



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

Featuring Month of: JUNE 2017

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Picture Narrative

WHO-JEE (Joint External Evaluation) Team visits UNHLS as the team had to assess one of the six national laboratories testing susceptibility to antimicrobials. The team assessed AMR Lab surveillance (preparedness and reporting outbreaks), Point of Care, and The hub sample transport system. This was part of the regular WHO country evaluation meeting under the International Health Regulation that was organized in the last week of June 2017 and involved; Office of the Prime Minister, WHO, Ministries of; Health, Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, Water and Energy under the One Health Platform.

Our vision

Quality health laboratory services available 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

- UNHLS, MAAIF and COVAB conduct a National Baseline of Animal Health Laboratories for AMR Surveillance
- UNHLS Microbiology Lab sets up Antimicrobial Resistance Information System (ARIS)
- Preparations for Upcoming Viral Load Test Campaign
- Building Capacity for UNHLS Records and Archives program
- Lab Day: discover the unknown
- Achievements, Challenges and Lessons Learnt as shared by EAPHLNP



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Center for Global Health



Editorial Opinion

Dear readers, the issue for the month of June brings to your attention, the global threat of Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR). During our routine activities we get in contact with germs and bacteria that affect our health.

Ideally, simple and cost-effective treatment is suitable but bacteria have become resistant to the available medicines especially antibiotics and are incurable hence affecting us socially and economically. Incidentally, WHO, FAO and OIE provides a global package of activities to combat AMR spanning human to animal, agricultural, food and environmental aspects, hence a One-Health approach. This June WHO-JEE evaluated country information on this approach. There was limited capacity in all aspects although Uganda registered an improvement compared to the 2015 evaluation where Uganda scored zero.

The package involves; National Action Plan for AMR in place; Strengthened surveillance and laboratory capacity with POC diagnostics; and improved support to preventive measures (awareness), alternative treatments or new cost-effective antibiotics. With this package, there is prevention of emergence and spread of AMR. Therefore this opinion contributes to the package in form of awareness of this global threat affecting us socially and economically.

Kasuse Michael
MakSPH – CDC Fellow

UNHLS, MAAIF and COVAB conduct a National Baseline of Animal Health Laboratories for AMR Surveillance

In a bid to harmonize the One-health agenda, the Global Health Surveillance Agenda Project of IDI supported data collection (data tools formulation and administering) in the first and second week of June 2017. Data collection was conducted by UNHLS as AMR coordination office, MAAIF as owner and the domain experts, College of Veterinary and Biosecurity resources (COVAB), Makerere University. The aim was to assess animal health laboratories in Uganda specifically; to map the animal health lab system; their status of Biosafety and Biosecurity; and capacity to detect or conduct AMR surveillance. Clear information is available for six national laboratories with the capacity to detect and conduct AMR surveillance including; UNHLS that receives EQA panels from UNHLS-SA; NTRL that receives DTS EQA panels from Antwerp, Belgium; NADDEC and COVAB that participates in EQA of bacteria isolates obtained from UNBS especially for food safety; UVRI for antiviral and NALIRI Lab in Tororo district.

There was a need to have country-wide clear information specifically for animal health laboratory services as apparently antibiotics for veterinary use are available over the counter and there is limited approval of specified antibiotics before they are used by the farmers (IDI survey, 2015).



WHO-JEE Team that provided technical support towards the exercise

UNHLS Microbiology Lab sets up Antimicrobial Resistance Information System (ARIS)

The Microbiology laboratory at UNHLS is the national AMR secretariat and coordination office hence a data intensive role. Currently, AMR data is collected from six sentinel sites of Hospitals including; Jinja, Kabale, Mbale, Arua, Fortportal and Mubende with an aim of expanding to cover the country. ARIS is a WHO requirement for nations to report AMR surveillance data to GLASS (Global Antimicrobial Surveillance System) of WHO. In June 2017, the Global Health Security Partner Project of IDI supported UNHLS to set up ARIS that will process country specific information on AMR which is now a Global burden.

Plans are under way for the secretariat to serve as a National Coordinating Centre for AMR surveillance as required by WHO-GLASS.



One of the laboratories at UNHLS

Preparations for Upcoming Viral Load Test Campaign

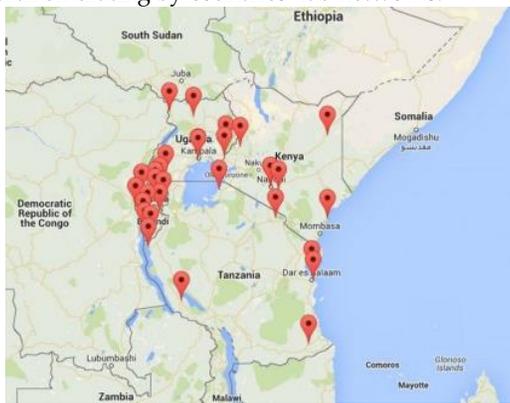
UNHLS has been able to run 1.5 million tests for Viral Load from all parts of the country and still has the capacity to run so much more tests. There is a need to generate demand for tests from patients that require viral load tests as part of their treatment plan. A meeting for MOH implementing partners was conducted on 29th June 2017 to share best practices for viral load demand creation while planning for the viral load campaign in August 2017.



Dr. Zziwa moderating the Viral Load Meeting at UNHLS

Achievements, Challenges and Lessons Learnt as shared by EAPHLNP

The World Bank-funded East Africa Public Health Laboratory Networking Project (EAPHLNP) has 36 laboratories within the 5 East African countries to serve as surveillance sites to monitor hot spots for disease transmission. During the last week of June 2017, TWGs met to share achievements, challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations while comparing 15/16 and 16/17 financial years of implementations including; WHO SLIPTA implementations, PT/EQA enrollment, Linkages between PBF and accreditation, equipment maintenance, compliance with environmental safeguards, performance for international accreditation, levels of support for AMR and Oncology. The comparison registered an inspiring positive change worth emulating by countries' lab networks.



Locations of the World Bank-funded East African Public Health Laboratories

Building Capacity for UNHLS Records and Archives program

Request forms for EID, sickle cell, viral load, TB and microbiology referred from public labs with other records including; SOPs, worksheets among others form part of UNHLS records system. Usability is not adequately attained due to limited quick location and retrieval. Between 05th – 09th June 2017 staff handling UNHLS records understood; how to benefit from institutional coding systems, to use records management tools for government health records registries, how to operate within the laws and ethics governing health records management, how to dispose off records and why, systems used elsewhere that support quick locations among others. This was through presentations by CoCIS, Makerere University and bench-marking tools demonstrations from Uganda Heart Institute records registry. Both UNHLS and UHI are part of MOH and are in a process of becoming semi-autonomous institutions.



UNHLS staff explaining challenges of UNHLS records

Lab Day: discover the unknown

On 7th June 2017, the PS, Dr. Atwiine Diana was the Guest of Honor for the Lab day organized at UNHLS with the theme “discover the unknown”. There was a reflection of Laboratory landscape in the country by IPs, ADPs, DHOs, Health workers, and 14 training schools including; UAHIMS mulago, Mildmay Uganda, Kampala Paramedix Institute, IHSU, Lira Medical Laboratory, Rubaga School of Medical Lab, Jinja School of Medical Lab, Kibuli School of Medical Lab Technology, Mayanja Memorial Hospital Lab School, St. Francis School of Health Science, Mukono, Nsambya School of Medical Lab, Ishaka Adventist School, KIU and Mengo. The reflection was focused on discovering the unknown potential of lab services in health care.

The PS assured all stakeholders that the national scheme of service for laboratory professionals will be approved and implemented by next financial year.



The PS, Dr. Atwiine Diana talking of the unknown potential of lab services during the Lab day

Trainers of Trainers to support the deployment of A-LIS

UNHLS HLIMS suite called ASLM-Lab Information System (A-LIS) is one of the software solutions to be piloted in public health facility laboratories in July 2017. It enables receiving electronic lab result report of referred samples and lab test requests from clinicians. It also generates electronic lab test result report, patient lab history, data values for HMIS 105-6, 033A, 033B, orders for supplies and lab information for referral samples.

The trainers of trainers (TOT) curriculum and training materials that featured in last month's eNotice Board issue were applied during a TOT of focal persons from 12 pilot sites in a 4-day TOT on 22nd June 2017 at UNHLS. The focal persons will have the ambassadorial role throughout the life of A-LIS at the facility while training laboratory personnel identified to use A-LIS.



ALIS Programmer responding to a question raised by a focal person

PICTORIAL



The PS, Dr. Atwiine Diana provides assurance that the scheme of service for lab professionals will be approved and implemented in the next financial year

On-going activities

- Ongoing country wide bio-safety audits in all public laboratories
- Reviewing the HIV Drug Resistance testing Protocol for submission to ethics bodies.

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