



**Makerere University**  
College of Health Sciences  
**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

## **The Kampala People's Health Conference**

**Theme:** Advancing Health equity through collaborative Action

### **Conference Overview:**

The People's Health Movement Ugandan Chapter, in partnership with Makerere University School of Public Health, is organizing a dynamic and impactful conference with the theme "Advancing Health Equity through Collaborative Action." This conference aims to bring together diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers, practitioners, civil society organizations, and community leaders, to collectively address the urgent need for achieving health equity in Uganda.

### **Background:**

Health equity is a critical issue in Uganda, where disparities in access to quality healthcare and health outcomes persist. The country faces numerous challenges, including inadequate healthcare infrastructure, limited resources, and geographical barriers that hinder equitable access to healthcare services. Marginalized populations, such as rural communities, women, children, and individuals with disabilities, bear the brunt of these disparities (1, 2).

Socioeconomic factors play a significant role in health equity. Poverty and limited education contribute to poor health outcomes, as individuals struggle to afford healthcare expenses and lack knowledge about preventive measures. Moreover, inadequate access to safe water and sanitation facilities further exacerbates health inequities, leading to increased rates of infectious diseases(3).

Gender disparities also impact health equity in Uganda. Women face unique challenges, including limited access to reproductive health services, high maternal mortality rates, and gender-based violence. Cultural norms and gender inequalities restrict women's decision-making power and hinder their access to healthcare. Addressing these disparities requires comprehensive approaches that empower women, promote gender-responsive policies, and provide access to reproductive health services (4).

To achieve health equity, it is crucial to strengthen Uganda's healthcare system by increasing the number of healthcare facilities, particularly in underserved areas, and improving infrastructure and medical equipment. Community engagement and empowerment are vital in promoting health equity, involving communities in decision-making processes, and providing health education and access to healthcare services (1). Transformative policies and advocacy efforts are also necessary to address health disparities, allocate resources to marginalized populations, and address social determinants of health.

Achieving health equity in Uganda requires concerted efforts from policymakers, healthcare professionals, civil society organizations, and communities. By addressing disparities in access to

healthcare, socioeconomic factors, and gender inequalities, and strengthening the healthcare system, Uganda can work towards ensuring that every individual has equal opportunities to lead a healthy and productive life.

### **Objectives:**

1. Raise awareness: Increase understanding of health equity issues and the impact of disparities on population health outcomes among participants.
2. Share knowledge: Facilitate the exchange of evidence-based research, experiences, and best practices in advancing health equity and addressing health disparities.
3. Foster collaboration: Encourage networking, partnership building, and collaboration among various stakeholders to develop innovative strategies and solutions for promoting health equity.
4. Advocate for policy change: Generate policy recommendations based on research findings and collective expertise to influence decision-making processes and shape health equity policies in Uganda.
5. Empower communities: Promote community engagement and participation in health initiatives to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are addressed.

### **Conference Themes:**

- Access to Quality Healthcare
- Community Engagement and Empowerment
- Policy and Advocacy
- Privatisation of Health
- Climate change and Health
- Gender Justice and Health
- Trade and Health

### **Conference Activities:**

1. Keynote speeches by renowned experts in the field of health equity and public health.
2. Plenary sessions with panel discussions on each conference theme.
3. Oral and poster presentations showcasing research findings, innovative projects, and best practices.
4. Interactive sessions and roundtable discussions to encourage networking and collaboration.
5. Community visits to learn from successful community-driven health initiatives.
6. Policy dialogue sessions to engage policymakers and discuss strategies for implementing evidence-based policies.

### **Target Audience:**

The conference welcomes participation from a diverse range of stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers, public health professionals, healthcare providers, civil society organizations, community leaders, students, and individuals with lived experiences of health disparities.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

- Increased awareness and understanding of health equity issues in Uganda.
- Enhanced knowledge sharing and collaboration among stakeholders.
- Development of evidence-based policy recommendations to address health disparities.
- Strengthened capacity of participants in promoting health equity and community engagement.
- Identification of potential partnerships and collaborations for future initiatives.
- Empowered communities with tools and knowledge to advocate for their health needs.

### **Conclusion:**

The "Advancing Health Equity through Collaborative Action" conference aims to ignite a collective effort to address health inequities in Uganda. By bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, this conference seeks to generate innovative ideas, foster collaboration, and advocate for policy change to ensure that everyone has equitable access to quality healthcare. Together, we can

**Proposed dates:** 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

**Venue:** Golf Course Hotel

### **References**

1. Dowhaniuk N. Exploring country-wide equitable government health care facility access in Uganda. *International Journal for Equity in Health*. 2021;20(1):38.
2. Kakama AA, Basaza R. Trends in inequality in maternal and child health and health care in Uganda: Analysis of the Uganda demographic and health surveys. *BMC Health Services Research*. 2022;22(1):1269.
3. McMaughan DJ, Oloruntoba O, Smith ML. Socioeconomic Status and Access to Healthcare: Interrelated Drivers for Healthy Aging. *Frontiers in public health*. 2020;8:231.
4. Morgan R, Tetui M, Muhumuza Kananura R, Ekirapa-Kiracho E, George AS. Gender dynamics affecting maternal health and health care access and use in Uganda. *Health Policy and Planning*. 2017;32(suppl\_5):v13-v21.