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NewsLetter

USAID LOCAL PARTNER HEALTH SERVICES - KIGEZI AND LANGO

Vol 3. Issue 001



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am writing to extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for the dedication, commitment, and tireless efforts the USAID LPHS Kigezi and Lango staff have demonstrated in their respective areas of operation. Your hard work and perseverance have significantly contributed to ensuring good health and improving the quality of life for the communities we serve in Lango and Kigezi Sub regions.

Recognizing Your Efforts

In the challenging times we face, your unwavering commitment to providing essential health services is nothing short of commendable. Your collective effort has not only sustained the healthcare system but also strengthened the resilience of our communities. Your ability to adapt and innovate in response to the needs of the people, often under difficult circumstances, is truly inspiring.

Collaborative Success

Our achievements are a testament to the power of collaboration and the shared vision we uphold for a healthier future for the people of Uganda. The synergy between our teams in the Kigezi and Lango regions has been instrumental in overcoming obstacles and driving progress. The dedication to excellence and passionate approaches are at the core of the impactful work being done.

Gratitude to Our Partners

I would also like to extend a special thank you to our partners, particularly the American people, through the

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), for their continuous support and unwavering commitment. Their resources, guidance, and partnership have been crucial in our journey towards achieving our health goals. Their belief in our mission and their investment in our communities have empowered us to reach new heights and deliver on our promises.

We are also grateful to the Ministry Of Health (MOH), District Local Governments and all the health workers we work with collectively to achieve all these results.

Looking Ahead

As we continue our mission, we build on the momentum we have gained and continue to strive for excellence in all our endeavors. Your resilience, passion, and dedication are the driving forces that will lead us to further success. Together, we can navigate the challenges ahead and create a brighter, healthier future for all.

Once again, thank you for your hard work, your commitment to our cause, and your unwavering support. Let us continue to work together in the spirit of unity and collaboration, ensuring that our communities receive the best possible care.

With deepest gratitude and respect,

Executive Director

Joint Clinical Research Centre (JCRC)

Dr. Cissy Kityo Mutuluza



MESSAGE FROM THE USAID LPHS K&L REGIONAL PROJECT COORDINATOR

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the volume 3 issue 001 of the Activity newsletter. The newsletter will provide you with a snapshot of some of our activities, achievements and major processes for the period October 2023 to June 2024.

With support from the American people, through the USAID, the Joint Clinical Research Center has been able to work closely with the district local governments in 15 districts and 1 city in Kigezi and Lango sub regions supporting comprehensive HIV and TB programs, implementing the USAID LPHS K&L Activity.

The efforts to avert new infections and stop HIV transmission in the supported regions, USAID LPHS K&L reached and provided 412,739 individuals eligible for HIV testing services with the needed services. 7,651 new HIV positive individuals were identified and initiated on life serving treatment. The Activity supports a total of 104,381 individuals on this life serving treatment with a 90% Viral load coverage and 96% of them with a viral load suppression. This support assures these individuals quality productive life irrespective of the chronic HIV disease condition.

We also support TB and TB/HIV programs in these supported districts. Here the team supports innovative approaches to prevent and control TB infections, identify new TB cases and have them access treatment. During the 6 months period of this newsletter, 4,390 new TB cases were identified and initiated on anti TB medicines. The two regions recorded a treatment success rate of 94% and a cure rate of 90%.



Dr. Namubiru Mary

We are very grateful to all our partners, stakeholders, Government of Uganda, district health departments, health workers and the clients in the supported regions without their support all these achievements would not have been possible.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Namubiru Mary
Regional Project Coordinator
USAID LPHS Kigezi and Lango

Leaving no one behind in the fight against **HIV**.

Batwa Community

As part of inclusive development, the activity works with marginalized communities of the Batwa in Kigezi region. Through enhanced availability, accessibility, and promotion of high-quality TB/HIV services, Kigezi has significantly bolstered support for marginalized communities within the Kanungu, Rubanda, and Kisoro districts. The project serves Batwa in 14 facilities across 3 districts with ART refills, viral load monitoring, TB preventive therapy, index client partner testing, gender-based violence (GBV) screening, as well as vital psychosocial and Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) support.



A counsellor visits a home in the Batwa community

Integrated Community Awareness, Screening, Prevention and Testing (CAST+) for primary prevention, control, and treatment of TB and HIV

The activity in conjunction with MoH implemented an integrated CAST+ campaign focusing on TB, HIV, malaria, nutrition, sanitation, and hygiene. Through this campaign in March 2024, 13,677 (9,486 in Lango, 4191 in Kigezi) people were screened for TB and 107 TB cases were identified and treated (83 in Lango and 24 in Kigezi). Through the integration, 2,865 children and adults (2,287 in Lango and 578 in Kigezi) also received nutrition assessment, 688 malaria cases in Lango were treated among others.



TB CAST+ Community Screening at Abia HC II.

Reaching communities with Home-based HIV testing services

Our efforts strive to support health facilities and provide index testing services to all PLHIV eligible for the services in targeted hotspots. At Acii HCIII, the team identified 2 islands with low coverage of HIV testing services. These sites were previously only reached with immunization services for children. This activity was carried out at Muchora Landing Site in Acii Parish, and 51 clients were tested for HIV, among which 4 people were identified as HIV positive and linked to ART.



Targeted hotspot testing at Muchora island in Acii parish, Namasale town council.

Building capacity of health workers in Device driven VMMC (Shangring)

Ministry of Health recommends implementation of surgical circumcision using the dorsal slit and Shang Ring method by service providers that have received additional training as Circumcisers, Assistant Circumcisers and VMMC counsellors.

Kigezi subregion had only five ShangRing focus facilities with only two having complete trained teams while the other three had lost the Circumcisers due to transfers and study leave. As such, the trained human resource gaps greatly affected ShangRing uptake in the region.

Against this background, USAID LPHS Kigezi & Lango Activity in collaboration with Makerere University Walter Reed Project (MUWRP) recently conducted a 7 days hands on skills Shang Ring training for 39 health workers (circumcisers, assistant circumcisers and SMC counsellors) using the recommended MOH Uganda standard curriculum.



Trainer taking the participants through a practical session at Kirima HCIII

Improving screening and management of non-communicable diseases among PLHIV

The USAID LPHS-Kigezi and Lango Activity worked with district health teams and health facility staff to fast-track training, on-job mentorship and coaching, provision of essential equipment and SOPs, tracking implementation and continuous improvement. This is in line with Ministry of Health strategy of integrating screening and management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among persons living with HIV attending ART and PMTCT clinics. The 2022 consolidated guidelines for Prevention and Treatment of HIV in Uganda recommend screening and management of non-communicable diseases including Hypertension (HTN), Diabetes mellitus (DM) and Mental health disorders (especially depression and anxiety and alcohol/substance abuse) as part of routine clinical assessment at every clinical encounter.



Practical demonstration on taking blood pressure during a coaching session at Kisoro Hospital

The Joint Clinical Research Center Donates Medicines to Kigezi and Lango Regions

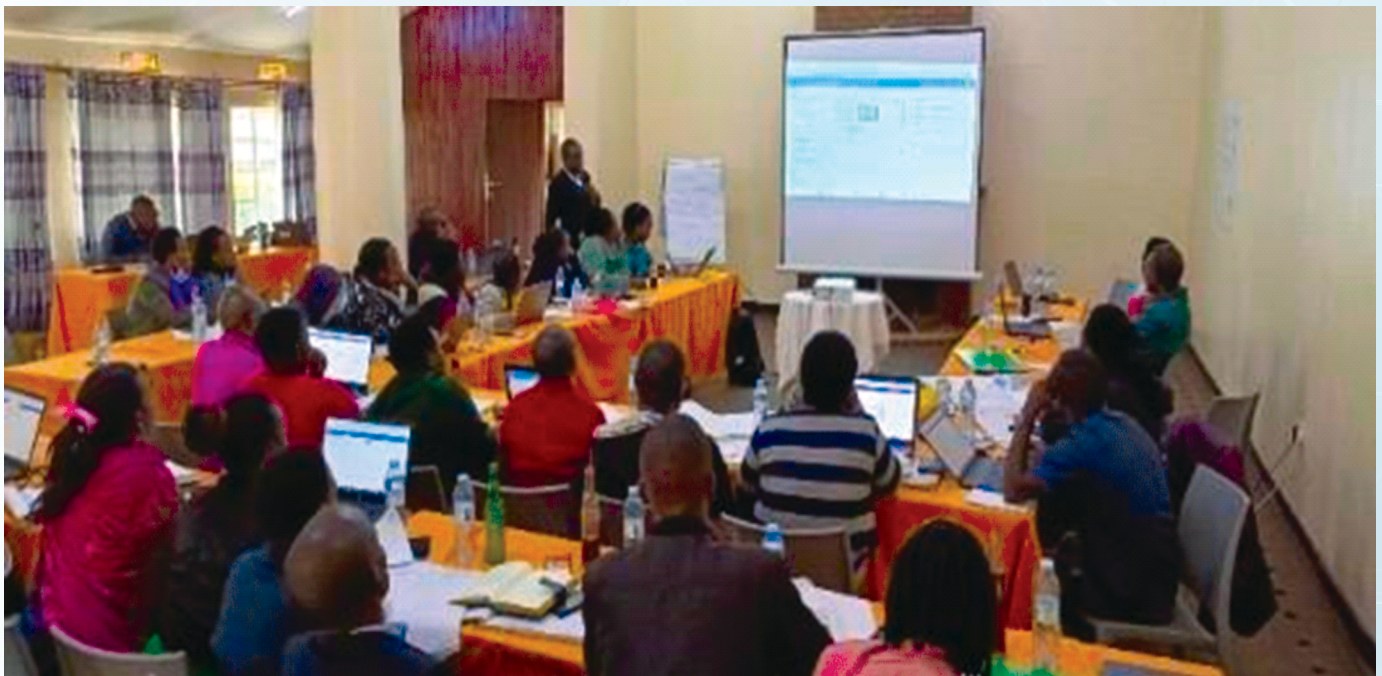
JCRC through its partners Direct Relief secured medicines and commodities worth over 188 (One Hundred and Eighty-Eight) million Ugandan shillings on humanitarian aid organization that was meant to equip health professionals in resource-poor communities to meet the challenges of diagnosing and caring for people in need. These included Antihypertensive medicines, antibiotics, IV fluids, antidepressants, oral rehydration solutions, and vitamins for pregnant mothers. These medicines will complement the drugs that facilities receive through the National Supply Chain System and are expected to contribute to improving the quality of patient care and treatment.



The Supply Chain Advisor handing over medicines to the CAO Kole district

Utilization of eCBSS data

In collaboration with the National TB and Leprosy program, the project rolled out the Electronic Case Based Surveillance System (eCBSS). The activity trained district Biostatisticians, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors and facility teams the Activity trained and cleared backlog at 53 eCBSS sites in Kigezi and 59 in Lango through onsite technical support and virtual follow up. In order to improve data use, health workers use inbuilt reports to run the HMIS reports, the site teams use the system to generate line lists for retention monitoring, data on new and relapse TB cases is used for hotspot mapping to identify high burden areas to guide implementation of CAST+ activities and data is generated to identify index cases pending contact tracing.



The Rubanda District Biostatistician training teams on eCBSS

Site Improvement through Monitoring Systems (SIMS) support to Kigezi and Lango

Site Improvement through Monitoring systems (SIMS) is a quality assurance tool used to monitor and improve program quality at PEPFAR-supported sites that guide and support service and non-service delivery functions.

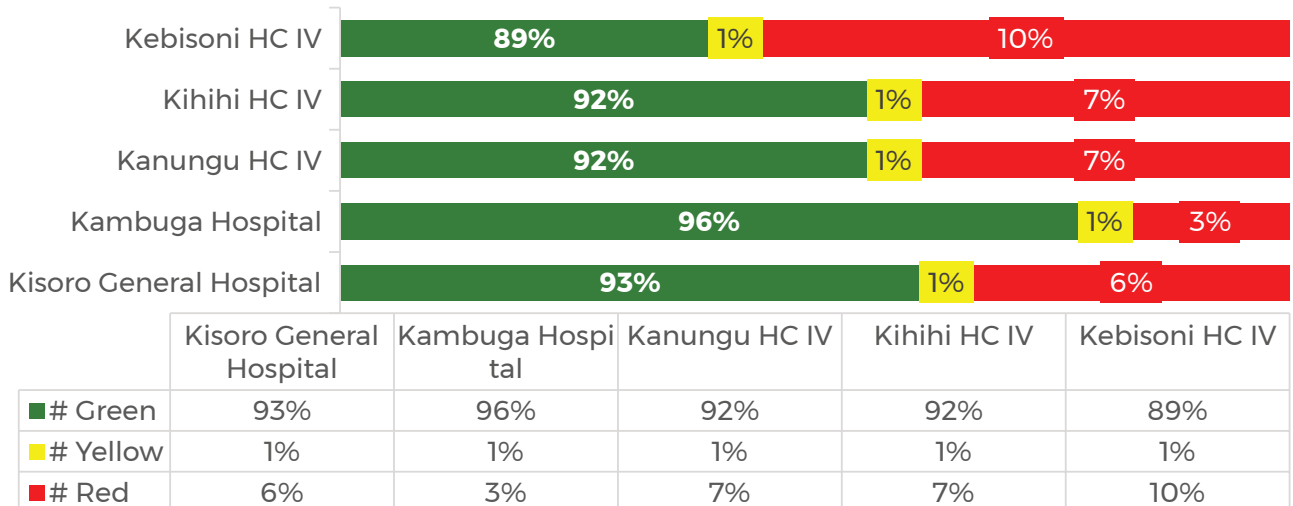
An integrated SIMS assessment by USAID Uganda working with USAID SITES and UHA was conducted in both Kigezi and Lango regions with the objective of assessing quality of implementation of standards. This provided an opportunity for site teams to reflect on their performance and set improvement objectives for areas of underperformance.

“Involvement of key stakeholders especially the DHT, facility in-charges and HUMC was pivotal and is still very rational regarding the successful and

harmonious implementation of activities and improved performance. The weekly DHO debrief meetings and communication ensured timely update on running activities for better coordination, participation and successful implementation leading to better outputs” Karungi Honest; ADHO-MCH/ AP3/ Munonye Focal person.



SIMS assessment at Kihihi HC IV



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NewsLetter

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