

Empowering Accountability and Impact: MakSPH-METS Initiates Evaluations for Positive Change



Dr. Alice Namale giving an overview and expectations of the writing workshop

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) established a Country Monitoring and Accountability System (CMAS) to identify country level challenges resulting from the rapid scale-up of public health programs. The CMAS recommends program evaluations for accountability of PEPFAR funds invested through CDC as a way of positively impacting the population. The program evaluations are guided by the Evaluation and Performance Monitoring Plans (EPMPs).

The respective program leads at MOH, CDC-Uganda, and METS embarked on a protocol development process during a 5- day writing retreat that was held at **Serena Hotel Kigo**, from **August 8-12, 2023**. The evaluations

are scheduled to be implemented in October-December 2023. Makerere University School of Public Health-Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Support (MakSPH-METS) Program will support 5 program evaluations.

These include:

1. Evaluation of the National PMTCT Group Antenatal & Postnatal Care (G-ANC/PNC) Differentiated Service Delivery Model (2021-2023). The study will evaluate acceptability, feasibility, and effectiveness of the Adolescent G-ANC/PNC model of care for pregnant and breastfeeding young mothers, and their infants at implementing sites nationally.

2. Evaluation of the Uptake and Outcomes of the Integrated Community-based HIV Service Delivery Model (ICSDM) in Uganda that aims to accelerate progress towards the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets.
3. Prevalence and Outcomes of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including Hypertension, Diabetes mellitus, Obesity and Mental health disorders, among persons living with HIV (PLHIV) in Uganda. This assessment will determine the prevalence, predictors, and outcomes of NCDs among PLHIV and the health system's capacity to offer NCDs services for PLHIV.
4. Outcome evaluation of the Young People and Adolescent Peer Support (YAPS) program in Uganda. The YAPS program aims to enhance HIV-related outcomes among adolescents and young individuals, including raising awareness on HIV testing, improving treatment coverage, achieving viral load suppression, bolstering psychosocial support, and linkage to livelihood programs.
5. Evaluation of the HIV Case Based Surveillance (CBS) pilot implementation in Uganda. The findings will guide program expansion.

UgandaEMR+ the future of paperless health facilities in Uganda



The developers of the UgandaEMR convened in August 2023 to add the requirements of the health facility. This resulted into a more comprehensive EMR dubbed UgandaEMR+, an open-source point of care (PoC) electronic medical record (EMR) system, that aids patient management, clinical documentation, and reporting at the point of service within a health facility.

UgandaEMR was officially recognized as an EMR by the Ministry of Health and is currently implemented in over 1,900 health facilities across the country. Initially, the system was supporting HIV care and treatment but has since been redeveloped to include all clinics and service centers beyond HIV. The redevelopment offers a more dynamic interface which can be easily accessed on tablets, desktops, and mobile phone devices. UgandaEMR+ will have modules for the following areas: HIV, TB, Outpatient Department (OPD), Inpatient Department (IPD), Special Clinics, Administration, Laboratory, Pharmacy, Stores, Theatre, among others.

The queuing module team poses for a quick photo opportunity during the Bootcamp

The METS Program has embarked on a journey of re-customizing UgandaEMR technology stack, data collection forms, look and feel, reports, dashboards, and integrations.

The new changes will enable the application to be more comprehensive and cater to all clinical interfaces, supporting personalized care and not just data management and reporting.

UgandaEMR⁺

Medical Records System

Perks of UgandaEMR+

- The EMR with the widest coverage in Uganda
- Intended to improve the patient experience at the health facility
- Beneficial to patients, health providers, and program managers at various levels
- The system has improved security features and utilizes artificial intelligence to predict patient outcomes
- The system communicates to other health information systems within the facility, across facilities, programs, and services. The system caters for patients from the point of registration, clinical consultation rooms, laboratory, radiology, theater, pharmacy, and inpatient wards.

Dennis Kigeni, the OpenMRS Kenya representative, who attended the bootcamp, acknowledged that the work achieved during the bootcamp was testament to the team's capabilities. He hoped that the progress to date would be adapted by the over 40 countries of the OpenMRS community.

Paul Mbaka, from Division of Health Information at Ministry of Health commended the team for the grand job done, cautioned them to ensure the integration was done seamlessly, and the application was futuristic.



Paul Mbaka, (2nd left) listening to Musa Mwanje presenting on the Clinic Workflow module during the UgandaEMR+ Bootcamp. This module includes data tools used by Clinicians to assess a patient, the patient summary widgets, and previous conditions of the patient.

Dr. Marta Ackers pays courtesy visit to METS



MakSPH-METS and CDC-Uganda team met with Dr. Marta Ackers (5th from right) to discuss the Program overview

METS hosted Dr. Marta Ackers (MD, MPH), the East Africa Regional Associate Director in the Division of Global HIV and TB at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The visit was used to touch base with Program implementation; impact, progress, challenges and future plans.

The meeting was attended by representatives from CDC Uganda; Ray Ransom - the Project Officer for METS, Jenny Nel - Branch Chief Data Science and Informatics, Kenneth Musenge - Health Information Systems Team Lead, and Dr. Herbert Kiyingi with

Surveillance, Surveys, and Implementation Science Team Lead.

Dr. Ackers cautioned METS to remain relevant to contributing to the country's sustainability program and applauded the team's effort in production of policies and guidelines, integration efforts, technical assistance offered to the Ministry of Health and efforts towards working within existing structures. She further called attention to TB care and treatment including outside HIV programing.

METS Vs MoH Friendly Football Game

It was a match filled with twists and turns, just like a thrilling football game. Our team was down one player, our star goalkeeper, but we were not about to give up. The weather was overcast, with the possibility of rain, but our determination to bring honor to the hallowed grounds of 20A Kawalya Kaggwa, an extension of the School of Public Health, remained unwavering.

The first two goals we conceded were harsh and could have been avoided, but in football, a win for the opposing team is still a win. Coach Simon devised our tactical game plan, and our squad rallied together. It did not take long for us to start equalizing the score. The Ministry of Health (MOH) had a formidable team that appeared to train regularly, but we had the spirit and the support of our passionate cheerleaders, led by none other than Director Dr. Alice Namale, who never stopped rallying behind her team.

At the close of the first half, MOH held the lead, but they were visibly fatigued, while our team was only just getting warmed up. It felt like magic, with the setting sun serving as the backdrop to the three goals that crowned METS as the King of the NET. The spectacle was truly breathtaking, and it seemed as if the church organ across the field played a triumphant tune as we celebrated our victory. Above all, it was our unwavering desire to excel that fueled our triumph. The final score stood at 5-4, and we

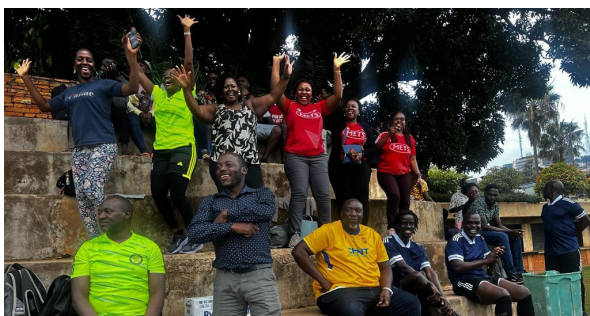


The undisputed King of the NET from METS



The MoH team led by Martin Lukwago (3rd L) with the referee and MoH "Old Boy" Edgar Kansiime (2nd L) and METS Coach Simon Muhumuza (L)

raised a toast to our opponents for putting up a valiant fight. As we basked in the glory of our victory, I overheard someone inquire whether we would be up for another challenge. Without hesitation, our coach confidently replied, "Bring it on!"



The victory cheer: METS team and supporters celebrating the win after the friendly football match between METS and MoH held on Thursday August 17, 2023

Gallery



▶ Rose Baryamutuma led the team developing the outcome evaluation of the Young People and Adolescent Peer Support (YAPS) program during the protocol development retreat at Kigo

▶ Alfred Driwale, Commissioner Institutional & Human Resource Development, Ministry of Health, giving opening remarks during the BUHIC National Training of Trainers that took place on 21-25 August 2023 at Ridar Hotel, Mukono. BUHIC is a capacity building program to equip health workers with skills in health



▶ Isaac Akileng, a Software Developer at METS (center) takes the team through the data visualization component of the UgandaEMR+ during the bootcamp that was held in Jinja (21 Aug - 1st Sept 2023).

Inter-Agency HIV Testing Services (HTS) Data Quality Assessments (DQA)



HTS Data Quality Assessment at Katakwi Hospital



HTS Data Quality Assessment at Soroti Hospital data room



HTS Data Quality Assessment at Serere Health Centre IV

Cervical Cancer Readiness Assessment



METS, MoH and CDC during a Cervical Cancer readiness assessment support visit to Lyantonde Hospital. The purpose of the activity is to strengthen cervical cancer screening and treatment and improve outcomes among women living with HIV. METS in collaboration with CDC and MOH conducted a facility level visit to provide initial supervision to the sites, and ensure that the required materials, protocol procedures and processes are followed.



Dr. Barbara Abindabyamu (accompanied by her family) during an intimate farewell dinner held on 25 August 2023. Dr. Barbara worked under the Disease Surveillance and Response unit and had served METS since 2016.



METS team meeting with Dr. Stavia Turyahabwe, Assistant Commissioner - National TB and Leprosy Program (NTLP) to discuss UgandaEMR TB module rollout and implementation. The group picture was taken with the team suited in the TB marathon kits, the marathon took place on 20 August 2023.



METSWATCH

**EDITORIAL
TEAM**

Nancy Karunganwa

Dr. Alice Namale
Dr. Simon Muhumuza
Jonathan Mpango