



CONCEPT NOTE:
CONFERENCE ON HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION

6-7 November, 2019
Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION

1.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Health (MOH) under the Health Promotion, Education and Communication Department is organizing Uganda's first National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Conference. The mission of this National Conference is to provide a platform for government, health professionals, partners and the academia to share best practices and lessons learned, provide networking opportunities, and raise awareness on the importance of health promotion for disease prevention in improving primary health care outcomes. This gathering will provide the opportunity for attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, and speakers to access the latest health education and promotion research, policy, and practice drawing from various health aspects/disciplines. It will explore and define the core areas of health promotion and disease prevention in the context of Uganda. The core areas include health education, health protection, health public policies, and disease prevention. Others include strengthening community capacity for health promotion, advocate for participation of stakeholders in primary health care, partnerships and networking, as well as monitoring and evaluation of health promotion interventions. Therefore, the National Conference on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention will provide an opportunity for MoH and Government of Uganda in general to make and be held accountable for national declarations on health promotion priorities and goals.

2.0 Background

In 2016, Uganda's population was estimated by the World Bank to be 41.5 million people with an average growth rate of 3.03% giving an estimated population by the 2014 Uganda Census of 42.4 million people by 2020 (World Bank, 2016; Census, 2014). According to the 2016 Uganda Demographics and Health Survey (UDHS), over half of the population is the age of 15 or younger. The health of Ugandans is central to the socio-economic transformation of this country. However, growing evidence shows that the majority of the national disease burden is due to preventable diseases. Approximately 75% of Uganda's disease burden is preventable, with the top 5 leading causes of mortality being malaria, diarrheal diseases, road traffic accidents and injuries, HIV/AIDS, and nutritional-related complications, including anemia.

To address the health-related challenges in the country, health promotion engages and empowers individuals and communities to practice recommended healthy behaviors and make behaviour changes that reduce the risk of developing preventable diseases. By definition, Health Promotion is '*enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.*' Health Promotion and behaviour change interventions have long been useful strategies to improve health outcomes in Uganda, with most notable success in the reduction of HIV and AIDS infections as well as the quick tracking and elimination of Ebola during outbreaks.

Health promotion, education and communication is in line with the Strategic Guidelines and Directives provided by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda on 23rd June 2016, for the Minimum Program for Uganda to attain Middle Income Status by 2020. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Health (MOH), is committed to improving the health status of its population through a wide-variety of interventions, including the elimination of preventable diseases.

It is the mandate of the MOH to facilitate the attainment of a good standard of health for all people in Uganda, with the specific goal to reduce morbidity and mortality as a contribution to poverty reduction as well as economic and social transformation in the country. As clearly captured in the National Development Agenda *Vision 2040*, health education, promotion and disease prevention are a top priority for the MOH and the country. In addition, Objective XV of the National Health Policy II is to ensure communities, households and individuals are empowered to play their role and take responsibility for their own health and well-being and to participate actively in the management of their local health services.

The roadmap to a healthier Uganda is contingent upon a multitude of factors, including a strengthened health system, quality services, ample resources, and, in this case, citizens who are empowered to take control of their health. Drawing inspiration from the World Health Organization's Global Health Promotion Conferences, the National Conference on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention is designed to provide a yearly platform for health promotion and disease prevention professionals to share and learn best practices and lessons learned, provide an opportunity for networking and collaboration, as well as set key priorities for health promotion and disease prevention.

3.0 Justification

The MOH's Health Sector Development Plan III 2015 – 2020 provides an overall framework for the health sector, and clearly recognizes the potential contributions of health education and communication as one of four clusters under the National Minimum Health Care package. VHTs are the main vehicle for community engagement in local health programmes.

Despite strengths in health promotion and communication across all levels of the health system, there are existing gaps in activity design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and importantly collaboration and learning. Evidence shows that there is ad hoc use of data to improve health communication and education program design and implementation. This also results in failing to target the multiple determinants of health, particularly attitudes and social, cultural and gender norms.

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Conference will bring together key stakeholders who individually and collectively contribute to improving health promotion and disease prevention at different levels in the country. These include but not limited to public and private sector; civil society, academia; the UN; bilateral and other international development partners. The conference will convene key stakeholders to advance knowledge about Health Promotion

and Disease Prevention; present new research findings, and promote and enhance scientific and community collaborations in synergy with other health and development sectors.

4.0 Conference Theme

The First Conference on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention will be held in Speke Resort-Munyonyo, Kampala on **6-7 November, 2019**. The Conference theme is ***“Investing in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention to Achieve Universal Health Coverage”***.

The proposed theme aims at raising awareness on the importance of investing in health promotion and disease prevention in improving primary health outcomes the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), increasing economic productivity, and contributing to sustainable development. For years, the health sector has placed emphasis on treatment instead of prevention, causing significant funds to be used to treat mainly preventable diseases. The lack of emphasis and prioritization of health promotion and disease prevention in the health sector is complex. All levels of the health system need to prioritize health promotion and disease prevention in order to make sustainable change.

4.1 Conference Objectives

The conference will ride on the following objectives:

- Increase awareness and understanding of the role of health promotion in achieving UHC.
- Generate an understanding of developing sustainable financing mechanisms for health promotion and disease prevention interventions in the country.
- Share best practices on integrating health promotion into the larger health system.
- Develop national annual/periodic declarations on health promotion to activate and galvanize political commitment and accountability among government, donors, private sector and civil society for an inclusive, sustainable and adequately financed, multi-sectoral, integrated response to health promotion for disease prevention.

4.2 Conference sub-themes

The first (2019) National Conference on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention will serve as a foundation to gather evidence and best practices on health promotion, education, and disease prevention interventions to improve health outcomes. The proposed tracks of the conference are as follows:

- a) Governance and leadership in health promotion and disease prevention
 - Partnership and multi-sectoral collaboration
 - Advocacy for stakeholder/ inclusive participation in health promotion
- b) Technology in health promotion and disease prevention
 - Technology used in implementing health promotion programs
 - New technology for scale-up
- c) Capacity strengthening for health promotion and disease prevention at community level
 - Strengthening community health promotion workforce
 - Improving health literacy and health education tactics

- Monitoring and Evaluation of health promotion interventions
- d) Health awareness and behavior change for health promotion
 - Social and Behavior Change Communication
 - Social marketing for health
 - Culture and behavior for disease prevention

4.3 Target Audience for the Conference

The conference participants will constitute key stakeholders such as: representatives from the local governments, organizations and individuals in the Public, Private, Health Promotion players that employ Health Promotion principles to influence positive behaviors and improve health status of all Ugandans. They will include;

- 1) Ministry of Health and other line ministries
- 2) Local government representatives (District Health Teams)
- 3) Health Development Partner representatives (USAID, UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF) including: implementing partners, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- 4) Representatives from the Corporate Private Sector
- 5) Media Houses
- 6) Academia – Lecturers and Students of Health Promotion and Education and other academic disciplines in line with disease prevention
- 7) Senior cadres and implementers in the field of Health Promotion
- 8) Sponsors from all sectors: Public, Private and Commercial
- 9) Political Leaders
- 10) Cultural and Religious leaders
- 11) Health Professional Associations and regional referral hospitals

5.0 Conference funding mechanism and contribution from stakeholders

The Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Education & Communication [HPE&C] department is the primary conference organizer. The HPE&C planning committee will be spearheading the conference: planning, coordination and resource mobilization. The conference is set to host 500 participants (drawn from the above target audiences).

To date, Ministry has received partial monetary commitments from partners like FHI 360/ USAID CHC Project, UNICEF Uganda, Living Goods, PATH, and BRAC. It is expected that other partners will also contribute to different budget lines of the appended conference budget. We are hoping to gain the support of implementing partners, development partners and those interested in making advancements in health promotion and diseases prevention to participate in this groundbreaking event. Participants will be hand selected using a selection criteria and will not be charged for the conference. Partners will support the funding of the two-day event and sponsorship of district officials to attend.

Partners will be encouraged to have exhibitions to showcase and demo their innovations, publications, and materials. This will be possible through an exhibition fee.

6.0 Expected outputs of the conference

- Shared experiences on implementation of health promotion interventions in the country.
- National declaration on periodic Health Promotion commitments that will lead to improved health and disease prevention efforts in the country.
- Increase awareness among different stakeholders on various national health promotion priorities envisaged from documented partner commitments to support sustainable financing, policy and programming efforts on health promotion.

For more information about the conference, please contact:

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