



July - December 2024



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WHO is supporting affected districts to activate district taskforces to oversee the overall mpox response.

“As WHO, we remain fully committed to supporting Uganda through this crisis, and towards building a resilient health system capable of responding to public health threats such as mpox into the future.”

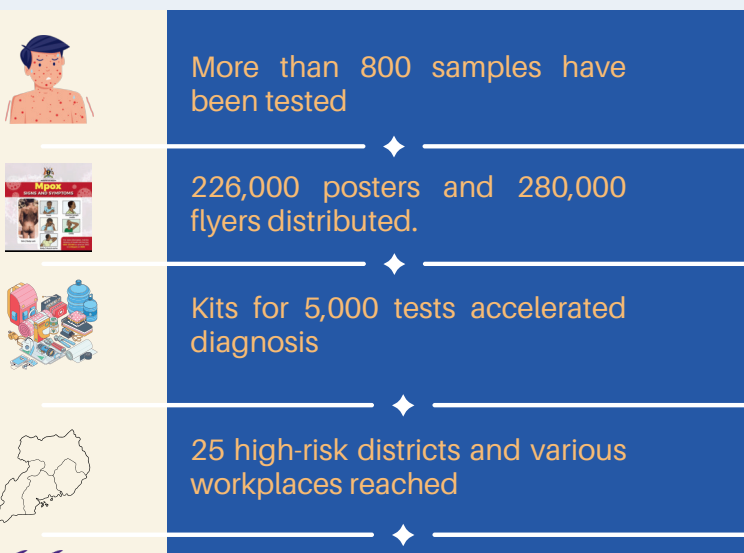
Dr Charles Njuguna, Acting WHO Representative in Uganda.

Reinforcing outbreak response systems to curb mpox in Uganda



Uganda's proactive response to the mpox outbreak has been pivotal in controlling the spread of the virus. With 51 confirmed cases reported across 11 districts as of October 2, 2024, health authorities have strengthened measures like surveillance, testing, and public awareness campaigns. WHO supported with training, resources, and data systems for effective contact tracing.

Risk communication efforts have engaged communities, disseminated educational materials, and reduced stigma. Survivors like Godwin Asimwe and Esther Kisakye emphasize the importance of hygiene and early medical intervention. As of now, more than 800 samples have been tested, and advanced digital tools have improved case management.



“ Along with the physical pain, I experienced a lot of stigma, especially from work colleagues. I got the reassurance I so desperately needed from WHO and the field teams that come to check on me” Kisakye

Tools like GoData improved tracking for 263 contacts. Community outreach and survivor stories highlight prevention, stigma reduction, and resilience.

WHO remains committed to strengthening Uganda's health system to tackle public health threats effectively.

[Read more](#)

Kenya, Uganda cross-border polio vaccination reaches 6.5 million children



Children getting immunized by a medical nurse in Mbale District.

“ Polio Vaccine is safe, effective, and provide good protection to our children. Each child vaccinated brings us one step closer to a world free from the scourge of polio” Dr Charles Njuguna, WHO Rep

More than 6.5 million children were vaccinated in a successful synchronized polio campaign between Kenya and Uganda. This cross-border achievement began with a coordinated launch in Bungoma District, Kenya, and Mbale District, Uganda.

This collaboration serves as a model for other countries facing similar challenges. By continuing to prioritize cross-border vaccination synchronization, Kenya, Uganda, and their health partners are leading the way toward a polio-free future for all.

By conducting these campaigns on the same dates, sharing real-time information, both countries ensured that children under five in these vulnerable areas were reached effectively, reducing the chance of cross-border virus transmission. cing similar challenges. By continuing to prioritize cross-border vaccination synchronization, Kenya, Uganda, and their health partners are leading the way toward a polio-free future for all. [Read More](#)

WHO, partners tip over 200 Journalists in Uganda on Mpox and Marburg

Uganda’s Ministry of Health (MOH), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in collaboration with the African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME) oriented over 200 journalists countrywide on the mpox outbreak and preparedness for a possible Marburg outbreak.

The orientation was conducted in different batches over a three-week period targeting reporters and editors at national and regional levels.

While mpox remains a significant public health concern in Uganda, the country has made significant strides in responding to the outbreak. WHO, with support from partners like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is working diligently to strengthen the different response pillars; coordination, surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, case management, risk communication and community engagement countrywide. [More info](#)



Journalists attending an orientation session conducted by WHO, Unicef and partners

“ Engaging with the media helps us to contextualize communication to promote a preventive approach for disease outbreaks like mpox and Marburg” Dr Daniel Kyabayinze, Director of Public health at MoH

“ The media’s ability to inform, educate, and engage the public is essential in ensuring accurate information reaches every community member. This helps to dispel myths, address misinformation, and foster a better understanding of mpox and Marburg” said Dr Charles Njuguna, the Acting WHO Representative to Uganda.

Empowering youth to combat tobacco in Uganda: Building champions amongst university student leaders to take charge



The WHO and MoH team addressing youth champions at the WHO Country Office

As part of a broader strategy to protect young Ugandans from the dangers of New and Emerging Nicotine and Tobacco Products (NENTPs), the Ministry of Health (MoH), supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), held a 2 day groundbreaking workshop in Kampala bringing together student leaders from seven Universities in Uganda to discuss the enforcement of Uganda's Tobacco Control Act 2015, control of tobacco-related harm & its control which includes a ban on NENTPs.

This workshop, which marked the start of a long-term anti-tobacco campaign, aimed to sensitize university student leaders/champions with the knowledge and skills to counteract the aggressive marketing tactics of the tobacco industry, especially its focus on targeting youth through social media platforms

Universities play a pivotal role in shaping the minds and attitudes of young people, and the Ministry of Health's decision to engage student leaders is strategic. 27 student leaders from universities like Makerere, Kyambogo, Nkumba, Islamic University in Uganda, Cavendish, and Kampala International University were trained to become champions of tobacco control.

As Uganda strengthens its efforts to curb tobacco use, the involvement of student leaders is seen as a critical component of ensuring long-term success. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with WHO, will continue to support these student champions as they embark on their anti-tobacco campaigns. The hope is that this initiative will not only reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among young people but also inspire other African nations to follow suit. [More info](#)



In Uganda, **1.3 million deaths** caused by exposure to second-hand smoke



8 million people die annually due to tobacco use



WHO and Germany donate IT equipment to support health sector digitization



Dr Diana Atwine, Ministry of Health, receives laptops from Dr Christine, WHO

“Ministry of Health is rolling out a comprehensive Electronic Medical Record system in a phased approach to all health facilities across the country starting with National Referral hospitals down to high volume Health centre IIIs.,” Dr Diana Atwine, the Permanent Secretary of the Uganda's Ministry of Health.

The Ugandan Ministry of Health has today received brand new Information Technology (IT) Equipment worth USD 222,594 (equivalent to UGX 865,029,221) to support the Ministry of Health (MoH) in the ongoing digitization of health service delivery and the scale-up of Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system across all public health facilities.

The IT equipment, comprising 95 laptops and 130 scanners, was donated by the Federal Republic of Germany, through World Health Organization (WHO), as part of their partnership to improve universal health coverage. The equipment will be channeled to the National Referral Hospital, selected Regional Referrals, and General hospitals.

Information technology is appreciated for being a vehicle for improving medical supplies accountability, the quality of health care as well as continuity of care based on a transferable medical record. [More details](#)

Ministry of Health, WHO and KOICA to Refurbish 28 Health Facilities in Busoga Sub-Region



Commissioner in charge of Reproductive and Infant Health, Dr. Richard Mugahi, launches the refurbishment of 28 health facilities in Busoga Region

The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a refurbishment of 28 health facilities in Uganda's Busoga sub-region. This initiative, which is a crucial step in service delivery is with the financial backing of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

The refurbishment is part of a five-year project titled Health System Strengthening for Improving Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) Service Delivery in the Busoga Sub-Region.

“ This refurbishment is a pivotal part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that every individual in the Busoga sub-region has access to quality healthcare, thereby reducing preventable maternal and newborn deaths,” says Dr Richard Mugahi Commissioner MoH.

The refurbishment efforts focus on critical areas such as maternity and children's wards, outpatient departments, expanding existing laboratories, and enhancing antenatal care clinics. Additionally, a new rainwater harvesting system will be installed at all refurbished health facilities. Selected facilities will receive a motorized water system to further manage water stress within the facilities.

By December 2024, the RMNCAH project is expected to have a profound impact, benefiting 560,809 pregnant women, 499,852 newborns, 349,327 school-aged adolescents (10-19 years), and 687 teachers across both primary and secondary schools in the Busoga sub-region. However, more pregnant women, newborns and adolescent girls are expected to continue benefiting from this investment.

Since its inception, the project has made remarkable progress. 100 lives are saved monthly through emergency referrals facilitated by seven Type B Toyota Land Cruiser ambulances procured for the region by KOICA and WHO. [More info](#)

WHO donates kits to support mpox diagnostics in Uganda



Dr. Charles Olara (MoH), receives mpox sample collection kits from the WHO team, led by Dr. Charles Njuguna, WHO Representative in Uganda.

The Ugandan Ministry of Health received mpox sample collection kits worth USD 15,135 (equivalent to UgX 56 million) to support accurate and timely diagnostic testing, which is critical in controlling the spread of mpox in the country.

The sample collection kits, comprised 5,000 swabs with transport medium and 5,000 dry Dacron/polyester flocked swabs.

The kits were procured with generous funding from the Federal Republic of Germany through the WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies as part of support to the mpox outbreak response in Uganda. The kits will be used by districts and healthcare facilities across the country to collect samples from suspected mpox cases and channel them to the Uganda Virus Research Institute for testing.

“ We encourage the Ministry and all healthcare facilities receiving these kits to put them to immediate use in the field as we work together to mitigate the spread of mpox and protect the health and wellbeing of Ugandans.” Dr Charles Njuguna, WHO Rep.

On 24 July 2024, Uganda confirmed two cases of mpox in Kasese district and subsequently declared an outbreak on 2 August 2024. As of 23 September 2024, a total of 25 cumulative confirmed cases had been reported across the districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Kasese, Mayuge, Amuru, Nakaseke, Kagadi, Nakasongola, Adjumani and Mukono. [More info](#)

WHO Uganda Recognized for Excellence at the 2024 Heroes in Health Awards



Dr Charles Njuguna, WHO Representative in Uganda, receives the Award of Recognition for Excellence on behalf of WHO Uganda at the 2024 Heroes in Health Awards

The fifth edition of the Heroes in Health Awards (HIHA) recognized and celebrated individuals and institutions making exceptional contributions to Uganda's health sector. Building on the success of the previous four editions of the awards, the theme this year was "Health Workforce Financing to Achieve Universal Health Coverage". This year's awards emphasized the critical need for strategic investment in health workers to ensure equitable and quality healthcare for all.

One of the highlights of the event was the special recognition awarded to World Health Organization Uganda for its unwavering commitment to strengthening Uganda's healthcare system.

The certificate, presented to Dr Charles Njuguna, Acting WHO Country Representative in Uganda, acknowledged WHO's exceptional contributions and steadfast partnership in making the 2024 HIHA Awards a success.

“WHO has been a beacon of excellence and partnership in our health sector. Their commitment inspires us to push boundaries in achieving sustainable health outcomes,”

Dr Jane Ruth Aceng Oceru, Uganda's Minister of Health.

The event took place amidst growing discourse on health workforce financing as a cornerstone of achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Despite significant strides, Uganda continues to face challenges in addressing critical health worker shortages, particularly in rural and underserved areas. According to WHO's latest findings, Uganda's health workforce density stands at 25.9 health workers per 10,000 people, significantly below the 44.5 required to meet UHC targets.

Dr Charles Njuguna, WHO Representative to Uganda, pledged ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other partners.

“Our partnership with Uganda remains steadfast. Together, we will continue advancing innovative solutions to overcome health challenges and create lasting impact,” he said.

As Uganda forges ahead on its journey toward UHC, the recognition of partners like WHO underscores the power of collaboration in building a resilient and inclusive health system [More info](#)

Dr Annet Kisakye Honoured for Transformative Work in Immunization



“ This recognition is a testament to the collective efforts of many dedicated individuals, partners, and communities committed to improving public health. She feels inspired to continue striving for a healthier future for all Ugandans, especially in this era where vaccine hesitancy—a well-known global threat—is contributing to the resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles. ” said Dr Kisakye.

The Government of Uganda through Ministry of Health (MOH) has recognised Dr Annet Kisakye, the World Health Organization (WHO) National Professional Officer (Routine Immunization) for her outstanding contributions to improving immunization services in Uganda.

The WHO family proudly celebrates her well-deserved award, honouring the significant contribution to the health sector over the past 20 years and beyond. [Read more.](#)

The award was presented to Dr Kisakye by Dr Sania Nishtar, Chief Executive Officer of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance on 19 November 2024 in Kampala. This was during the celebration of 50 years of Uganda’s Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI).

WHO Hosted a Special Meditation Session



UN in Uganda Staff participants during the commemoration of WorldMeditationDay2024

With over 15 years of experience at WHO, Dr Kisakye has provided technical guidance and support to MOH in several areas including strengthening routine immunization, introducing new vaccines, the polio eradication initiative, eliminating measles, strengthening surveillance, eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus including outbreak and pandemic response activities among others. Her work has directly contributed to preventing disease outbreaks and saving lives through vaccination in the country.

WHO joined by the UN Resident coordinator Mr. Leonard Zulu, hosted a special meditation session for UN in Uganda staff. This event highlighted the importance of meditation in enhancing both physical and emotional well-being. Experts emphasized how incorporating mindfulness meditation into daily routines, even for just a few minutes, can promote calm, focus, and mental clarity.

Dr Kisakye played a pivotal role in a campaign to save lives against Cholera infection when the country started vaccinating the people living in 13 hotspot districts as part of the national integrated comprehensive cholera prevention and control plan 2017/18-2021/22. Since then, no outbreaks have been registered in those districts.

Participants shared their positive experiences and commitment to integrating these practices into their work and personal lives. The session reaffirmed meditation as a powerful tool for stress relief and overall health.





[WHO Deputy Executive Director visits Uganda for Mpox response](#)

The World Health Organization Deputy Executive Director of the Health Emergency Programme, Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu, and the World Health Organization Africa Regional Emergency Director, Dr Abdou Salam Gueye, concluded a successful two-day advocacy visit to Uganda (24-25 October 2024).

During their mission, they met with Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, Dr Jane Ruth Aceng, Honorable Minister of Health for Uganda, Members of the Parliamentary Health Committee, the diplomatic corps and health development partners, the United Nations Country Team, and WHO Country Office staff to discuss mpox reonse and other health related issues.

“The WHO will continue supporting the country efforts across the different pillars of the response to control infection and prevent severe forms of the disease,” Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, Deputy Executive Director of the Health Emergency Programme. [Read more](#)



A farewell to Dr Olive Sentumbwe

After 29 years of dedicated service to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the people of Uganda in advancing health, a heartfelt farewell is extended to Dr Olive Sentumbwe Mugisa from all WHO Uganda staff.

She joined WHO in 1997 as a technical expert in reproductive, maternal, and newborn health in Uganda.

Reflecting on her achievements, Dr Mugisa leaves with great pride, stating, "The maternal and infant mortality rate has decreased from 524 deaths per 100,000 births in 2000 to 189 deaths in 2022. This is good progress, but we must accelerate implementation to meet the global target of fewer than 70 deaths per 100,000 live births."

We deeply appreciate her invaluable contributions to Uganda's health sector and her unwavering commitment to #RMNCAH. [Read more...](#)

Men's Health Matters

The World Health Organization held an awareness session on prostate cancer as part of the November campaign for men's health and well-being. [WHO](#) prioritizes staff health to foster a supportive and healthy work environment.



The power of partnerships

We extend our sincere appreciation to all our partners who have contributed to our work in supporting the Government and the people of Uganda. We rely on your continued support and collaboration in ensuring the continuity of essential health services, improving the health and well-being of people, and responding to the most urgent needs of the health sector. We can only meet our goals through the power of partnership.



Members of the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Malaria and NTDs, including 10 Members of Parliament, Children Ambassadors, and WHO team to strengthen partnerships for malaria elimination in Uganda.



(L-R) Dr Abdou Salam Gueye, WHO Deputy Executive Director; Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu; Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda; and Dr Charles Njuguna, WHO Representative in Uganda, following their meeting at the Prime Minister's Office.



The WHO team, alongside Mr. Leonard Zulu, the new UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda, following his courtesy call on the WHO Representative and senior management.



WHO Cluster Leads and the WHO Country Representative, Dr Charles Njuguna, with Norwegian Ambassador Tone Tinnes during a courtesy visit to Uganda in December 2024.



WHO Representative in Uganda, Dr Charles Njuguna, and UNAIDS Uganda Country Director, Jacqueline Makokha, following a meeting on collaborative efforts to support the government's mpox response.

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