SEMA Trend Report
How can we improve citizen satisfaction with police stations in Kampala?

June 2020

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Introduction

SEMA is a social enterprise geared towards the citizen-centred improvement of public services. With this goal in mind, SEMA developed a system of citizen feedback through which citizens rate the experiences they have had at public offices. Since 2018, this system has been tested in Uganda in collaboration with (among others) police stations. The feedback collected from citizens was presented in one-pager actionable reports that are distributed and discussed each month with the heads of the police stations where we work. Monthly reports are followed-up with management of an office to find out which improvements have been initiated.

To ensure that the results of the feedback given reaches the citizens, who are the source of this feedback, we ask that public officers pin up the monthly reports that we give them on the notice boards at the public offices. However, not all offices do this. Although we continue to value the confidential relationship we have with police stations where we measure, we also want to inform JLOS and other government bodies, as well as citizens and civil society groups about the trends that we see in our data. Therefore, this report is one of the trend reports SEMA publishes and distributes publicly to inform a wider community about the trends we see in citizen feedback at police stations.

The purpose of this report is to address citizen feedback collected from 9,092 citizens, between September 2018 and March 2020, at different police stations around Kampala city. The focus of this report will be to compare the performance of different police stations in Kampala and discuss what poorly performing stations can learn from good performing stations. We hope the Ugandan Police Force, the JLOS Sector and non-governmental partners will use this report to develop new policies and strategies for better police performance in Uganda.

Methodology

Citizens gave feedback at 7 police stations, 6 of which are at the divisional level (Central Police Station, Kira Road Police Station, Wandegeya Police Station, Jinja Road Police Station and Katwe Police Station), while one is a police post (Ntinda Police Station). These stations cover the largest part of Kampala city police services, spanning a population of (approximately) 1,680,800 residents. Citizens gave their feedback through talking to our team of trained data collectors situated at the entrance/exit of the police stations, who asked respondents to rate the service they received. In the same period, SEMA also collected feedback from citizens visiting police through other means (feedback devices, automated mobile phone lines), but the data gathered through those sources is not included in this report. Individual police stations received a total of 92 customized monthly feedback reports during this period, showing the findings of each month of citizen feedback collected. SEMA held regular informal interviews with police officers to find out how they have been reacting to these reports and the feedback presented.

Citizen ratings of police stations in Kampala

Most recent police performance according to citizens (Q1 2020)

Satisfaction Rating for Q1 2020

Waiting Time for Q1 2020
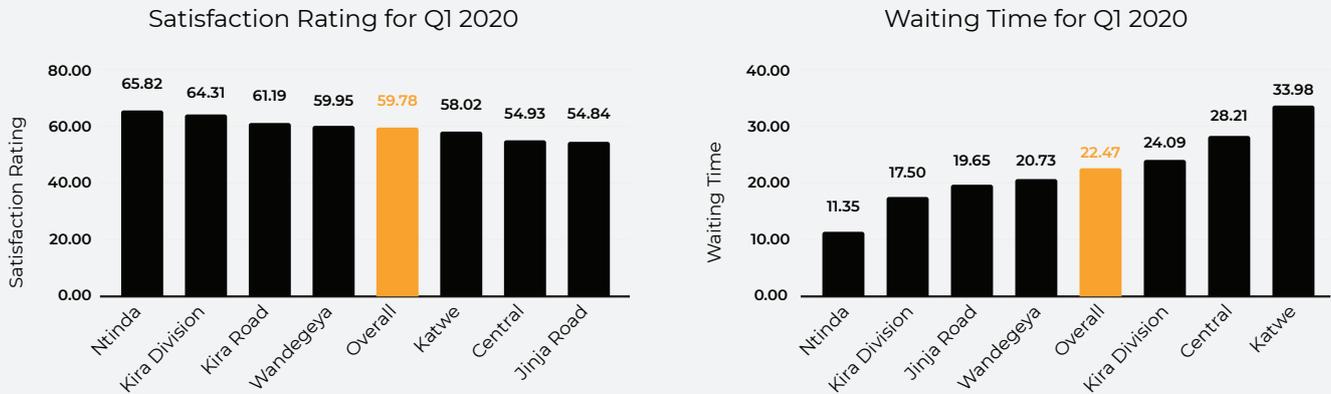
If we look at Quarter 1 of 2020 (January 2020 - March 2020), we see that right before the COVID19 outbreak the average satisfaction score for all police stations was 59.78 out of a possible score of 100. Meanwhile, the average waiting time during this period was 22.47 minutes across all police stations.

There were three police stations which scored below the overall average of 59.78, with Jinja Road scoring the lowest overall with a satisfaction score of just 54.83. Ntinda was the highest rated at 65.82 out of 100, followed closely by Kira Division. In terms of waiting time, Katwe Police Station had the longest overall waiting time of 33.98 minutes of waiting for a citizen before she/he was helped. The remaining stations were able to keep average waiting times under 30 minutes, with Ntinda being the best performer with an average waiting time of 11.35 minutes and Kira Road the next best with a waiting time of 17.50 minutes.

Performance improvements according to citizens in one year (2019-2020)

Satisfaction Comparison for Q1 2019 and Q1 2020

Average Increase in Satisfaction from Q1 2019 Q1 2020
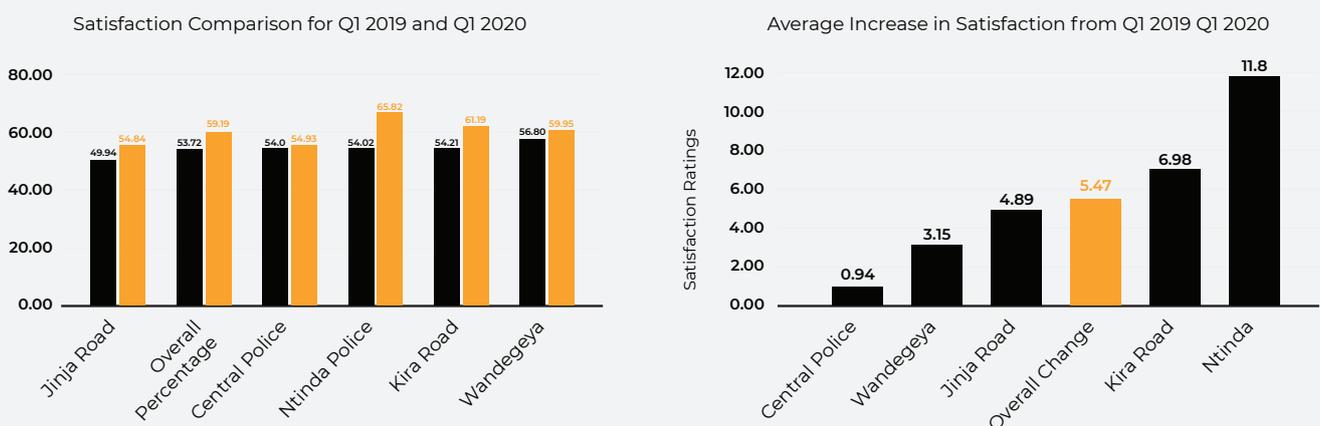
At 5 of the 7 stations where SEMA has collected citizen feedback, we have been able to track satisfaction ratings and waiting times for over one year, which allows us to directly compare the satisfaction ratings of Q1 2019 and Q1 2020. Our first observation is that every single police station saw an improvement in performance over this time period. Ntinda Police Station saw the most improvement, gaining 11.80 points in a year, which is a key reason it earned the (citizen) award of 'Police Station of the Year 2019'.

Except for Ntinda Police Station, which is a police post, all the police stations where SEMA measured citizen satisfaction serve extremely busy locations and work as regional police stations. Because a small post like Ntinda has less traffic and is closer connected to its community, it has naturally shorter waiting times and less complaints from citizens. If we only consider busy (divisional) offices, then the Kira Road Police Station had the largest increase in satisfaction at 6.98 points in a year. Central Police Station saw the smallest gain at 0.94 points in a year. Central Police Station is located at the centre of Kampala city and has offices of police officers who oversee more than the divisional affairs. For many citizens, it is difficult to navigate larger police stations and to get their problems resolved easily and quickly, which requires individual attention to create strategies for further improvement.

Aside from such contextual factors, an increase in satisfaction at all police stations over the last year could be the result of a number of factors, including changes in staff, training given to police officers, or an increased focus on better service and facilities. Throughout the months of January to June 2019, SEMA's field team had numerous meetings with the police officers addressing issues raised by the citizens during their visits to the police stations, including waiting times, bribery and friendliness of staff. Some of these concerns were addressed by the officers in charge at station level when it was within their power and willingness to do so.

2 Six factors that may affect citizen satisfaction at police stations

In this section, we'll analyse different factors that helped some stations receive higher satisfaction ratings than others stations. By focusing on improving these elements, police stations with lower ratings can improve their performance in the coming years.

Citizen waiting time and absenteeism

By comparing citizen feedback about waiting times from 2019 to that of 2020, we can analyse the long-term effects, while also accounting for seasonal fluctuations that sometimes make comparisons month to month more volatile. Furthermore, through discussions held with officers in charge at the police stations, we saw that the average citizen waiting time was a factor that they wished to focus on.

Average Change in waiting time from Q1 2019 and Q1 2020

| Station	Value
Ntinda Police	-9.47
Kira Road	1.4
Average Waiting Time	2.49
Jinja Road	2.61
Wandegeya	4.12
Central Police	12.25
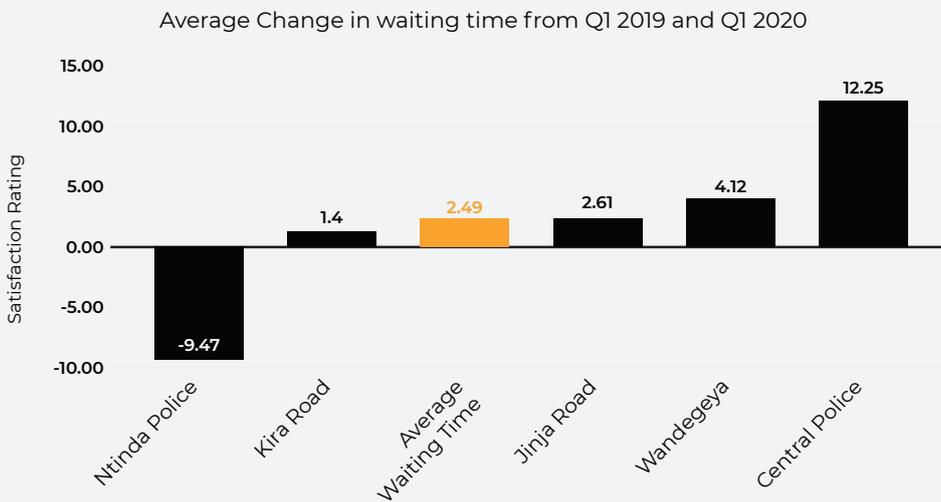
Looking at the results in the graph, we see that the average waiting time decreased at Ntinda station by nearly 10 minutes, while citizens visiting other locations experienced longer waiting times than in 2019. In particular, the average waiting time for citizens visiting Central Police Station increased by 12 minutes in 2020 as compared to 2019. This is a big difference and may have affected the overall satisfaction rate given to these stations, while at the same time affecting the police performance. Police stations should conduct further analysis on why these changes have taken place. In addition to having adequate staff, waiting times are also likely to be affected by staff motivation and frequency of absenteeism. Citizens often rated services lower when they found that the officers that they needed were not in office during working hours. This was especially the case when the officers arranged appointments with citizens but were not in office at the appointed times. Officers who do a lot of fieldwork should indicate clearly to their colleagues and citizens when they are reporting in office so citizens don't waste time visiting stations when the officer they are meant to see is not in. A reasonable goal for police stations currently struggling with high waiting times is to aim to serve citizens who visit a station in under 20 minutes.

Friendliness of police officers

Looking more closely at the results for the first quarter of 2020, we can get an idea for why stations may have performed as well as they did in these most recent months. In the graph describing friendliness of service, we can see that 83.55% of respondents visiting the Central Police Station said they received friendly service, which is the lowest score. The highest rate of people saying they received friendly service were respondents visiting Ntinda (91.80%). Katwe Police Station also performed well here.

Percentage of people saying they received "friendly service" during Q1 2020

Station	Percentage
Central Police	83.55%
Jinja Road	83.93%
Wandegeya	86.73%
Overall Average	88.14%
Kira Road	88.96%
Kira Division	90.77%
Katwe	91.51%
Ntinda	91.80%
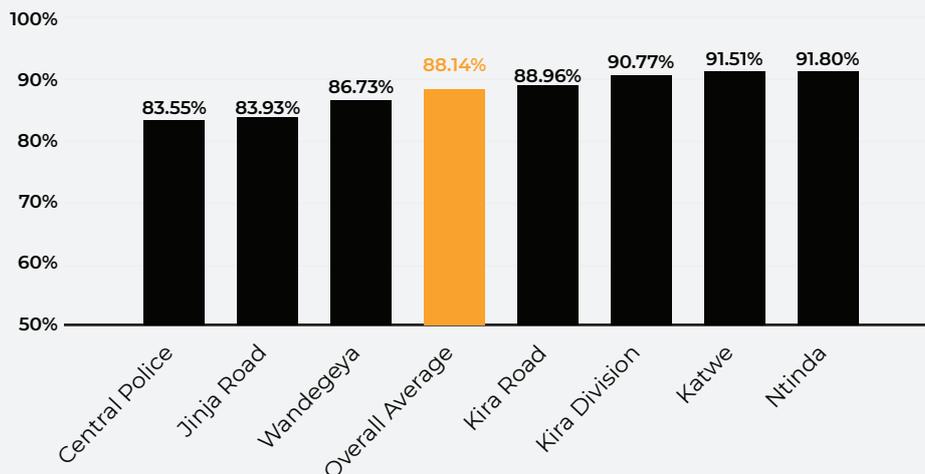
During analysis, we also considered whether respondents might be confusing receiving friendly service with getting a solution to their problem. Citizens who did not have their problem resolved, may complain about service being not friendly service, while in fact the officer assisting them was very friendly. However, after running a regression analysis (see below), we saw that those factors were scored differently and that friendliness of service resulted in the strongest improvement for the regression model. As a result, we can conclude that it's very possible for police officers at a station that has many unresolvable issues and having a long waiting time, to still be highly rated. It is therefore encouraged that police officers continue to focus on being respectful and friendly during interactions with citizens, even if the issue they are bringing cannot be resolved.

Likelihood of being sent from office to office

Another issue we looked at during analysis was the likelihood of getting sent around, where we noticed that the police station that had the most number of citizens reporting that they had been sent around was Central Police Station (16.78%). Meanwhile the police station with the lowest rate of complaints on this issue was Ntinda Police Station (5.08%).This could be because Ntinda Police Station is a small station comprising 5 office rooms, which is much smaller in size as compared to divisional police stations. Nevertheless, we see that Jinja Road Police Station was close behind, with 9.18% of citizens reporting that they were sent around. Large stations that have many departments and officers could improve their citizen satisfaction rate if there is a clearer reception at the entrance of a police station. We encourage large police stations to staff an attendant to help direct citizens to the correct office once they enter the station, rather than them having to visit various departments until they find the correct one.

Percentage of people saying they were "sent from office to office" during Q1 2020

Ntinda	5.08%
Jinja Road	9.18%
Kira Road	9.25%
Kira Division	10.77%
Overall Average	11.03%
Wandegeya	11.11%
Katwe	14.15%
Central Police	16.78%
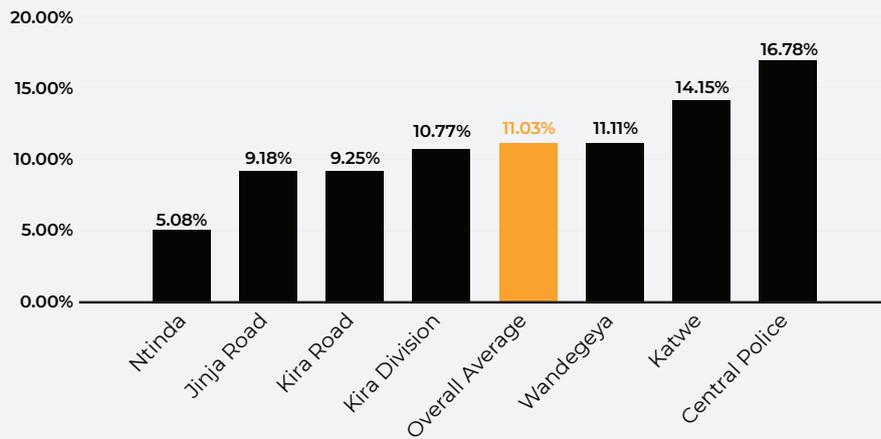
Police officers' level of knowledge while serving citizens

The level of knowledge displayed by police officers refers to how well they were able to explain the procedures of getting services from police stations to the citizens. Many times citizens felt that they were uncertain of what they needed in order to effectively receive police services. In situations when the officers explained this to the citizens, they were often rated higher than when the officers did not explain procedures adequately. This also applied to cases where citizens needed information about ongoing cases as well as suspects being detained. Police officers who were clear on the investigation proceedings were appreciated by citizens, and this contributed to satisfaction rating citizens gave to police stations they visited.

Attempts to charge citizens for free services

This was present at all the police stations where SEMA collected feedback and in all the major departments that received large numbers of citizens. This factor can be viewed from two angles:

Police officers on many occasions requested for some kind of token in order to prioritize the citizen's case by paying a "fee" in cash, rather than through a bank payment. This was mentioned most often by citizens who were visiting the traffic and charge office departments. Some citizens recognized this as corruption, while others simply could not differentiate the services they were meant to pay for from those that they were entitled to receive for free.

Interestingly, we found that paying for services was usually not the biggest concern for citizens. Many times citizens felt that this was a minor drawback to the generally good service that they received and was especially for citizens who required a one time service like obtaining a police letter. However, to citizens who had long standing cases, this was a big concern as they often paid bigger sums of money. In general, stations that had higher (reported) corruption rates were affected in their overall satisfaction rates. For example, Ntinda Police Station, which was exemplary in many aspects and of service delivery had the highest reported corruption rates. They were however able to lower their bribery rate from 25% to 5% between January and June 2019, which greatly improved the station's performance.

The environment of the police station

Though the environment was a less common concern than other factors already mentioned, a number of citizens felt that the cleanliness and general layout of the police station was an important factor towards good service delivery. This was especially the case with the waiting area or the lack of one. Police stations like Ntinda Police Station and Central Police Station, which had few seats in their waiting areas relative to the number of citizens they had to serve, were often advised to work on this issue. To deal with this situation, Ntinda Police Station added seats to their waiting area, while Central Police Station worked on the amount of time citizens had to spend in the waiting area before moving to the departments to be assisted. They tried to ensure that the number of citizens waiting to receive services did not overwhelm the capacity of the waiting area. This had an effect on the overall satisfaction rate of police stations and can easily be addressed at other police stations to improve their performance.

Data verification

To verify that our recommendations are meaningful and that results are statistically significant we also ran a regression on all 7 participating stations during Q1 2020, with a model that gave the best fit for the variables collected. The results show that in terms of adding to a respondents satisfaction, **the most crucial factor was having a friendly staff (adding on average 23.19 points to a client's satisfaction)** followed by having their problem resolved (adding 14.28 points). Meanwhile, being sent around office to office was the most likely to result in a client being dissatisfied (losing 8.10 points as a result) and with long waiting times results in a client losing 1 point of satisfaction for every 10 minutes of waiting.

Title: Regression Analysis of factors influencing satisfaction at police stations

lm(formula = satisfaction ~ waiting_time + return_times + friendly_yn + resolved_yn + waiting_area_yn + sent_around_yn)

Residuals:				
Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-70.108	-16.641	4.173	8.908	54.708

Coefficients:	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)	27.0401	2.2712	11.906	< 2e-16 ***
waiting_time	-0.1013	0.0214	-4.737	2.40e-06 ***
return_times	-0.6180	0.2452	-2.520	0.011852 *
friendly_ynYes	23.1829	1.9654	11.796	< 2e-16 ***
resolved_ynYes	14.2820	1.2322	11.590	< 2e-16 ***
waiting_area_ynYes	6.8287	1.8092	3.774	0.000167 ***
sent_around_ynYes	-8.1011	1.8943	-4.277	2.03e-05 ***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 20.16 on 1351 degrees of freedom

Multiple R-squared: 0.3364,   Adjusted R-squared: 0.3334

F-statistic: 114.1 on 6 and 1351 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

How departments within police stations affect the station's performance

One of the best ways for police stations to improve their satisfaction ratings is to focus on improving particular departments which account for a large proportion of their overall visits, or by focusing on their lowest rated departments as a starting point for improvement. Looking at the chart below, we can see that the services which receive the most citizens may vary per police station.

Distribution of case loads at police stations Q1 2020
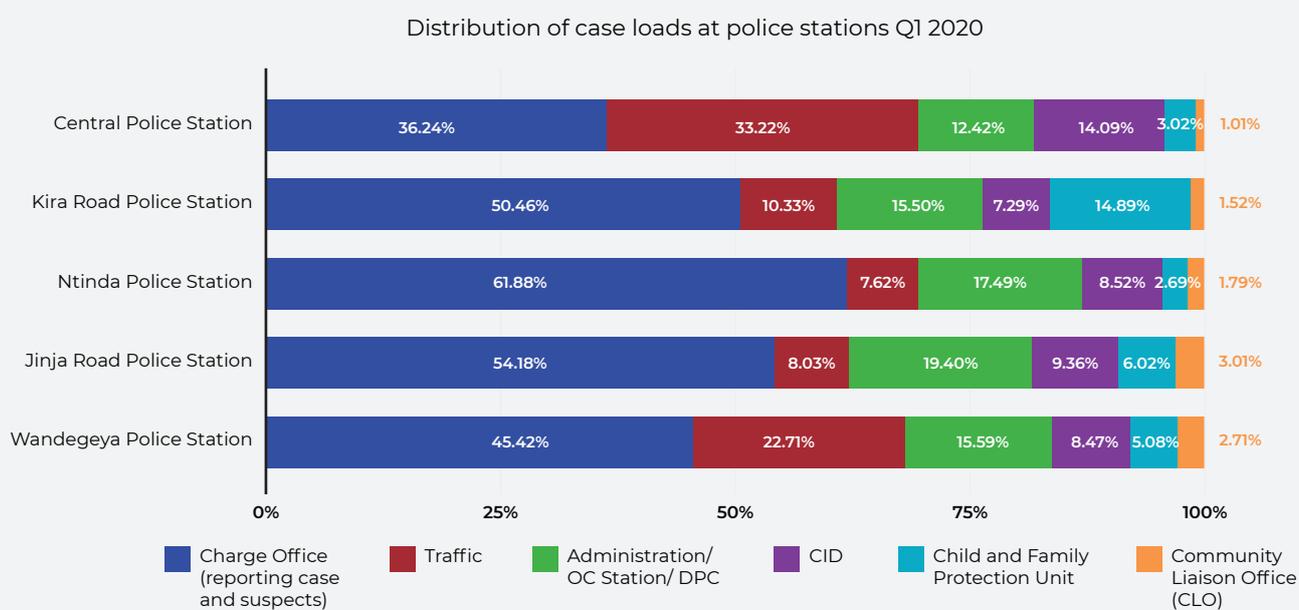
Despite these variations, there is nevertheless a clear trend showing the charge office receiving the largest caseload at all stations, regardless of size or location. In some cases, it accounts for over 50% of the visits. As such, it is the most likely candidate for police stations to target if they wish to improve their overall scores. Traffic is also a fairly large department at some stations, especially at the Central Police Station and Wandegeya Police Station, where it accounts for 33.22% and 22.71% of all visits. The administrative office is also usually fairly large, consistently handling 12-20% of cases at all stations.

The impact of improving one department

	Overall Average	Central Police Station	Kira Road Police Station	Ntinda Police Station	Jinja Road Police Station	Wandegeya Police Station
Change in citizen satisfaction at charge offices across all police stations						
Charge Office Q1-2019	52.19	53.57	50.91	52.73	46.97	57.64
Charge Office Q1-2020	57.84	55.79	57.83	65.58	53.40	56.90
Change in Charge Office Ratings	5.65	2.22	6.92	12.85	6.43	-0.74

Looking at the changes in ratings from Q1 2019 to Q1 2020 for charge office departments across all police stations, we see that the two stations that made the largest improvement in the charge office are also the ones most improved overall (Ntinda and Kiira Road). At the same time, the two stations that improved least throughout 2019, were also the ones that made least improvement to their charge office, with the Wandegeya Charge Office even reporting a drop in satisfaction. This shows that focusing on the charge office for service improvements can have a big effect on the overall performance of the police station in the eyes of the citizens.

A similar pattern can be detected at the Traffic department, which receives the lowest ratings across all stations. However, Ntinda and Jinja Road made the biggest improvements in this department (increasing the scores by 10.16 points and 9.21 points respectively), while the stations with the biggest amount of citizens visiting the traffic department decreased their satisfaction (CPS saw a drop of 2.35 points, while Wandegeya's score dropped by 0.5 points for citizens visiting the traffic department). Further discussing why these changes took place at these stations could help lower performing stations builds strategies to improve in the future.

Average citizen satisfaction based on departments/cases reported (Q1 2020)					
Traffic	Charge Office (reporting case and suspects)	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	Child and Family Protection Unit	Administration / OC Station / DPC	Community Liaison Office (CLO)
54.94	58.21	59.59	62.80	63.94	64.71

Across all stations, the Community Liaison Office (64.71%) and Administration Department (63.92%) are rated the highest of all departments and thus helped improve the overall score of most stations. However, many of them are not very large departments and thus not the departments to be targeted for improvement. As mentioned in the previous sections, traffic and charge office are the most likely candidates for improvement not only due to size of the department but also due to their relative underperformance.

Spotlight Analysis: Kira Road Police Station

Kira Road Police Station is a divisional police station that we have been working with since 2018 and has shown steady improvement in service delivery over the last two years. We awarded the station office of the year 2018 for its outstanding performance and officers' dedication towards improving the ways in which they served citizens. In the year 2019, the police station had an average citizen satisfaction rating of 54.21% for Q1, this improved to 61.19% average citizen satisfaction during Q1 in 2020. Below we show an in-depth look at how Kira Road was able to improve its service to citizens.

	Department	# of cases	Satisfaction Score
2019 Q1	Overall Average	386	54.21
	Traffic	52	56.25
	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	108	53.94
	Community Liaison Office (CLO)	2	37.50
	Administration / OC Station / DPC	42	62.50
	Charge Office (reporting case and suspects)	165	50.91
	Child and Family Protection Unit	17	63.24
2020 Q1	Overall Average	335	61.19
	Traffic	34	63.97
	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	24	56.25
	Community Liaison Office (CLO)	5	75.00
	Administration / OC Station / DPC	51	69.12
	Charge Office (reporting case and suspects)	166	57.83
	Child and Family Protection Unit	49	64.29
Change	Overall Change	-51	6.98
	Traffic	-18	7.72
	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	-84	2.31
	Community Liaison Office (CLO)	+3	37.50
	Administration / OC Station / DPC	+9	6.62
	Charge Office (reporting case and suspects)	+1	6.92
	Child and Family Protection Unit	32	1.05

We can see that in 2019, the charge office saw the biggest caseload, while receiving poor ratings

In 2020, the amount of cases stayed consistent, but ratings improved

The criminal investigation department saw a very large drop in cases, a 78% decrease

The Administration office ratings highly improved, which in conjunction with its size boosts scores significantly

The child and family protection unit saw a 188% increase in caseload

As SEMA began to deliver reports to Kira Road Police Station, we noticed that the Officer In-Charge of Kira Road Police Station was very engaged in trying to improve the station. He not only took personal note on information presented in monthly feedback reports about what could be improved, but also used them in team meetings to address the staff with the goal of pushing Kira Road Police Station to become a top performing station. The reports delivered to this police station were displayed on the station notice boards for citizens to see and to demonstrate the level of transparency valued at the police station.

In order to improve, the office addressed the following issues that were raised by citizens:

- Initially many citizens raised the issue of feeling disrespected by police officers in 2019, but looking at the data for 2020 we found this to be less of a concern.

- Citizens often complained of not finding the officers that they needed at the station during working hours. This was also an issue that the Officer In-Charge raised to his staff and, following a recommendation made by SEMA, we saw more incidences of police officers giving citizens their phone numbers so that the citizens could follow-up on the cases without having to come to the station.

- To follow up on negative comments from citizens on the behaviours of officers in the Child and Family Protection Unit, the Officer In-Charge requested SEMA to conduct in-depth reviews of citizen comments mentioning the department and to review citizen recommendations on how to improve that department.

"For the first time ever, my personnel knew there was somebody watching, there was somebody to compliment what they were doing or report if something is not right. Since the feedback is not only for Kira Road Police Station, we developed that competitiveness. Every morning when I am giving personnel tasks, I tell them that we are waiting for that scorecard (monthly feedback report) and that we want our marks to go higher."

- Officer In-Charge Kira Road Police Station

Conclusion

Summary

Citizens engaging with the police have a lot to say about what can and should be improved in police service delivery. In this report, we looked at the feedback of nearly ten thousand citizens in Ugandan who visited police stations around Kampala in the last 18 months. After closely examining the data across all of the police stations where we gathered citizen feedback, we provided analysis and findings in this report. We summarize our findings as follows:

1. The average satisfaction rating citizens give to police stations in Kampala in 2020 is 60% and the average waiting time is 23 minutes. Compared to 2019, average satisfaction with police services in Kampala improved with 6% (from 54% to 60%). All individual police stations saw at least some improvement in satisfaction compared to 2019. Ntinda Station saw the highest increase of 12%, while Central Police Station saw the lowest increase of 1%.

2. Average waiting time, friendliness of police officers, likelihood of being sent around, how knowledgeable officers are, bribery incidences and the environment of an office are the most important factors that proved to be strongly associated with overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Friendliness of staff is the single most predictor of satisfaction, with "yes" response on friendliness predicting an increase of 23.18 points above a "no" response for the same question.

3. Department performance can strongly affect the overall results of a police station. In general, the charge office receives the most citizens and can affect the overall satisfaction rates of a station.

Summary of performance of police stations in Kampala according to citizens							
	Kira Road	CPS	Katwe	Jinja Road	Wandegeya	Kira Division	Ntinda
Nr of citizen voices considered	1720	1420	318	1856	1896	325	1557
Most recent rank by score (Q1 2020)	3	6	5	7	4	2	1
Improvement over last year	Good	Poor	-	Average	Average	-	Very good
Waiting time decrease	Very good	Poor	-	Average	Average	-	Very good
Friendliness of staff	Fair	Good	Very good	Fair	Good	Very good	Very good
Likelihood to being sent around	Low	High	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Very low
Av score of charge office	54.39%	54.65%	55.84%	51.25%	56.8%	63.9%	55.93%

Questions for further reflection

Although our analysis delivers findings on what changes took place, our analysis cannot say why these changes took place with certainty. To do this, we need to reflect on how individual police stations (and the police as a whole) have changed the services they provide and why these changes took place. These questions can help readers of this report to further reflect on possible causes for the changes and possible actions to further improve service:

- *What was different about police service delivery in Q1 2020 that was not present in Q1 2019?*

- *What changes were made through the year that affected waiting times at the police stations?*

- *What improvements can be made to improve citizen satisfaction at Central Police Station and Jinja Road Police Station?*

- *What can other police stations in Uganda learn from these findings by using examples from high-performing stations like Kira Road Police?*

Recommendations

Citizen feedback gives strong indications of how police stations can improve their performance. We hope that the Uganda Police Force and the Justice Law and Order Sector will pick up on the results of this report to inform their strategy for performance improvement. Based on the data we analysed, we provide the following recommendations:

1. All police stations should focus on making their front-end staff more friendly, receptive and knowledgeable about standard police procedures.

2. Big police stations should make it easier for citizens to navigate the station and to help them find the right officer, thereby reducing the likelihood of being sent around from office to office and the amount of time citizens end up waiting.

3. Efforts to improve a police station's performance should focus on equipping departments that interact with the citizens most often, such as the charge offices.

4. Smaller police stations (posts) may be better positioned to serve their communities, and could lift the overall image of the police if equipped well.

5. Effective leadership at each police station that is driven towards improving the nature of service delivery is key in achieving results over time. Officers in charge should be empowered to improve their station and be there for at least one year to lead changes that can improve an overall station's performance.

SEMA

Do you have any questions about this report or want to learn more about SEMA? Contact us via info@talkosema.org, visit www.talktosema.org or follow us on social media @talktosema