



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**UGANDA NATIONAL HEALTH
LABORATORY SERVICES/CPHL**

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UNHLS eNOTICE BOARD

The Health Lab Monthly News Series

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Picture Narrative

The U.S Ambassador to Uganda, H.E Deborah Malac, handing over a total of 156 motorcycles and 97 computers to the Minister of Health, Hon Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng during a ceremony that was held on 29th November 2017 at UNHLS Headquarters in Butabika

“The US government is a key partner in the modernization of the health commodities supply chain in Uganda. Since 2009, we have made major investments in the supply chain system at both national and sub national levels in order to ensure that the people of Uganda get the drugs and laboratory supplies in a fast and efficient manner.” said the Ambassador.

Our vision

Quality health laboratory services available and accessible to all people in Uganda

Our Mission

Provide quality, cost-effective and sustainable health laboratory services to support the delivery of the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package at all levels.

Our Mandate

- To undertake and coordinate clinical and public health laboratory services needed to support the implementation of the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package
- To provide for the purpose and functions of modern and high-technology reference laboratory services with international standards that will address the challenge of testing specimens for complex diagnostic and forensic purposes.

FEATURED STORIES

- Buganda Kingdom donates sickle cell testing kits to Ministry of Health
- The electronic Laboratory SPARS database appears on UNHLS Dashboard
- Trainer of Trainer for Point of Care Testing for Jinja and Masaka Districts
- UNHLS Reviews performance plans with IPs
- UNHLS to create a profile for Masters and PhD Holders in Laboratory Medicine
- Biosafety Training for Hub Bike riders



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Center for Global Health



Editorial Opinion

Dear readers, the issue for the month of November brings to your attention USAID involvement in supporting the Government of Uganda's vision for national development, "*Uganda's transition to a modern and prosperous country accelerated*". U.S Global Development Policy directs USAID to formulate Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS) that are results-oriented and to partner with host countries to focus US investment. The CDCS streamline investment within the host country context (development vision) while maintaining close coordination with U.S. Government partners.

UNHLS mandate falls under CDCS 3, "*Improved health and nutrition status in focus areas and population groups*". USAID supports government and Ugandan private sector to tackle the heavy disease burden, malnutrition, and unmet needs for family planning by improving health service delivery systems; thus the goal statement, "*if we strengthen health systems, we will improve health and nutrition service delivery; and, if we strengthen service delivery and the demand for these services, we will in turn improve health and nutrition status. Equitable, efficient health and nutrition services are an element of a —modern country and improved health and nutrition status will accelerate achievement of prosperity.*"

Therefore the USAID/Uganda Health Supply Program strengthen our health system by increasing the availability, accessibility, affordability and appropriate use of essential medicines and health supplies under SPARS. The Supervision Performance Assessment and Rewards Strategy (SPARS) is a quality improvement approach that combines interventions with regular performance assessment to improve logistics management. Hence, the motorcycles and computers will improve mobility and data processing under SPARS.

Kasusse Michael, MakSPH – CDC Fellow

BUGANDA KINGDOM DONATES SICKLE CELL TESTING KITS TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Katikkiro of Buganda, Charles Peter Mayiga handed over a donation of sickle cell testing kits to the Minister of Health, Hon Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng during a ceremony that was held on 24th November 2017 at UNHLS Headquarters in Butabika. This donation was from the proceeds of the sickle cell run to mark the Kabaka's Birthday on 9th April 2017 and the run was also featured in the May 2017 issue of the eNotice Board.

The Katikkiro was very grateful to all partners who made the run a success while contributing to this donation. The Minister of Health for Buganda Kingdom, Dr. Kiwanuka Mukwaya said that sickle cell disorder can only be cured by bone marrow transplant and advised all partners to screen for the disorder before marriage as a preventive measure. Flanked by the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Health, Dr. Atwiine Diana and the UNHLS Executive Director, Dr. Susan Nabadda Ndidde; Hon Ruth Aceng re-enforced partnership with Buganda Kingdom and Ministry of Health and appealed for awareness about the sickle cell disorder among the population.



Katikkiro hands over Sickle cell testing kits to the Minister of Health, Hon Dr. Aceng

THE ELECTRONIC LAB SPARS DATABASE APPEARS ON UNHLS DASHBOARD

The electronic laboratory SPARS is an online database hosted on the UNHLS servers and accessed through the UNHLS dashboard to allow SPARS supervisors across the country to instantly submit and analyze logistics data and provide prompt feedback to stakeholders.

On 22nd November 2017, UNHLS in collaboration with USAID/Uganda Health Supply Chain Program officially launched this database after an extensive computer training of 42 Lab SPARS supervisors that begun on 13th November 2017 at Silver Springs Hotel, Bugolobi. Training involved computer use and maintenance and utilization of Lab SPARS database. Each supervisor received a new Lenovo Yoga 11e ThinkPad Laptop and internet modem loaded with internet bundles to facilitate online access.



Some of the Lab Supervisors during the Launch of the database

TRAINER OF TRAINERS FOR POINT OF CARE TESTING (POCT)

Due to the numerous advantages of POCT, the current trend is to encourage POCT by non laboratory persons including nurses and midwives. POCT is a medical test done to a patient at a care site or bedside. The laboratory person should maintain the quality assurance aspect of POCT and they have developed a POCT policy at national level as well as national guidelines. Capacity has to be built through TOTs on the implementation of the policy and guidelines.

On 20th November 2017, there was a 3 days TOT for Jinja and Masaka districts about the national policy and guidelines, knowledge and skills related to the international standards leading to POCT accreditation and to equip health workers with quality related skills including; internal quality control (IQC), external quality assessment (EQA), Validation/Verification aspects.



Health workers from Jinja and Masaka Districts during the TOT for POCT

UNHLS REVIEWS PERFORMANCE PLANS WITH IPs

UNHLS strategic plan is put in operation by Implementing Partners (IPs) working with Development Partners (DPs). The DPs and IPs have MOUs with UNHLS to perform different aspects of UNHLS strategic plan. There is always a need to review this performance every six months to better align with UNHLS plan while reducing adhoc implementation and duplication.

On 15th November 2017, IP Laboratory advisors had a meeting at UNHLS Butabika, to review performance of individual IPs for the last six months and plan for the next six months.



IP Laboratory advisors during a review meeting at Butabika

UNHLS SUPPORTS THE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF UMLTA

UNHLS strategic plan provides for support to regulatory bodies and associations which assess all laboratories for compliance to standards for registration and licensing. Compliance to standards is one of the roles of the Uganda Medical Laboratory Technology Association (UMLTA) performed during its annual scientific conference. One of the objectives of UMLTA is to promote and maintain high standards of professionalism and excellence in Medical Laboratory Service delivery in Uganda and beyond.

On 1st November 2017, UMLTA organized its annual scientific conference in Arua with the theme, "Laboratory Systems Strengthening for a Resilient Health System" There were presentations of annual findings and projects from UMLTA members including exhibitions of ideas products within the laboratory sector



Exhibitors explaining ideas and products within the laboratory sector

UNHLS TO CREATE A PROFILE FOR MASTERS AND PHD HOLDERS IN LABORATORY MEDICINE

There is a need to develop the laboratory sector and find solutions to challenges within the sector. This requires harvesting and harnessing the capabilities of research and learning attained from academic institutions. Laboratory persons with higher qualifications from academic institutions are capable of bringing on board innovations and solutions to challenges when they are organized as a "think tank". UNHLS intends to create a profile of these persons and periodically engage them in related objectives and create a recognized research agenda for the laboratory sector.

On 16th November 2017, identified masters and PhD holders had a meeting with UNHLS Senior Management Team (SMT) at Butabika where the idea of creating a profile was discussed. Among other ideas discussed was the establishment of a peer reviewed academic journal for the Laboratory Sector that meets international standards and support research work from academicians in Uganda.



Masters and PhD Holders with the SMT at Butabika

BIO SAFETY TRAINING FOR HUB BIKE RIDERS

UNHLS strategic plan provides for strengthening human resource capacity for biosafety and Biosecurity program through trainings for improved practices. Biorisk combines aspects of biosafety and Biosecurity and is about ensuring work place safety and security in protection of personnel, the public and environment from infectious biological materials (samples) and injuries from the process of handling. It is important for the protection of both accidental exposures to health workers and community; and for intention exposures through intent to harm, steal or misuse valuable biological materials (VBM).

Hub bike riders move laboratory samples along the transport network. Using demonstrations and videos, hub riders were introduced to aspects of biorisk management, bioethics and code of conduct, personal protective equipment, decontamination, sterilization and disinfection, among others, during a training that took place from 16th – 18th November 2017.



Hub bike riders during the Biosafety training

Other activities

- There was a need to acquire system requirements and details of QA key performance indicators to monitor services offered by laboratory facilities. This was done in a 3 day workshop involving system developers and Development Partners on 30th November 2017. Therefore, the quality assurance (QA) database will soon appear on UNHLS dashboard to monitor key performance indicators centrally.
- In efforts to empower PLWHA to demand for viral load testing, UNHLS organized a pre-World AIDS Day Viral Load Awareness Camp at Butabika on 30th November 2017.

PICTORIAL SECTION



The U.S Ambassador to Uganda handing over computers to the Minister of Health



Mr and Miss Y+ who were born with HIV and are living Healthy during the Viral Load Awareness Camp at Butabika

On-going activities

- Biorisk management training for UPDF Soldiers
- Viral Load stakeholders meeting at Hotel Africana
- Biorisk management training for non-laboratory staff

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