



UNITED NATIONS
UGANDA



UN UGANDA BULLETIN

5 GENDER EQUALITY



UGANDA LAUNCHES 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN IN KAMPALA

By Eva Sibanda, UN Women

OVERVIEW

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Performers during the National Launch of 16 Days of Activism campaign to end violence against women and girls at the Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala ©UN Women Uganda

Uganda officially kicked off 16 Days to end Violence Against Women and Girls 2022 with the National Launch in Kampala on 24 November 2022, led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD) with support from UN Women.

The launch was expected to raise awareness on the continued prevalence of violence and clarify the urgent need to end all forms of violence against women. The remarks shared highlighted the urgency and the community backed up that evidence through testimony. Government representatives shared their commitments to the cause.

Dance entertainment and videos played in the background illustrating the work conducted in Uganda to support survivors of violence and efforts to prevent all forms of discrimination against women. The UN Women Country Representative Paulina Chiwangu introduced the





Assistant Superintendent of Police Francis Ogweng shares feedback to the "What I Was Wearing" Exhibition at the National Launch ©UN Women Uganda

United Nations Resident Coordinator Susan Namondo to make remarks on behalf of one United Nations. The UNRC shared:



Despite the commendable efforts of the Government - including legal reforms, increasing access to justice, and improving services - high rates of violence persist. This is costing society. In 2021 alone the Uganda Police Force received over 16,000 reports of sex-related offences – one report every 30 minutes."

On the sideline of the launch, civil society organisation Frauen Initiative Uganda (supported by UN Women) held an exhibition entitled "What I Was Wearing." The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development concluded his remarks at the launch with reflections on the "What I Was Wearing" exhibition, noting: "We should not agonize, but organise." [when it comes to ending violence against women and girls].

The Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, spoke on behalf of the development partners and donor community in Uganda, sharing recent statistics on teenage pregnancy. The Chairperson of the National Women's Council Faridah Kibowa and the Honourable Minister of Gender Betty Amongi reinforced with figures, quoted by the UN Resident Coordinator, from Uganda Bureau of Statistics and emphasised the timely importance of this campaign.

The launch was a call to action and triggered thinking among participants visiting the exhibition and bearing witness to the remarks, the shared feeling was around urgency and need to amplify the cause. The participants highlighted the need for concerted efforts to take urgent action. The launch left participants asking "What Can I Do?" to make the world safer for women and girls. With conclusive remarks and commitments to continue work to end violence in Uganda, the campaign was officially launched with a symbolic cake cutting and signing of the Commitment Board. 🌍



Mr. Frank Mugabi, Communications Officer, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development moderated the day and made impassioned pleas to end violence against women and girls at the 16 Days of Activism National Launch at Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala ©UN Women Uganda



Left to Right Ms. Chiwangu, UN Women Country Representative; Ms. Juliana Akoryo, Director, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social DDevelopment; Ms. Elsie Attafuaah, UNDP Resident Representative; Honourable Betty Amongi Ongom, Minister of Gender Labour and Social Development; Ms. Susan Namondo, UN Resident Coordinator; H.E Jan Sadek, Head of the European Union Delegation to Uganda; Dr. Roswitha Kremser, Head of Office, Austrian Embassy in Uganda; and H.E. Maria Håkansson, Ambassador of Sweden ©UN Women Uganda

UNITE! - ACT NOW TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UGANDA

By Monicah Aturinda, UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)



UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Susan Namondo addressing the High-Level Symposium on ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Uganda on 9th December 2022 ©UN Women Uganda



Participants at the High-Level Symposium on ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Uganda on 9th December 2022 ©UN Women Uganda

The UN family in Uganda together with the Uganda Human Rights Commission and partners held a High-Level Symposium on ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Uganda.

The symposium which took place in Kampala on 9th December 2022 aimed to promote learning and knowledge sharing among key stakeholders and mobilize commitments for action against the vice.

The event supported by UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Women, and UN Population Fund (UNFPA) also acted as a lead up to the commemoration of the International Human Rights Day and marked the end of the 16 days of activism campaign against violence towards women and girls in Uganda.

While delivering opening remarks at the symposium, the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo called on everyone to sustain the momentum that has been generated by the 16 Day of activism campaign.



It has been an incredible 16 Days of Activism campaign, we have seen Uganda's leaders using their platforms to amplify the voices for women and girls across the country, calling for change. This energy must be sustained," she urged.

Ms. Namondo informed the guests that the United Nations in Uganda has prioritized a holistic approach

to eliminating violence against women and girls as articulated in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021 - 2025. "We have made progress through joint programmes such as the Spotlight Initiative and Joint Programme on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR)," she explained.

Globally and in Uganda, Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive human rights violations, with immediate and long-term consequences for its victims, communities, and society as a whole.

Hon. Jacklet Atuheire Rwabukurukuru, Commissioner, Uganda Human Rights Commission, in her remarks said that violence against women is not just criminal. It has long-lasting implications for the physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health of women. "The impacts go further, tearing the very fabric of families, communities, economies and nations," she emphasized.

Hon. Rwabukurukuru thanked the UN family in Uganda, and the Embassy of Sweden for partnering with the Uganda Human Rights Commission to support the symposium and called for need to strengthen advocacy and civic education programmes at all levels in order to end violence against women and girls

Sexual violence against women and girls comprises domestic violence, defilement, systematic rape, sexual and psychological forms of abuse as well as harmful practices, such as genital mutilation/cutting. In recent years, Uganda has adopted relevant policies addressing sexual violence against women and children, including the National Gender Policy (2007); the National Action Plan III on Peace Women and Security (2021-2025); the National Gender Action Plan; and Uganda's National Plan of Action for Sexual Gender Based Violence and Violence against Children 2019/2030.

As part of the event, two panel discussions were held, the first one on sustaining SGBV prevention and response in Uganda moderated by Hon. Dr. Miria Matembe, former Minister of Ethics and Integrity and Human Rights Activist. The second one was on the role of civil society in enhancing access to services and accountability for SGBV moderated by Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga Board Chair of Women's International Peace Centre. 🌍



THE SUSTAINABILITY CENTRE LAUNCHED AT 13TH CEO FORUM

By Michael Wangusa, UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)



The Minister of General Duties and Focal Point Minister for SDGs Rt. Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, with Private Sector stakeholders and development actors launches 'The Sustainability Centre' during the CEO Forum on 7th December 2022 ©UN Uganda

The CEO Summit Uganda and the SDG Secretariat, Office of the Prime Minister co-organised the 13th Edition of the Annual CEO Forum on 7th December 2022 at Méstil Hotel in Kampala.

The Annual CEO Forum was first held in 2009, as then the optimal response to the global financial meltdown of 2008 and still is, the platform for the captains of industry to debate and rethink the economy, to drive mutually beneficial partnerships to address each other's woes and to become catalysts for action and for change.

Over the years, the Annual CEO Forum evolved into a diverse and exclusive forum. The forum draws together over 200 leaders from all Uganda's leading private sector firms, civil society and Uganda's public sector leadership (who are there to listen). The Annual CEO forum brings together the region's best business and industry minds, thought leaders, public sector practitioners and development actors with a view to engender insights that influence and implement solutions to business and industry challenges and hindrances to economic growth.

The 13th CEO Forum, on the theme 'Beyond Sustainability – Strategic Choices that Matter' was also used to launch 'The Sustainability Centre' aimed at unbundling ESG: Purpose beyond profit. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing is used to screen investments based on corporate policies and to encourage companies to act responsibly.

Sustainability was defined by the UN Summit in 1987 as meeting current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to fulfil their own requirements.

The Minister of General Duties and Focal Point Minister for SDGs Rt. Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, was the Chief Guest at the 13th Annual CEO Forum.



UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo delivering her speech during the 13th CEO Forum ©UN Uganda



UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo appends her signature during the launch of 'The Sustainability Centre' ©UN Uganda

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IOM PROJECT TO TACKLE ORGANIZED CRIME ON LAKE VICTORIA

By Richard M Kavuma, International Organization for Migration (IOM)



Uganda Immigration Assistant Commissioner Marcellino Bwesigye speaks at the launch in Nairobi ©IOM Uganda

Nairobi - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has launched a sub-regional project on detecting and deterring transnational organized crime (TOC) on Lake Victoria in Kenya, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The project is expected to improve the coordination between national border authorities in the three countries to address TOC, enhance the management of Lake Victoria's ports, and increase capacity of frontline officials through specialized border security trainings. Launched in Nairobi on 14 November, the project will also improve engagement between border authorities and maritime border communities to tackle TOC and challenges related to facilitation of cross-border trade.

Lake Victoria, shared by the three countries is the world's second largest tropical freshwater lake. It supports the livelihoods of an estimated 40 million people in East Africa. Even so, it is faced with a myriad of challenges, including evolving cross-border threats and transnational criminal networks, combined with limited operational capacities and resources, and gaps in border security infrastructures. Hence this three-year initiative, which is funded by the United States of America Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

The benefits of the project will not just be felt in the three countries, but also in neighbouring regions that are especially prone to TOC.

"If we are to harness the benefits of Lake Victoria's "Blue Economy" and enjoy collaborative and inclusive growth within the East African Community region, a safer lake region, then building solid foundations today for tomorrow's improvement is a major investment area, which is the major proposition of this project," said Marcellino Ramkishun, IOM 's Regional Thematic Specialist for Immigration and Border Management.

The project will comprehensively assess the existing capacities and gaps in infrastructure, governance structures on Lake Victoria in and between the three countries. National assessments will identify urgent interventions to be undertaken at the specific sites.

In Kenya, the project will specifically carry out activities in Kisumu, Usenge, Mbita, Muhuru Bay and Sio ports. In Uganda, activities will centre around the ports of Jinja in the east, Kasensero in the south, and Port Bell in Kampala. In Tanzania, the focus will be the ports of Mwanza North and Mwanza South, Musoma and Kagera.

Still, the project will build the capacity of government officials from the three countries mainly on regional coordination, maritime security, detection of document fraud, and combatting TOC.

Border management authorities will develop a better understanding of how maritime communities perceive border security, as part of efforts to engage these communities as partners in securing the lake.

Parvathy Sankar, deputy director of INL Kenya, congratulated the three governments for taking on what she described as a challenging but essential task noting that "by taking shared responsibility and enhancing intelligence and information sharing we will be able to better protect the communities living along the Lake Victoria."

Marcellino Bwesigye, Uganda's Assistant Commissioner for Migration said, "There is need to improve surveillance and coordination in terms of law enforcement [on Lake Victoria]."

"The launch of this project bolsters efforts to deal with threats of TOC on Lake Victoria," noted Alexander Muteshi, Kenya's Director General of Immigration Services.

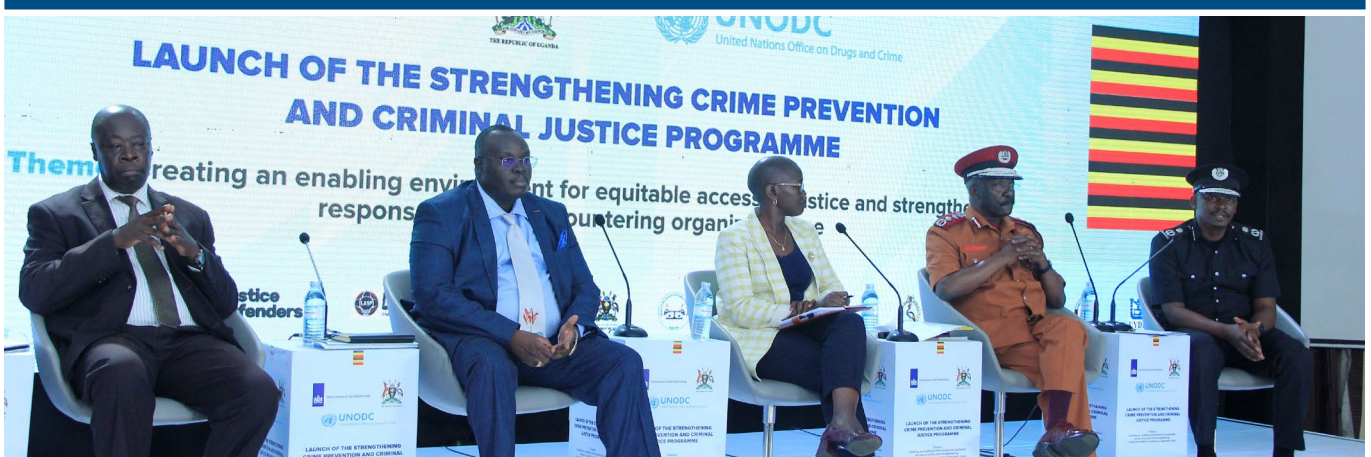


Enhancing the maintenance of machines, boats and other tools will help us make those kinds of operations along Lake Victoria," observed Msafiri Raymond Shogholo, from the Tanzania Police Force.

Sharon Dimanche, IOM Kenya Chief of Mission, said the project will contribute to enhancing close cooperation among the three countries through "facilitating regular interactions, joint activities, and sharing of best practices." 

UNODC LAUNCHES MAIDEN FIVE-YEAR COUNTRY PROGRAMME ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

By Henry Nsubuga Mukasa, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)



The Director of Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) of the Uganda Police Force, AIGP Tom Magambo (Right) makes a case for a digitized cases management system during the panel. The Commissioner General of Prisons, Dr. Johnson Byabashaija (2nd Right); the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Lady Justice Jane Frances Abodo (Centre); the Executive Director of the Financial Intelligence Authority, Mr. Sydney Asubo; and the Head Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court, Justice Lawrence Gidudu (extreme left) await their turn to speak ©UNODC Uganda

Kampala, Uganda 5 December – The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has launched a new programme to enable equitable access to justice and to strengthen responses to counter organized crime in Uganda.

The five-year, Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, a product of a comprehensive consultative process with criminal justice institutions, is funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Uganda to the tune of \$13 million (approximately 48.5 billion shillings).

Presiding over the launch of the programme on 25 November, 2022, the Deputy Chief Justice of Uganda, His Lordship Richard Buteera, commended the UNODC Programme Office in Uganda, for working with stakeholders in the criminal justice chain, to promote the rule of law and delivery of justice to the people of Uganda.

“This programme is set to achieve what is dear to the judiciary and is part and parcel of our mandate; that is, strengthening the rule of law and crime prevention,” Justice Buteera noted.

“Courts are bound by international instruments to which Uganda is a party and has adopted.

The judiciary in Uganda will participate in the programme and contribute to the objective of promoting effective, fair, humane, and accountable criminal justice institutions,” he added.

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Uganda, H.E. Karin Boven pointed out that criminal justice systems in Uganda, equally around the world, face many challenges like high levels of crime and violence’ case backlogs; and insufficient

financial and human resources. Typically, this has caused delays in the delivery of justice, overuse of pretrial detention and insufficient use of alternative sentencing options.

The Ambassador observed that the new programme is “comprehensive and multi-faceted” and that, with UNODC providing the relevant technical support, it will help Uganda to strengthen access to justice and enhance efficiency in the criminal justice system.

“The field of countering illicit financial flows – including corruption, money laundering and financing of terrorism and organized crime – is a new priority area for the Netherlands as these activities hamper the development of a country, undermine the rule of law and enhance inequality,” H.E Boven said.

Since 2017, the Netherlands, through a Joint Global Initiative implemented by UNODC, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre and United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and co-financed by the EU and United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, have been supporting the Government of Uganda to prevent violent extremism and support the management of violent extremist prisoners, while enhancing access to justice. The Ambassador said the new programme builds on the expertise this initiative.

Mr. Neil J. Walsh, the UNODC Regional Representative for Eastern Africa, stressed that the programme is about the UN supporting criminal justice institutions, policing, national security and the judiciary, to make Uganda, the region and the world safe from crime, terrorism, illicit financial flows, cybercrime and other threats.

“Crime and terrorism is profit driven... its profit orientated. What is the inherent value of crime? We shall work with the Financial Intelligence Authority and other institutions to identify those profits: How do the criminals and terrorists get value, how do they move it, how do they cash it, and how do they undermine society?” Mr. Neil stated.



That’s what we shall be doing because ultimately, economic security is national security: Its not about only crime and justice, its about developing the economy; it is about getting those criminal finances out of the illicit economy and back into your licit economy. That will make a real big difference,” he added.

He said innovative solutions that fit Uganda’s legal system and skill-set in the criminal justice institutions will be made, to improve the business processes in the justice system and create an enabling environment for equitable access to justice for all, in line with international human rights standards.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 of the 2030 Agenda enjoins the United Nations to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

A peaceful and just society is not only a goal by itself but is also a means to realizing many of the other SDGs, including those related to education, health, gender equality and decent work. Effective justice systems are central to enabling people, including vulnerable groups, to become equal partners in decision-making and development,” observed, Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo, the UN Resident Coordinator for Uganda.

While commending the Government of the Netherlands for the financial support, Ms. Namondo noted that the launch provided yet another further confirmation of how the UN system can work with development partners, Governments, civil society and private sector, to forge a strong partnership for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

“We look to this initiative to accelerate actions and investments focusing on deepening access to justice in Uganda, including through provision of legal aid, capacity building for criminal justice actors and supporting young people in conflict with the law, and other vulnerable groups, as a necessity for the achievement of the 2030 agenda, leaving no one behind,’ she explained.

The UN Resident Coordinator congratulated UNODC on launching its first Country Programme for Uganda saying this broadens the UN in Uganda’s engagement with the government.

According to Ms. Sharon Nyambe, the UNODC Head of Office in Uganda, the programme can be traced to the request made by former Ugandan Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu during a bilateral meeting with the UNODC Executive Director, Ms. Ghada Waly, on the sidelines of the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Kyoto, Japan. During the meeting, the Government of Uganda requested for technical assistance towards Uganda’s quest to strengthen its criminal justice system and ability to respond to organized crime and related threats.

The programme objectives include; strengthening mechanisms for court administration and case management, increasing access to quality legal aid services for vulnerable groups and the promotion of alternatives to imprisonment.

Others are; crime prevention among the youth, including prevention of violent extremism, and the protection of the economy of Uganda from illicit financial flows and money-laundering.

The launch was followed by a panel discussion led by representatives of criminal justice institutions, who identified capacity building, digitization, mindset change, and expansion of legal aid services to the vulnerable and the poor as key entry points for the programme. 🌍



The Deputy Chief Justice of Uganda, His Lordship Richard Buteera (extreme left) speaks to UNODC Head of Office in Uganda, Ms. Sharon Nyambe; UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo; UNODC Regional Representative for Eastern Africa, Mr. Neil J. Walsh; and The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Uganda, H.E. Karin Boven ©UNODC Uganda

CROSS-BORDER PEACE DIALOGUE HELD IN KARAMOJA

By Sophie Akera, UN Resident Coordinators Office (RCO), UN Area Coordination (UNAC) Team Karamoja

The peace dialogue between officials from the Governments of Uganda and Kenya was organized by the Uganda People Defence Forces (UPDF) 3RD Division Commander.

The meeting was chaired by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) of Moroto District Local government in Kobebe Village, Otisan Sub-county Moroto District on 9th November 2022.

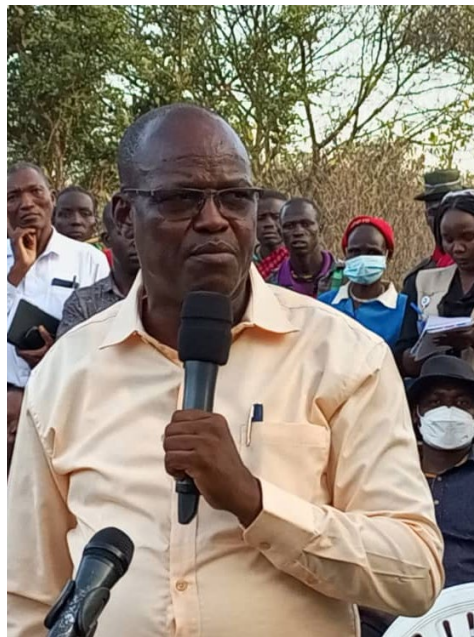
There were over 1000 participants in attendance. The participants from Kenya included His Excellency, the Governor of Turkana, Turkana County Commissioner, Members of Country Assembly of Turkana. The participants from Uganda included two Members of Parliament from Moroto, RDC's in Karamoja, Local Council 5/District Chairpersons of Karamoja, UPDF Commander and Police Force. Also in attendance were UN participants from UNDP, OHCHR and RCO, and implementing partners including Mercy Corps and GIZ. There were also community members from both the Karamojong and the Turkana.

The meeting was organised to raise awareness to leaders and the community on the resolutions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed by the two presidents in 2019 and the resolutions made by the UPDF for the purpose of maintaining peace and development of both the Karamojong and Turkana as they graze in Kobebe during this season that most of them have moved and settled with their animals and families in that community.

During the meeting the Turkana Governor thanked the Governments of Uganda and Kenya for having peaceful understanding to enable the Karamojong Turkana pastoralists to graze freely at Kobebe where their animals can have pasture and water to sustain the lives of the livestock during the drought period, which is currently being experienced in Turkana Kenya. During the meeting both parties reaffirmed their commitment to disarm anybody who found with guns illegally, warned both communities not to cross the border with guns. The Turkana leadership committed that they would not defend their nationals found with guns across the border, and those that commit crimes would be arrested and dealt with. 🌍



The Woman Member of Parliament Moroto District Hon. Atyang Stella gives her speech during the Peace Dialogue at Kobebe on 9th December 2022 ©UN Uganda



The Governor of Turkana, H.E. Lumu Lukayi delivering a speech during the peace dialogue at Kobebe. He warned Turkana pastoralists not to carry guns along as they come to graze in Kobebe, Moroto in Uganda on 9th December 2022 ©UN Uganda

The Sustainability Centre launched at 13th CEO Forum

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'I challenge all CEOs present to align your finances, investment, and services to deliver both profit and sustainable development,' she said.

'Any approach to environmental and social governance must and should be part of your growth and sustainability plans,' added Rt. Hon. Lumumba.

“Gone are the days when the focus was on profits at the expense of social and environmental concerns. We aim to create harmony in the 3 Ps, that is People, Planet and Profits,' said Dr. Robin Kibuka, a Board of Trustees of the CEO Summit.

UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo noted that private sector is a key player in reaching development goals in Uganda and there is need to build synergies between all actors in a whole of society approach.

'To maximize the potential of the private sector to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs there is need to shift from disjointed efforts to concerted efforts with selected sectors,' she added.

Ms. Namondo called for the revitalization of the Uganda Private Sector Platform for SDGs focused on specific development outcomes, for inclusive dialogue and to catalyse innovations. 🌍

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY COMMEMORATED

By Bernard Amwine, UN Human Rights



(Right to left) - Hon. Mariam Wangadya, UHRC Chairperson; Mr. Yves Mercier Counsellor, Head of Cooperation French Embassy; Ms. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Country Representative; Ms. Kahbila Mbuton, OHCHR Human Rights Officer; Mr. Crispin Kaheru, UHRC Commissioner; Mr. Sam Nsubuga, Chief Executive Officer, African Centre for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture (ACTV); and Ms. Franziska Bertz Head of Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP), GIZ ©OHCHR Uganda

Every year, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Uganda joins the rest of the world to commemorate Human Rights Day on 10 December – a landmark day when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly. The day offers the opportunity to amplify our common agenda and reaffirm the purposes and principles of the UN Charter that have guided the organisation since its founding.

In Uganda, the commemoration was themed on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and its relevance to the common person, with a particular focus on Sexual Gender-based Violence (SGBV) and access to justice. The commemoration brought together national and international partners, including the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), UNFPA, UN Women, and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office. The national commemoration took place in Nakawuka, Wakiso District.

In her remarks to hundreds of citizens and residents of Nakawuka, Ms. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Representative speaking on behalf of Ms. Susan Namondo UN Resident Coordinator expressed honour speaking at the climax of the 16 days of activism against sexual and gender-based violence and in the difficult circumstances of the Ebola and post COVID-19 pandemic. She further congratulated the Government of Uganda having undergone the Universal Periodic Review to assess the

progress made on the 2016 recommendations and government commitments to international protocols and standards, as well as a review in November under the Convention Against Torture (CAT). "The realization of human rights is progressive. In Uganda, we continue to see, and we applaud the Government of Uganda for fulfilling its international treaty reporting obligations in respect of the International Convention Against Torture and the Universal Periodic Review," she said.

She underscored the UN Secretary General, António Guterres's message that, "Human rights are the foundation for human dignity, and the cornerstone of peaceful, inclusive, fair, equal, and prosperous societies. They are a unifying force and a rallying cry. They reflect the most fundamental thing we share – our common humanity."

"As the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) is preparing for its upcoming Review in 2023 by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), the UN in Uganda stands ready to continue providing support, hoping that the UHRC will maintain its "A" Status as National Human Rights Institution at the end of the review. I take this opportunity to encourage the Government to continue providing the much-needed support to this Commission." Ms. Chiwangu urged.

The commemoration was preceded by a week-long mobile legal aid clinic by OHCHR key partner – the Wakiso District Human Rights Committee – to rural and peri-urban areas in and around Kampala and Wakiso districts. Funded by OHCHR, the legal aid services were provided by a team of legal experts – free of charge – on subjects like land rights, freedom of expression and access to justice. It is estimated that the mobile clinic legal aid services reached more than 5,000 rural people within five days through community barazas – gatherings. 🌍

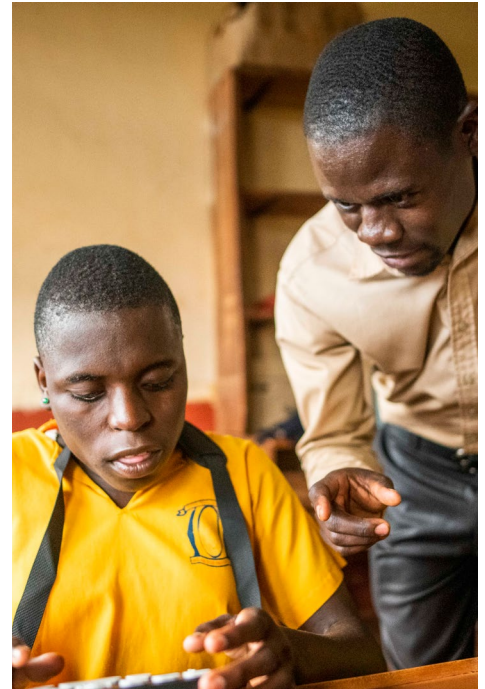


THEY MAY HAVE LOST SIGHT, BUT DIGITAL ASSISTIVE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES HAVE GIVEN LEARNERS A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

By Alex Taremwa, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Susan Atuhairwe (15) from St. Bernadette Primary School in Hoima listens to a recorded lesson from a Victor reader. St. Bernadette Primary school is one of 20 schools in Uganda where technology-based design has allowed students with special needs access to reading materials. A Victor reader allows students to record lessons and to access audio books so they can revise on their own ©UNICEF Uganda



Special needs teacher John Tiwaku from Spire Road Primary School in Jinja assists blind student Sarah Musasizi, 13yrs, on the Orbit braille reader. The Orbit reader allows students to have content loaded on to a SD card by teachers and use the unit without any live connectivity to a computer or the internet ©UNICEF Uganda

Habib, 14, and Suzan, 13, may be attending schools 280 kilometres apart, but the two pupils have much in common.

They are visually impaired top students at the Primary Six class at Spire Road Primary School in Jinja and St. Bernadette's Model Primary School in Hoima, respectively who have become experts at using assistive device technology provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with support from UNICEF through the Norwegian Government.

Unlike Habib, though, Suzan was born with sight until 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown when she suffered an "allergic reaction" that claimed her eyesight. Even when the schools re-opened, she could not return to her former school because it lacked the necessary infrastructure to support learning for children like her.

As a result, Suzan lost yet another year of education. Her mother was recommended to enrol her at St. Bernadette's Model Primary School – a Catholic-founded school in Hoima Municipality that has admitted blind, visually impaired, deaf and hard-of-hearing primary school children since 1920.

According to the school's headteacher, Sister Jacinta Komuhangi, Suzan is well on course to score a first grade in the national Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE), judging from her stellar performance in the school's termly assessments.

Komuhangi credits this turnaround to the support the school has received from UNICEF and MoES, including a consignment of digital inclusion learning materials and gadgets that she says have significantly improved the performance of children with disability.



We have brail machines, orbit readers, blaze ET, victor readers, laptops with text-to-speech enhancements, projectors on which teachers cast audio and video content so that no child is left behind. Those who cannot see can hear, even record the lessons and can playback later using the victor readers," Sister Komuhangi said.

St. Bernadette's Model Primary School has an enrolment of 1,351 pupils, 154 of whom are special needs children. The school suffers a vast capacity gap because only five teachers can ably integrate accessible learning materials into their lesson plans and use them to aid the learning of children with disabilities.

Back in Jinja, Spire Road Primary School is eyeing Habib and her classmate Arafat, 13, to carry the day in national examinations next year. Not only has the duo's performance increased since the school received assistive device technologies from UNICEF for children with disabilities in 2017, but their confidence in and outside of the classroom grown too.

The school headteacher, Agnes Ketrach Amoding, noted that the devices had reduced absenteeism and late coming of learners and boosted the confidence and performance of learners with disabilities.

In 2021, the school got four first grades in the PLE examinations, two of which were scored by children with visual impairment.

Scale Up

Since 2017, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), with support from UNICEF through the United Nations Promotion of Right of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Fund and later the Norwegian Government, has been developing digitally accessible learning materials and supporting learners with disabilities in 20 model schools in Uganda.

In conjunction with Kyambogo University and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), three of the four subjects taught in Primary Schools (P.4 and P.6); Mathematics, English and Science have been transcribed into accessible formats; audio (daisy format), audio-visual (sign language), and large print.

The textbooks' pictures have also been graphically enhanced with compatible software to meet the needs of children with low vision, while natural voices have been used as direct narrations to translate images for blind children.

According to Sarah Bugosi Kiboli, the Commissioner for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, at least three teachers from each of the 20 schools, including the headteachers, were trained to use digital tools to improve the learning experience of special needs children.

The Ministry has also developed a teacher's guide on assistive technology from which the trained teachers can train their colleagues locally on the use, maintenance, and storage of digital assistive devices.



Uganda is now developing the National Inclusive Education Policy in which digital devices for inclusivity and adaptation of materials for all subjects have been prioritised to increase equity and quality education for all learners with sensory impairments," Bugosi said.

The Commissioner further intimated that the Ministry has already rolled out a similar initiative targeting secondary schools under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project that capitalises on the gains and lessons learnt from implementing this initiative in primary schools.



Special needs teacher Specious Katusabe uses a laptop together with a projector in her inclusive class at St. Bernadette Primary School in Hoima. The laptops are loaded with specialized education software that optimizes classroom content for learners with special needs. In this case the videos can assist the deaf students with an accompanying sign writer ©UNICEF Uganda



Blind learners Dorcus Namuddu (left, 12yrs) and Habiba Sabiba (14yrs) and Arafat Kyabita (13) can now playback a recording of the day's lesson on their Victor readers ©UNICEF Uganda

According to the National Council for Disability, about 2.5 million children in Uganda live with one form of disability, yet less than 250,000 access some form of education. 🌐



NORTHERN UGANDA UN AREA COORDINATION TEAM JOINT MONITORING VISIT TO MUREYI COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEM PROJECT

By Collins Adubango, UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), West Nile/Northern UN Area Coordination (UNAC) Offices



A community member from fetching water from the tap stand constructed through the community water system support ©UN Uganda



The joint monitoring at the tap stand while a woman from the community cleans the tap stand area ©UN Uganda

The development of Mireyi Community Water Supply System was part of the UN support to Adjumani District Local Government in responding to the outbreak of COVID 19 pandemic in 2021.

Mireyi Community Water Supply System in Ofua Sub-county, about 9 kilometers Adjumani Town, is a hybrid solar/generator powered water system that draws water from a production well next to Mireyi Primary School. It provides approximately 40,000 liters of safe water per day and accessed by about 6,000 people including refugee/host community and pupils at Mireyi Primary School.

As part of the UNHCR/UNICEF joint project on community water supply system in Adjumani District, UNHCR provided the high yielding production well, and UNICEF supported in motorizing and in developing a reliable and safe water supply distribution network, comprising of twelve 3-faucet community public tap stands and one tap for Mireyi Primary School. Ofua Sub-county

Water Board oversees and supervises operation, and management of all water service points together with the tap stand committees in line with the government newly revised National Operation and Maintenance Framework. These committees are currently managing the tap stands and collecting water user fees for Operation and Maintenance (O&M).

Upon interaction with the stakeholders during UN Area Coordination (UNAC) Joint Monitoring visit to the site, it was noted that the community had a long history of clean water scarcity before the establishment of the community water system as expressed by the Parent Teacher PTA Chairperson Mireyi primary school. - Mr. Abiriga Jamal Buga.



I realised as a community; we started advocating for water since I was young. Now that you have provided us with this water, we manage the utilization of the water ensuring that there is reduced wastage and the community is very grateful for your generous support."

With UNICEF, UNHCR and other partners supporting the establishment of the Community Water Supply System, more could be done to improve on the livelihood through small farm irrigation in addition to the household consumption/WaSH enhancement success. It was however noted that backyard gardening with a small portion of land with little water consumption capacity is taking place with already two of the community members utilizing the water to irrigate their small gardens for income purposes but more pronounced under Livelihood sector. This greatly contributed to household income, nutrition, and sustainability of the project. The backyard gardening encourages the community to contribute funds to support the operationalization. These households pay more in terms of monthly contribution than other households.

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NORWAY, FAO AND WFP IN UGANDA ENTER PARTNERSHIP ON CLIMATE ACTION, RESILIENCE AND FOOD SECURITY

By Anita Tibasaaga, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme and the Embassy of Norway in Uganda have entered US\$4.7 million partnership on climate action, resilience food security and market access for 8000 farming households in Teso sub-region, with special focus on female farmers. The is line with the new Government of Norway Strategy on Food Security. The agreement was signed the Ambassador of Norway to Uganda, H.E. Elin Østebø Johansen; FAO Representative, Mr. Antonio Querido; and WFP Representative, Mr. Abdirahman Meygag; in Kampala on 2nd December 2022.



FAO Representative, Mr. Antonio Querido; WFP Representative, Mr. Abdirahman Meygag; and the Ambassador of Norway to Uganda, H.E. Elin Østebø Johansen during the signing ceremony at the Embassy of Norway in Kampala on 2nd December 2022 ©Embassy of Norway

West Nile UN Area Coordination Team joint monitoring visit to Mureyi Community Water System Project

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However, both community and the school management were cautioned to take care not to deplete the water reservoir since irrigation takes a lot of water that has not been included in the initial design. Though on a small scale, the water for irrigation may be utilized off peak time to avoid depletion; the Livelihood and WaSH sector leads were advised to identify the gap in the already existing support and ensure that waters is used for both household consumption and small scale agriculture.

From the broader perspective of UN intervention in Adjumani District, the District Water Officer Mr. Izakare Richard Kareode noted that the intervention of the UN has contributed to improved water coverage in the district from 70% to 72%. This in turn has led to improved sanitation coverage to about 97% in the year 2022.

The Refugee Desk Officer (RDO) from the Office of the Prime Minister, Adjumani, Mr. Jogo Titus, in his remarks, during a joint Monitoring visit to the project site, expressed being proud to be associated with the UN family. Seeing many UN agencies coming together to deliver as one UN, made him proud. Says the RDO. On behalf of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), he appreciated the support of the UN towards the development of this country and the support given to OPM and the department of refugees to respond to the refugee management and protection in the district of Adjumani. A lot has been done with the UN support that can't be kept unappreciated. "We are moving away from humanitarian response to development response and some of the projects that were seen are full testimony of what local integration means in the district," he said. He reiterated the commitment of the OPM in partnering with the UN from time to time and ensure refugee protection and management in the district. 🌍



UNDP LEVERAGES PARTNERSHIPS WITH RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LEADERS TO SUPPORT NATIONAL EBOLA RESPONSE

By Michael Mubangizi, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



The Minister of State for Health (Primary Healthcare), Hon. Margaret Muhanga (3rd from left); His Eminence Sheikh Shaban R. Mubaje, Grand Mufti of Uganda and Co-Chair Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (4th from right); UNDP Resident Representative Ms. Elsie Attafua (4th from left); KCCA Executive Director Ms. Dorothy Kisaka (2nd from right); Owek. Noah Kiyimba, Buganda Kingdom Minister for Lukiiko, Information and Cabinet Affairs (2nd from left); and other officials from UNDP, MOH and WHO ©UNDP Uganda

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Uganda has partnered with the Ministry of Health, cultural and religious leaders to scale up the National Ebola Response to curb transmission of the virus, minimize mortality, disruption of socio-economic and health systems and improve standards of care for affected persons.

Under this initiative, UNDP is also working with the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, Buganda Kingdom and Kampala Capital City Authority to strengthen public health risk communications and community engagement.

Provision of heavy-duty washing machines and incinerators to support Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) and deployment of specialist UN Volunteers to support the National Ebola Response in high-risk areas has been prioritized. A total of 20 technical experts who include eight Infection Prevention Officers, two Psychosocial Support Officers, four Case Management Officers and six nurses have been deployed through WHO to improve standards of care for Ebola patients, suspects and survivors and minimize transmission.

Speaking during a high-level engagement on “Leveraging Partnerships for Public Health Emergencies” held at UNDP offices, Hon. Margaret Muhanga, the Minister of State for Health in Charge of Primary Healthcare, commended the UNDP partnership with traditional and religious leaders, “We believe that people listen to their cultural and religious leaders and that’s why this partnership is very important.”

UNDP Resident Representative Ms. Elsie Attafua underscored the role of traditional and religious leaders in influencing behavioral changes and called for innovative ways of enhancing preparedness and response to emergencies,

“We are confronting a perfect storm of evolving threats and growing uncertainty where Uganda has to find innovative ways to build system resilience to tackling impacts of multiple crises at a go – Ebola, COVID-19 pandemic, flooding, drought, hunger, rising prices, etcetera,” she said.



The Minister of State for Health (Primary Healthcare) Hon. Margaret Muhanga (right) receives a dummy of a heavy-duty washing machine from UNDP Resident Representative Ms. Elsie Attafua. UNDP is procuring heavy duty machines to support the National EVD response ©UNDP Uganda

UNDP Areas of Support

Following the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease, UNDP repurposed core resources and secured additional funding from the UNDP Crisis Bureau to contribute US\$1,300,000 (about UGX 4.85bn) to the national response in the following priority areas: (a) Risk Communication and Community Engagement; (b) Strengthening EVD Response Coordination at National and Sub-national Levels; (c) Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) with a focus on EVD Waste Management; (d) Human Resource Support; and (e) Socio-economic Impact Assessment and Early Recovery.

Central to this support has been the mass production and distribution of Information, Education and Communications (IEC) materials through Buganda Kingdom and the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) structures.

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'DAY OF 8 BILLION' INTER UNIVERSITY QUIZ CHALLENGE POPULARIZES SDG'S AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

By Evelyn Kiapi, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



GRAND FINALE: Students of Bishop Stewart University celebrate after emerging winners of the "Day of 8 Billion" Inter University Quiz Challenge organized by UNFPA on November 28, 2022. UNFPA Representative Dr Mary Otieno (2nd Left) presided over the award giving ceremony at NBS Television ©UNFPA Uganda

KAMPALA: Students of Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara emerged winners of the 'Day of 8 Billion' inter-University quiz challenge during a live televised broadcast on NBS television November 28, 2022. The quiz challenge aimed at popularizing and localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Uganda as the world marked the "Day of 8 Billion" on November 15.

Organized by UNFPA Uganda in partnership with UN Communications Sub-group, United Nations Association of Uganda (UNAU) and NBS Television, eight universities from four regions in Uganda participated in the competitions that run for four weeks from the western region (Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) vs Bishop Stewart University; Eastern Region (Islamic University of Uganda (IUIU) Vs Soroti University); Northern Region (Gulu University Vs Lira University) and Central Region (Kyambogo University Vs Makerere University).

While officiating at the Grand Finale between Bishop Stewart University and Kyambogo University that was broadcast live on NBS television in Kampala, UNFPA Uganda Representative Dr. Mary Otieno stated how young people are the greatest resource a nation can have and are the key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal.

"The world has reached 8 billion people; but we would like to say, it's not about the numbers, but about the possibilities that exist with these great numbers in terms of quality, and what kind of world we want. And the only people who can make this happen is you, the young people," she said.

For instance, Dr. Otieno said young people can make the world a better place to live in terms of climate change, innovation and

better health by using their digital skills to create and innovate.



At UNFPA we are here to support young people, by delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every child birth is safe and where every young person's potential is fulfilled. We are saying you are the greatest resource a nation can have. Over 70 percent of the Ugandan population is young people, so you matter if you use that capital well. We do not want to leave anyone behind as accorded by the SDGs," Dr. Otieno said.

The "Day of 8 billion" presented a vital opportunity to draw the world's attention to the infinite possibilities of humanity to build a better world, with sexual and reproductive health and rights for all at its core. It was also an opportunity to spotlight UNFPA's leadership and programming on population and sexual and reproductive health issues. To this end, UNFPA planned a range of content and activities to commemorate this day and an opportunity to underscore the need to move the conversation from numbers to rights and choices. The inter-University Quiz challenge was one of the activities organized to mark the day. 🌍

UNICEF AND WFP BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OF JOINT PREMISES IN UGANDA: The agencies commit to a greener, more inclusive UN

Patience Akumu, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)



Ms. Dorothy Kisaka, Executive Director Kampala Capital City Authority (second from left) with Mr. Abdurahman Meygag, WFP Uganda Country Representative (second from right); and Mr. Munir A. Safiieldin, UNICEF Uganda Country Representative (far right) during the ground breaking ceremony for the joint office premises ©UNICEF Uganda

Kampala – On 13th December 2022, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) held a ground-breaking ceremony to kick off the construction of their joint office premises in Mbuya, a Kampala suburb.

From 1962 to 2000, Plot 142 Boazman Road, Mbuya provided residence for three senior UNICEF staff. The small rustic houses, whose aging tiles are testament to how long this organization that works to make the lives of the world’s most disadvantaged children better has been operating in the country.

As the organization grew and the buildings got older, UNICEF used the compound as storage facility and for back up office space. Driven by the increased cost of renting, UNICEF decided to build its own office premises, which would be more cost effective in the long term. And, in the spirit of the One United Nations, invited WFP, the world’s largest humanitarian organization that works to save lives in emergencies, to join them.

Situated on 2.8 acres, the premises will feature parking space, health amenities, gender-sensitive services such as breast-feeding rooms and green gardens. Special focus will be given to making sure the premises are energy efficient, making maximum use of natural light and using renewable energy sources such as solar.

It will also provide for sewage treatment, water recycling and rainwater harvesting. UNICEF and WFP have committed to keep at least 50 per cent of the lush green gardens and towering decades-old trees that grace the property.

“Today it is really a celebration as two UN agencies come together to fulfil the guidance from the Secretary General, have joint premises and deliver as one UN,” M. Munir A. Safiieldin, UNICEF Representative to Uganda, said. “UNICEF Uganda has been working towards positive climate action and with this new construction we show once again that we walk the talk. When we move into the premises, we shall be able to save on rent and operational costs. Money that should be spent on ensuring safe and healthy future for boys and girls in the country.”

The premises will also have full disability access and foster stronger ties between the two agencies that already deliver jointly on some projects, including that on school feeding and addressing malnutrition in Karamoja and providing food assistance to refugees.



A model of the joint UNICEF -WFP office premises that will be constructed at Plot 142 Boazman Road, Mbuya ©UNICEF Uganda



We are building premises that will reflect our values as an inclusive and environmentally conscious United Nations. The United Nations is already a great place to work, and these premises will create an even better environment for our staff – enabling them to deliver jointly on the UN goals while serving the most vulnerable,” WFP Uganda Country Representative, Abdirahman Meygag said. “Whether it is our pregnant and breastfeeding staff and clients or people with disability, we are committed to creating an inclusive workplace while minimising our carbon footprint.”

The premises are set to benefit not only UN staff and the people it serves but also those who will be directly and indirectly involved in the construction. As the project goes into procuring construction materials and paying for services, it will contribute to the national economy. It will create jobs for an estimated 200 people, including women, will be involved in both technical construction work and providing ancillary services such as preparing food.

“The Kampala skyline, this area of Kampala, will not be same. You are going to transform it,” Dorothy Kisaka, the Executive Director Kampala Capital City Authority, said. “We thank UNICEF and WFP for this important investment that will contribute to making our city greener while injecting money into the economy. We encourage everyone to build a greener Kampala. Thank you for being part of the solution.” 🌍

**3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING**

UNDP leverages partnerships with government, religious and cultural leaders to support National Ebola Response in Uganda

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Buganda Kingdom and IRCU speak out

Both IRCU and Buganda Kingdom have held media and community engagements and issued public statements rallying the public to adopt positive behavioral tendencies to minimize spread of the disease and debunking myths and perceptions about Ebola.



What we have here is an enemy who is mercilessly lethal and deadly. We, therefore, call upon the public to note that Ebola is real, has no cure and kills. Ebola should be understood from the scientific rather than mystical or spiritual perspectives,” reads a press release issued by the IRCU on 16 November 2022.

The IRCU leaders also urged the populace to adhere to the Standard Operating Procedures set by the Ministry of Health.

Similarly, in a statement issued by Buganda Kingdom, the Prime Minister Charles Peter Mayiga commended frontline workers and also clarified falsehoods about the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease.

“We should desist from the belief that the Ebola virus is caused by witchcraft and should desist from taking our friends and relatives to traditional healers; instead, we should take them to hospitals and health facilities because the Ebola virus is not caused by witchcraft,” he said. 🌍

