



July - September 2023



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[Anti-tobacco initiative yields results](#)

"Since I quit smoking in 2021, I've been raising awareness about the negative impacts of smoking on health."

**Namudu Kareen,
Anti-tobacco advocate in Uganda.**

51%

Drop in Prevalence of Tobacco Smoking between 2014 and 2022



A group of tobacco Activists in Uganda raising awareness on tobacco consumption and collecting tobacco butts in Entebbe street.

TOBACCO IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Tobacco consumption has severe negative impacts on the health of users. "Smoking is the leading modifiable risk factor for noncommunicable diseases, including heart attack, stroke, chronic lung disease, cancer and diabetes

Dr. Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam,
WHO Representative in Uganda.

Kareen Namudu, a 28-year-old anti-tobacco advocate in Uganda, faced the harsh reality of smoking's impact on health when her lungs struggled to provide oxygen after surgery in 2020.

She started smoking at 20 to fit in with friends and was never warned about the health risks. However, her experience motivated her to raise awareness about tobacco's dangers.

Tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable noncommunicable diseases like heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.

Uganda has over 1.7 million adult tobacco users, with 13,000 annual tobacco-related deaths.

In 2007, Uganda signed the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, providing measures to reduce tobacco use. In 2015, the country passed the Tobacco Control Act, regulating tobacco products and their use.

This initiative has yielded positive results with smoking prevalence dropping from 7.9% in 2014 to 3.8% in 2022.

Uganda Improves Access to Hepatitis Testing, Treatment and Vaccines



Emmanuel Lutamaguzi, Founder of the Hepatitis Aid Organization

In a groundbreaking initiative, Uganda is making significant strides in the fight against Hepatitis B, a leading cause of liver disease and cancer-related deaths in the country. The Hepatitis Aid Organization's founder, Emmanuel Lutamaguzi, discovered his own Hepatitis B infection during a routine medical exam while preparing for a job abroad. This revelation prompted him to raise awareness and combat the disease.

Globally, 90% of people with Hepatitis B and C remain undiagnosed, resulting in 3,000 daily deaths. Uganda's Ministry of Health, with WHO support, launched a comprehensive strategy that includes free Hepatitis B screening, awareness campaigns, and treatment. With an annual investment of around US\$3 million and broad national collaboration, Uganda has screened over four million people, making it the first African nation to surpass WHO's 2020 targets for Hepatitis B diagnosis and care.

The success of the program emphasizes prevention through vaccination for newborns and encourages testing, education, and treatment for adults. It also highlights the importance of lifelong therapy.

Uganda's dedication to eliminating Hepatitis serves as a model for other nations, with WHO providing vital support, funding, and guidance.

This initiative underscores the crucial mission of ensuring health for all and reducing mortality rates associated with Hepatitis.

“Hepatitis B is the leading cause of death from liver disease and cancer in Uganda. There is a crucial need to raise awareness and help eliminate the disease.

Emmanuel Lutamaguzi



A patient being screened for Hepatitis B in Uganda by a medical officer

WHO and KOICA Handed Over Medical Equipment to Improve Service Delivery in the Busoga Sub-region of Uganda



Handover of Medical Equipment by WHO Representative to Uganda Dr Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam (fifth left), the KOICA country Director Ms. JiheeAhn (fourth left) and partners to Hon. Margaret Muhanga, the Ugandan Minister of State for Health, Primary Healthcare (sixth left) in Kampala. Credit @WHOUganda

The Ugandan Ministry of Health received from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) a package of medical equipment designed to improve reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (RMNCAH) service delivery in five districts of the Busoga sub-region.

With funding from KOICA through WHO, the medical equipment worth 1.5 million USD is intended to equip 30 health facilities in the targeted districts of Bugiri, Buyende, Kamuli, Iganga, and Mayuge.

This equipment is provided under the project - Health System Strengthening for Improving RMNCAH service delivery. It is in addition to the 07 ambulances previously donated under this same project to improve the referrals of patients in the Busoga region.

“This support is timely to strengthen our effort to end preventable maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent deaths in the country,” Hon. Margaret Muhanga, the Uganda’s Minister of State for Health in charge of Primary Health Care.

WHO Assesses Uganda’s Preparedness to Respond to Public Health Emergencies



The World Health Organization in partnership with the Ministry of Health in Uganda, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the East African Community has conducted a week-long scoping mission to tailor the country’s capacity to implement the flagship initiatives on Epidemic Preparedness and Response (ERP).

The mission aimed to raise awareness among government and critical stakeholders of ERP flagship initiatives, and to assess Uganda’s preparedness to respond to epidemics and public health emergencies.

The mission assessed the Ugandan healthcare system, health laboratories, medical supply chain, and public health infrastructure. It served as a platform to advocate for high-level investment in preparedness, detection, and response to public health emergencies.

Participants of the scoping mission in Kampala.

“Strengthening epidemic preparedness and response is part of our goal to support the country in improving its healthcare system to prevent and address public health emergencies more effectively. The findings of this mission will guide our collaborative efforts in the coming years” Dr Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam, WHO Representative to Uganda.

WHO's Milestones in Uganda over the last Five Years

Over the span of 75 years, WHO has been at the forefront to expand universal health coverage, while spearheading the coordination of global responses to health crises – championing healthier lives from conception to old age.

WHO's presence in Uganda spans six decades, a testament to our collaborative efforts alongside the government, the Ministry of Health, civil society, international organizations, and local communities. Together, we've harnessed financial, logistical, and technical resources, propelling Uganda toward significant milestones within the health sector.

Highlighting the accomplishments of the past five years, we achieved the exceptional milestone of eradicating the Sudan Ebola Virus Disease within an unprecedented 69 days.

In addition, a series of vaccination campaigns and public health interventions aimed at fortifying immunity and preventing epidemics have yielded remarkable results, with the eradication of severe sleeping sickness. Similarly, Uganda has been free from type 2 polio for the last two years.



Ministry of Health drafted a Manual to Address Alcohol-use Disorders in Uganda

“Ugandans currently consume over 12 liters of pure alcohol per year per capita. Surprisingly, less than 50% of the population consumes alcohol, which means that the few who do drink are drinking too much, a challenge that demands immediate action,”

Dr Hafisu Kasule, WHO Technical Officer for Non-Communicable Diseases.

Uganda, like many other countries, faces significant challenges related to alcohol use disorders (AUDs) resulting from hazardous alcohol consumption. This situation has a considerable impact on public health and the social well-being of consumers.

As part of an ambitious initiative to tackle alcohol-related problems, in collaboration with WHO, 17 addiction treatment specialists held a five-day workshop to draft a manual to guide the screening and management of people affected by hazardous drinking and alcohol use disorders.

The manual was developed in line with the WHO SAFER initiative launched in 2018 at the Third UN High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

SAFER is a technical package of cost-effective interventions for the prevention of harmful alcohol use. It has been developed to deliver health and development gains to meet global, regional, and national health needs, and to reduce the human suffering and pain caused by harmful alcohol use.



17 Addiction Treatment specialists at the training in Jinja, Uganda.

[Click here to enjoy reading more on WHO work in Uganda](#)



WHO Joins Other UN Agencies in a Football Tournament

WHO Uganda enthusiastically joined forces with other UN agencies in a spirited football tournament held in the city of Entebbe. This event not only showcased the unity and teamwork among the various UN entities but also underscored the importance of promoting physical activities and healthy lifestyles. Congratulations to the WHO Uganda team that participated and represented WHO.



Balancing Breastfeeding and Work

In observance of World Breastfeeding Week, WHO Uganda organized a special session featuring Ms. Catherine Ruhweza, commonly known as "Mama Tendo," to engage with staff on the vital importance of breastfeeding and offer insights into balancing breastfeeding with work commitments.



WHO Celebrates Two colleagues Service End

Last month, the WHO Country Office celebrated the years of service of two remarkable colleagues, [Elizabeth Malinga](#) of the Human Resources Department and Collins Mwesigye, Climate Change Officer who served the organization for 37 and 27 years respectively.

Your unwavering commitment to your work over the years has set a high standard for us, and the accomplishments we achieved together are a testament to that. As you embark on retirement, please know that you leave behind a proud team.
Dr Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam, WHO Representative to Uganda

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 in ensuring continuity of essential health services, improving the health and well-being of people living in Uganda, and responding to the most urgent needs of the health sector. We can only meet our goals through the power of partnership.



Delegents Scoping Mission on Epidemic Preparedness and Response (EPR) Flagship Initiatives in Uganda



Stakeholders' meetings on Regional Emergency Operations Centers in Jinja



Emergency Medical Teams Simulation training (July 2023)



World Patient Safety Day 2023 commemoration webinar team at WHO Office



Participants at the WHO (MR-MAPs) Workshop in Uganda 12-13 July



National round table dialogue in preparation for the 2nd UN High-Level Meeting

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