA) hosted a memorable dinner. The event marked the handover ceremony of the outgoing cabinet, led by one Fauza Sebyanzi, and the swearing-in of the incoming cabinet, led by Simon Peter Musiito. Gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest was the Executive Director (ED) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA), Mr. Benson Turamye.

The night brought together students, lecturers, and

prominent figures from the public and private procurement sectors. The presence of the Institute of Procurement Professionals of Uganda (IPPU) added an extra layer of inspiration for the budding professionals.

In his speech, Turamye lauded the student leaders for their commendable efforts in advancing the procurement profession and emphasized the importance of continuous education, urging students to pursue studies beyond their first degrees to remain relevant and competitive in the evolving job market.

"I want to encourage you to support the Institute of Procurement and Supply Chain

Management of Uganda Bill that we are pushing for in Parliament. Once this bill is assented to, we shall be able to protect our profession from masqueraders," he said.

A significant highlight of the evening was the ED's announcement that PPDA would continue to offer internship opportunities annually to outstanding graduate trainees. This initiative is designed to provide these bright students with invaluable hands-on experience and a strong foundation to kick-start their careers in procurement. By engaging in these internships, the selected graduates will gain practical insights and professional networks that are crucial for their future success in the industry.

Acknowledging the challenges of job scarcity, the ED encouraged the youth to explore opportunities on the supply side of the procurement value chain. He highlighted the importance of leveraging government reservations aimed at promoting businesses led by youth, women, and

Persons With Disabilities (PWDs). By registering companies or associations on the national registry/ database of youth businesses, these groups could significantly enhance their chances of being selected to supply goods or services to government Procuring and

Disposing Entities (PDEs).

The ED announced ongoing negotiations with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) to ensure that Youth Businesses can register free of charge. Furthermore, he assured them that registration to the PPDA database would also be simplified, easing the path for young entrepreneurs to engage in government procurement processes.

He underscored the importance of supporting efforts to professionalize procurement, urging students to deter intruders from tarnishing the integrity of the profession. By promoting excellence and adherence to professional standards, the procurement field can maintain its reputation and effectiveness.

The evening encapsulated a shared vision of a robust future for the procurement profession, driven by the dedication of young professionals and the unwavering support of industry leaders. With the PPDA internship program, the next generation of procurement experts is poised to make a significant impact. As the new MUBSPA cabinet steps into their roles, the foundation laid by their predecessors and the guidance from seasoned experts like the PPDA ED ensures that the future of public procurement in Uganda is indeed solid.



PPDA Executive Director (standing second left) speaks to the students of MUBSPA during the annual dinner at Esella Country Hotel in Najjeera (Kira Municipality).



The ED joined the Incoming and Outgoing MUBSPA Cabinets to cut cake in celebration of the successful handover.

WHY HAVE A WELLNESS PROGRAM AT PPDA ?



Staff of PPDA attend a stretching exercise during one of the weekly work out sessions at the PPDA Head Office.

By: Bridgette Teddy Opany

The writer is a Senior Human Resources Officer at PPDA Uganda

For any organization in any sector to succeed, it must provide employees with a safe workplace. Regardless of whether an employee base is fully in person or partly remote, one of the main means one can use to improve such an environment is by using a staff wellness program of any kind.

But what is it? Why is it important? And what have we as an Authority done?

A Wellness program is an organization's initiative aimed at improving the health of the staff. It is for disease prevention, better cohesion or team work among staff (through group

activities) and improved productivity of staff (through improved health).

These programs provide employees with various benefits to improve their overall lifestyle. Examples of such programs include anything and everything that encourages healthy movement, provide health screenings, disease control, and more.

At the Authority, we implemented a unique wellness program in March 2022 when the fitness center (gym) was equipped and opened to staff. This was made to include a fitness trainer who

conducts six sessions per week (two sessions a day, thrice a week). I call it unique because this remains one of the very few public organizations that has come up with such an initiative for their staff.

Before this, and up until now, the Authority already had a medical insurance scheme covering all staff and up to five members of their immediate family. This scheme also includes an annual wellness check to help determine where possible the risk of disease or enable early detection of diseases for timely management of the same.

This year, following a Ministry of Public Service directive, all staff at the Authority are required to have a mandatory two hours of physical activity. Currently this is being done on Wednesday at 3p.m It is business unusual! The fitness trainer leads the staff for a long walk which covers 4.8 km, followed by a basic aerobics session and stretching exercises. What better way to calm the mid-week pressure?

Wellness programs were created to meet mutual goals that benefit both the staff and the organization. As the employer prioritizes the mental and physical conditions of their staff, this will in return, both boost productivity and provide substantial savings for the organization. We have to acknowledge that the more active our staff are, the less likely they are to suffer from non-communicable diseases and stress-related ailments.

Employee wellness programs can provide benefits in the following categories:

1. Physical

Healthy employees are likely to be more productive than those experiencing poor health. Poor health behaviours may lead to increased health risks and chronic diseases and result in lower levels of productivity. By promoting healthy habits such as movement and a balanced diet, employers can ensure their employees stay healthy and be more productive at work.

Employee wellness programs often include initiatives that encourage exercise, healthy eating habits, and regular medical check-ups (as covered by our insurance schemes).



Staff of PPDA attend a fitness session in the PPDA's gymnasium at the PPDA Head Office.

2. Emotional and mental impact

Employee wellness programs can positively impact employees' emotional and mental health. Such programs make employees feel appreciated and valued, increasing their overall morale and connection to the business.

These programs often include wellness initiatives that promote stress reduction and mental health awareness.

Employees participating in workplace wellness programs may experience emotional well-being, reduced stress, and increased job satisfaction, when done correctly.

3. Intellectual impact

Corporate wellness programs boost learning and personal development. As a result, employees who participate in wellness programs may experience better cognitive function and increased creativity and even enhanced problem-solving skills. This is no lie and it benefits the business and their own lives outside of work.

4. Social impact and team work

Corporate wellness programs encourage team building and social interaction, which works to improve relationships between colleagues. Such programs also instil a sense of community within the workplace. The gym instructor has incorporated a lot of group-work and team based physical assignments which bring people together for a common goal, in a casual setting.

The effect of COVID-19

For many, working remotely for the first time after the pandemic led to a sense of loneliness. Working at home, without the possibility of bumping into a co-worker, led to a sense of isolation and detachment from colleagues and the organization, in some cases. Those little human interactions that we often take for granted at work actually go a long way in promoting mental health. After the lockdown, some people did not return to their lifestyle as it was before and instead became less active than they were.

HOW TRANSPARENCY WILL ENHANCE WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT.



Some of the participants at the Western Region training of women entrepreneurs held in Mbarara City at Lake View Hotel on Friday 26th April 2024.

By: Ms. Faith Mbabazi
Manager Research, PPDA

Promoting women's participation in public procurement is not only about economic empowerment but also about fostering sustainable development. Through open contracting, we can address barriers, ensure transparency, and create opportunities for women-led businesses. By effectively tracking and publicizing procurement data, we envisage a future where inclusive procurement becomes the norm.

In Uganda, women-owned businesses represent a significant portion of the

entrepreneurial landscape, contributing to economic growth and livelihood improvement. However, despite their potential, these businesses encounter numerous challenges that hinder their full participation in various sectors, including public procurement. A recent study by the Africa Freedom of Information Center (AFIC) revealed that only 1% of women-led business firms currently engage in public procurement activities. This statistic underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address the underlying barriers and create equitable opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

The participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement is hindered by several key issues and significant barriers, resulting in minimal representation in public procurement processes. Reluctance in disclosing procurement-related data makes it challenging to identify and address systemic issues affecting women's participation. And lack of disaggregated data on existing procurement reporting platforms prevents the evaluation of initiatives aimed at promoting women-owned businesses.

LIFT PROGRAM

To tackle the above challenges, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA) and Africa Freedom Information Centre (AFIC) were selected to participate in the LiFT Program, focusing on leveraging Open Contracting to advance social inclusion, particularly by enhancing women’s participation in public procurement in Uganda. This initiative recognizes the critical role that women-owned businesses play in the economy and aims to address the systemic barriers they face in accessing and participating in public procurement processes.

The PPDA has secured funds and over 200 hours of technical assistance from the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP). Collaborating with AFIC, the PPDA aims to enhance the participation of Women Owned Business (WoBs), in Uganda’s public procurement. The joint project focuses on increasing WoB participation through a pilot initiative involving four Procuring and Disposing Entities (PDEs): Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), Mbarara City, Wakiso District Local Government, and Uganda Electricity Generation Company (UEGCL).

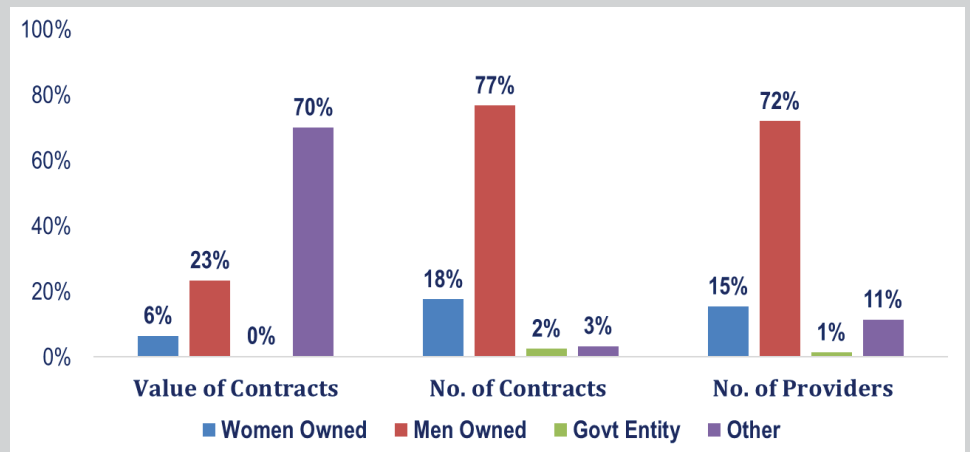
BASELINE ASSESSMENT

To effectively understand and address these barriers, a baseline assessment was conducted to evaluate the extent of participation of Women-Owned Businesses (WoBs) in the four pilot entities.

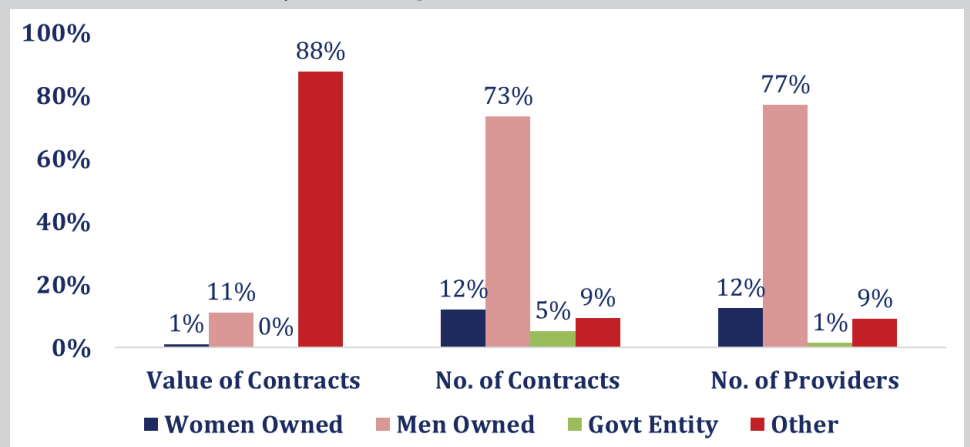
The assessment retrieved contract award data for the pilot Entities for the FY 2022/23. The team then utilized the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) portal to search for company data, including ownership, shareholding proportions, and gender of shareholders. The findings were presented at a stakeholder meeting held on 30th April, 2024 at Hotel Africana.

Findings on the Proportion of Contracts Awarded to WoBs in the Four Entities

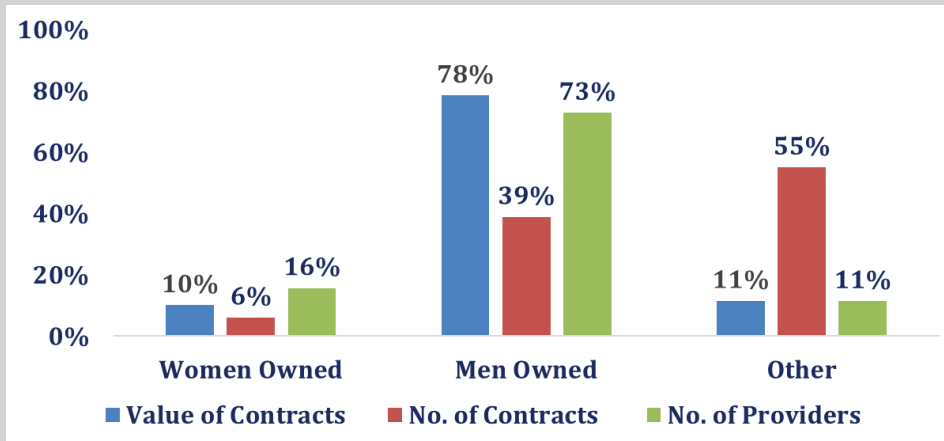
1. Contracts Awarded by Ownership-KCCA



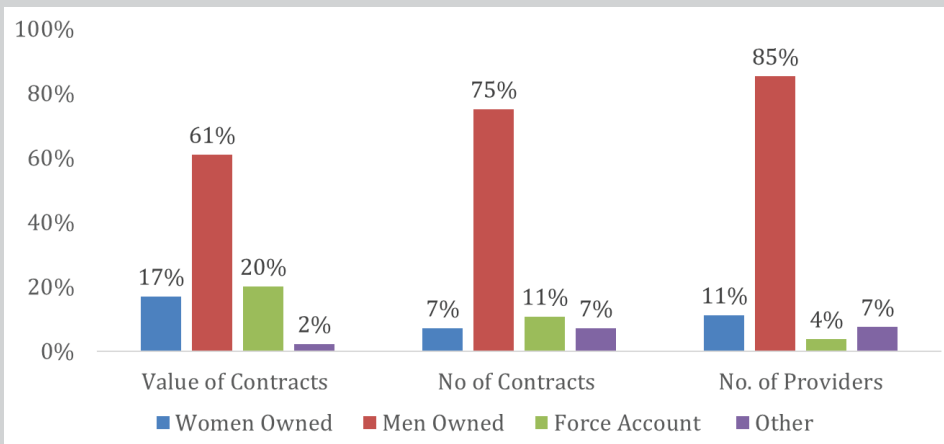
2. Contracts Awarded by Ownership-UEGCL



3. Contracts Awarded by Ownership-Wakiso DLG



4. Contracts Awarded by Ownership-Mbarara City



The baseline assessment revealed several barriers hindering the participation of WoBs in public procurement. These include:

- a lack of knowledge about the bidding process;
- inability to win bids leading to discouragement;
- limited access to relevant information, perceived gender bias;
- Complexity, and high costs associated with bidding; and
- a perception of corruption and lack of trust in the process.

The assessment also revealed that WoBs were majorly

concentrated in procurement of catering services, office supplies and equipment including office furniture, stationery, printers, and IT equipment and supply of cleaning and janitorial supplies for public toilets and office compounds. A number were also in community engagement and support programs –facilitation of workshops, training sessions, and consultative engagements for stakeholders and supply of agricultural inputs, educational materials, and sports supplies.

Following the findings from the Assessment the Authority intends to conduct the following activities:

- I. Reviewing and engendering existing templates and platforms.

- II. Conducting targeted capacity building for women entrepreneurs.
- III. Hosting meetings with policymakers to advocate for the promotion of WoBs.
- IV. Running sensitization and advocacy campaigns.

The impact goal for the project, to be assessed over 18 months based on baseline data, is to increase the number of public contracts awarded to WoBs by at least 5% among pilot entities.



OUR VISION
A Dynamic Facilitator of the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal System for Sustainable National Development

PPdA
PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC ASSETS AUTHORITY
"Procurement That Delivers"

OUR MISSION
To Promote Service Delivery Through Effective Regulation of the Public Procurement and Disposal System

PPdA
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"Procurement That Delivers"

PICTORIAL

LIFT PROGRAM WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' TRAINING



PPDA Executive Director, Mr. Benson Turamy, addresses women entrepreneurs at the launch of the LIFT Program trainings at PPDA Head Office.



Manager Legal Affairs, Sophia Masagazi elucidated the provisions of the Reservation Schemes to promote Women's Participation in public procurement.

PICTORIAL

LIFT PROGRAM WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' TRAINING



Executive Director Africa Freedom of Information Center (AFIC) Mr. Gilbert Sendugwa speaks during one of the trainings for women entrepreneurs



PPDA Staff; Manager Local Content - Ronald Tumuhirwe, (seated second right) and Senior Officer, Micheal Abaine (extreme right) discuss the reservation scheme to promote women in public procurement with the Deputy Town Clerk of Mbarara City Mr. Swizen Kutambaki.

PICTORIAL

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY WORK OUT (WWW) SESSIONS



PPDA ED, Mr. Benson Turamy exercises alongside staff in the PPDA Gym.



Staff of PPDA during a gym session.



Staff jog for at least 4 kilometers around Nakasero Hill in Kampala.

PICTORIAL

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY WORK OUT (WWW) SESSIONS



Upon arrival, a professional wellness trainer facilitates a stretching session to keep the staffer's body fit and strong.



Studies show that working out improves fitness levels which in turn, improves overall performance

PICTORIAL

PPDA BOARD INSPECTS SEED SCHOOLS IN BUNYORO SUB-REGION



The team found Kijunjubwa Seed Secondary School in Masindi District abandoned and incomplete at the roofing level. The Project Engineer, the only employee on-site could not explain the causes of the delay of the project.

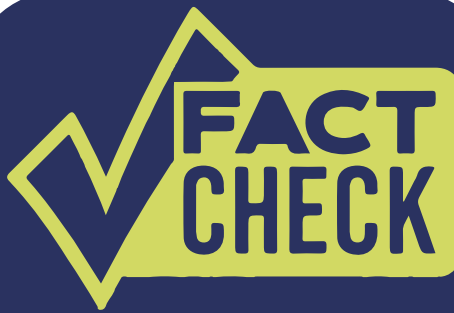
PICTORIAL

PPDA BOARD INSPECTS SEED SCHOOLS IN BUNYORO SUB-REGION



Unlike in Kijujubwa, the team established that though not roofed, there was notable presence of the contractor on the site, and the project was progressing according to schedule.

COFFEE BREAK



PPDA FACTS, FIGURES AND TITBITS



58: The section, in the PPDA Act 2003, that dwells on procurement planning. It also obliges PDEs to publicize their procurement plans on a notice or a website of the entity. "A procuring and disposing entity shall display its procurement plan and the updated and approved plan on its procurement and disposal notice board or using any other method as may be prescribed, for not less than twenty working days".



97: The section, in the PPDA Act 2003, that authorizes the issuance of guidelines by the PPDA for the efficiency of public procurement and asset disposal system in Uganda. "For the better carrying out of the objectives of and functions under this Act, the Authority shall issue and Gazette guidelines."

SAGACIOUSLY SPEAKING



The right to be heard doesn't automatically include the right to be taken seriously. *Hubert H. Humphrey, (1911 –1978) American politician.*



It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled. *Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835 –1910), aka Mark Twain, American writer, humorist and essayist.*



I have had a lot of worries in my life. Most of which never happened. *Anonymous*



If a snake does not act like a snake, little children will use it to tie firewood. *An Igbo proverb*



It is survival, not bravery that makes a man climb a thorny tree. *African proverb*



**PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL
OF PUBLIC ASSETS AUTHORITY**

"Procurement That Delivers"

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