



*Newborns whose mothers die in childbirth are far less likely to reach their first birthday.*

**MPHL SEPTEMBER 2022 INTAKE** Save the Mothers Program is now receiving applications for a Masters Degree in Public Health Leadership (MPHL) at Uganda Christian University, Main Campus. **SHARE THE NEWS**

Behold! Save the Mothers East Africa conference. It was held at Uganda Christian University, Nkoyoyo Hall and online hosting on 6 May 2022. The conference gathered about 170 delegates online and at Nkoyoyo Hall from over 8 countries that included, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, USA, Canada, UK among others.

Rev Richard Mulindwa (MPHL alumnus) led the opening prayer. In her opening remarks Dr. Miriam Mutabazi, Executive Director Save the Mothers East Africa (STMEA) reflected on the conference theme: "What do you have in your own hands?" and called upon the stakeholders: *"Use it to make a change in the reproductive health sector, in your health facilities, community and everywhere. The Master of Public health Leadership (MPHL) alumni and partners are here to celebrate their work and they will be showing us some of their work today."* She applauded everyone for the work they were doing to save the mothers.

Prof Aaron Mushengyenzi, Vice Chancellor, Uganda Christian University (UCU) welcomed all guests and thanked the MPHL alumni for the work well done in their communities and thus the reason for gathering at the conference to share their works in

## STM EA RMNCAH Conference



efforts to reach the last mile mothers. He uploaded the alumni for flying high the Uganda Christian University flag.

The guest of honor Hon Margaret Muhanga, who participated on-line said the conference theme 'Unveiling what you have in your hands to reach the last mile mother: 'is deep down in my heart because am a mother.' Adding that she hails from a community where women need safe motherhood services. Hon Muhanga thanked the Commissioner for Maternal and Child Health, Ministry of Health Uganda, Dr Jessica Nsugwa for making it to UCU to represent her physically. Hon also thanked Save the Mothers for such an important meeting.

MPHL alumni and RMNCAH partners presented at the conference: Rev Sr. Judith Kaddu; Determinants of breast cancer screening among reverends sisters in Kampala Archdiocese, Uganda; Andrew Koolya, Maternity basket fund -Kagadi District; Dr Boaz Aruho Mbagaya -Establishment of peoples' life care foundation Uganda-NGO; Rachel Alweny, and Gladness Munou from Tanzania also had poster presentations. Oral presenters were Edith Naluwende, Jeremiah Mbulamani, Narus Regina, Waniale Stephen plus representatives from World Vision and Healthy Child Uganda.

Dr. Jean Chamberlain (STM Co-founder) one of the speakers- said that getting a mother to survive, takes a team, a village and that's the strength of Save The Mothers program that targets multi- disciplinary professionals. **To page 3**



*Delegates gather for poster presentations*



**Prof Aaron Mushengyenzi, Vice Chancellor**



**Oral presenters**

With support from Leila C Reader Foundation, STMEA provides emergency medical and psychosocial support to vulnerable mothers to ensure a safe and dignified delivery. STMEA implements this initiative in Kagando Hospital, Kasese district, western Uganda, Mbale People's Hospital in Mbale City, eastern Uganda and Boro Boro Health Centre III in Lira district, northern Uganda.

In Kagando Hospital over 25 women have benefited and in Mbale People's Hospital about 10 HIV positive mothers have accessed ANC and safe delivery services, including ARVs.

Christine Musonki, 20 years old and her baby Sonia are beneficiaries of the emergency Medical Care Fund under Kagando Hospital. Christine lives in Kyarumba, Kasese.

In 2020, Christine got pregnant when she was in senior four. Her baby Sonia was born in May 2021 in Kagando hospital. Christine delivered through a C-section. The C-section wound became septic and this caused further complications and thus escalated hospital bills.

Christine's family failed to pay hospital bills. Christine's mother had to sell her land in order to pay the bills. She paid 700,000 UGX (179 USD). But still the money was not enough to clear the bills.

Christine had overstayed in hospital due to inability to pay bills. STM footed 750,000 UGX (192 USD) to clear the bill.

# Emergency Medical Care Fund



Christine and her baby



Christine narrates her story to STM as her mum looks on.

*"I thank STM for the caring. I request for more care to enable me go back to school."* Christine's mother Estaluzi also thanked STM for saving her daughter's life. Estaluzi is a mother of four children and one grandchild. They all live in one little room that has space for one small bed, three stools, one basin and a bucket. They pay rent of 20,000 UGX (5.12 USD) per month. Estaluzi is a trader who sells onions and tomatoes to support her family of five.

#STMEA#POSTCARD#JourneysOfHope#Kasese#TheEquator

In the July-August issue read about the High Dependence Units in the MBFHI sites.

STM invites you to share your stories for the next issue



# STMEA RMNCAH Conference

## From page 1

Dr Jean also emphasized the need to work together and create a power source to save mothers and 'that's why we have this conference.'

The keynote speaker, Dr. Olive Sentumbwe, Family Health and Population Advisor, World Health Organisation, stressed the need to promote Reproductive Health for both men and women. She highlighted that a third of the global deaths are among women and girls and are due to reproductive health issues. Dr Olive pointed out the need to address the social cultural factors that escalate poor reproductive health indicators.

She said that in order reduce maternal deaths each one of us can do something to avert the death. *"We need to know when to practice evidence based interventions and making emergency interventions available for mothers. Unless we improve the service of care in the health facility, those who come to the health facility will run away."*



Dr Olive

## Responses from delegates

My name is Atuhaire Edgar, I am attending this conference currently from the University of Ghana, where I am doing my PhD in Population, Family and Reproductive Health. All this wouldn't have been possible without the MPHIL, Save the Mothers Program. Through STM I have been able to attend a PhD Exchange program at the University of Sheffield in South Yorkshire, the UK. Together we stand for Maternal and Child Health.

Hello, my name is Pascal Mulindwa - alumnus from DR. Congo, currently working with the United Nations as the Coordinator & Head of Experimentation of the UNDP Accelerator Lab in DRC. I am

grateful for the opportunity I have benefited from the STM program to which I owe part of what I have become today.

Atia Margaret; I am happy to attend the conference from Soroti. Dr. Miriam can we have the programme extended to Soroti RRH and I would be happy to be part of the implementor.

Penninah T.K: Waaoww the idea of the basket fund is an interesting one.

Excellent poster presentations and such a range of topics. Certainly important to address this issue of stillbirths. This is a subject that needs to be addressed around the world. I hope Uganda can take the lead in this! Dr Jean.

Greetings to you all, I am Auma Sarah attending from South Sudan. I am impressed by the innovation of maternity basket funds, its worth replicating.

Presenters received certificates of appreciations and four change project presenters received an enhancement fund.

Thank you all for making this possible.



Moderator Joan Mugenzi  
MPHL 2005



Rev R Mulindwa & Rev M Ssemugoma receive certificates



Group photo

# Catching up with alumni in Kasese

## Jolly Muhindo, MPHL alumnus – advocating for adolescents

In Bwera, Jolly is a deputy head-teacher at a secondary school passionate about adolescent health. “When I read the Save the Mothers brochure, I knew this was the program for my adolescents.”

She joined the MPHL program with a desire to gain skills for supporting adolescents under her care in schools. She was a teacher then. Jolly was promoted to deputy head-teacher, after completing the program. She has established youth friendly services in her school to support adolescents through friendly talks and counselling.

Jolly says that these initiatives have reduced teenage pregnancies in the school. She believes in preventing early pregnancies, which weigh down the hospital maternity services and fuel maternal mortality and morbidity. “It is important to put in place services to curb this pregnancies and diseases for safe motherhood.”

Jolly also narrates a story of one of the school female cooks who was always absent from duty. The school administration tried to be patient with her but the habit continued.

The administration arrived at a decision to fire the cook. When Jolly learnt of this, she speak to the cook about the cause of her absenteeism. The cook revealed to Jolly that she gets heavy bleeding that keep



STM team joined by Fred Thembo from Kagando hospital, visited Jolly in Bwera.

her away from work. Jolly advised the cook to seek medical treatment. Health workers discovered that she had cancer of the cervix. She was treated and recovered. She resumed her duty at work.

Jolly says that if she had not done the MPHL, she would not have been alert to the cook's need.

## Eliphaz Muhindi -moves district health financing from 9% to 25%

Eliphaz is an MPHL alumnus based in Kasese district. Eliphaz who the proprietor of Rwenzori School of Nursing and Midwifery, is the Local Council 5 chairperson of Kasese district.

As an LC 5 chairperson, Eliphaz holds the top most position at the district.

He is using his work in different fields to advocate for maternal and child health as result of having done the MPHL program. One of the decisions Eliphaz has influenced as an LC 5 chairperson is health financing at the district where this has increased from 9% to now 25% in the 2021/2022 district budget.

Eliphaz also established Save the Mothers Initiative in 4 sub-counties in Kasese district to promote self-sustainability at the community level regarding access to health care services during pregnancy and childbirth.



Eliphaz stresses the power of advocating for safe motherhood at different levels



Eliphaz is flanked by the STM team. Left to Right: Sarah Namee-Programs officer, Carol Namono- Accountant, Enoch - photographer and Teopista Agutu - Communication and networking director.

## Farewell

Rev Stephen Ssemaganda

Rev Stephen MPHL class 2018 passed on 25 June 2022.

RiP Rev Stephen



Dr Yusuf Baseka and Queen, STM missed you. Next time better.



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