

UGANDA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (UNACOH)

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

1.0 Introduction

This report covers the activities carried out at local, national and international level during the year 2008. The activities undertaken were within UNACOH Operational Plan 2008 and Strategic Plan 2004-2008. The active participation of UNACOH members and continued support and collaboration of partners made it possible to achieve the results that are being reported. The main activities carried out included; developing the operation plan 2008, Project Development, Tobacco or Health program, Village Health Team strategy implementation program, 16th Annual scientific Conference and Dr. Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture, Newsletter publication, ECSAPHA activities and monthly National Executive meetings.

2.0 Annual Operational Work plan 2008

The first activity embarked on by National Executive Committee at the beginning of the year was, developing the action plan, which was successfully made with a total budget of Uganda shillings 509 million. Although the budget was not financed as expected, quite a number of activities were carried out with or sometimes without financial support. Thanks to the voluntary support and commitment of members.

3.0 Tobacco or Health program

3.1 Tobacco Control Project

In the effort to increase the capacity to become a stronger advocate for implementing the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), UNACOH accessed financial support in August 2008 from Health Canada through Canadian Public Association (CPHA) to implement the Tobacco Control Awareness Project that focused on Article 8: protection from exposure to second hand smoke, and Article 12: Education, Communication, training and public awareness of the FCTC.

The project covered 12 district branches of UNACOH in selected schools and workplaces. The program activities included among others; developing and disseminating IEC materials, Training of Trainers, Radio talks, school talks, workplace talks and follow up assessment. The target groups were teachers, pupils, students, parents, management, staffs and community. The project was completed on 20th March 2009. However, proposal for the extension was submitted to CPHA for possible funding.

3.2 Tobacco or Health Forum

UNACOH participated actively in the proceedings of the Forum throughout the year. Among the key activities conducted by the forum, was a workshop organized by Ministry of Health, which reviewed the Draft Tobacco Control Policy.

3.3 Representation at International Tobacco control meetings

In May 2008, UNACOH was represented by Dr. Victoria Mukasa in Accra, Ghana at the consultative meeting about Tobacco Control in Africa. The participants included representatives from government and non-governmental organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the key outcomes from the meeting included: a framework for the scaling up of tobacco control capacity in Africa, identified needs for the knowledge hub, activities and framework for the establishment of the knowledge hub among others. The workshop was sponsored by WHO – Tobacco Free Initiative and Canadian Public Health Association.

In November 2008, Mr. Nkonge Douglas represented UNACOH in Durban, South Africa at the 3rd African Regional Public Health Association Workshop for the Anglophone. There were follow up activities agreed upon for each Public Health Association. The workshop was organized and sponsored by Canadian Public Health Association.

4.0 The 16th UNACOH Annual Scientific Conference and 7th Dr. Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture

The 16th Annual Scientific Conference and 7th Dr. Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture took place 25-26 September, 2008, at Hotel Equatoria, Kampala. The theme of the conference was *“Primary Health Care, 30 years after the Alma Ata Declaration: What is Ugandan’s Position?”*

The Conference was attended by about 100 participants on both days. The conference drew participants across the country, with over 10 districts represented, including international participants from Canada, Malawi and Finland, among other countries.

The activities involved paper presentations and discussions on a number of topics in form of round table discussions, research papers and experience/situational analysis.

The year’s 7th Dr. Mathew Lukwiya was delivered by Dr. Sikyewunda, the District Medical Officer, Bundibugyo District, who together with the Guest of Honour, Hon. Dr. Emmanuel Otaala, MP, Minister of State for Health – Primary Health Care received appreciation awards. Also, at the same occasion, Mr. Gaby Jabbour, the Director of CPHA/CIII2 Program presented certificates of appreciation to Ministry of Health, Kyenjojo District Local Government and UNACOH for their contribution to the success of CIII 2/UNACOH Project, which was funded by CIII2 of Canadian Public Health Association, but coordinated by UNACOH and implemented by various stakeholders on the ground in Kyenjojo District, Uganda.

The sponsors for the conference included; Sino Africa Medicines and Health, Uganda Clays Ltd., CPHA, World Health Organization, Makerere University-Walter Reed Project, Rwams Allied Traders Ltd., RUDMEC, Century Bottling Company, The New Vision, Dr. J.H. Kyabaggu and Dr. J.M. Twa-Twa.

5.0 Newsletter

The Uganda Health Dialogue Newsletter Issue 33 was published in September 2008. A total 1,000 copies were produced and distributed to the conference participants, National Health Assembly, partners, district branches among others

6.0 Project Development

Three (3) project proposals were developed and submitted to prospective funders, one on tobacco control mentioned above was approved and funded, the two proposals also on Tobacco control were submitted to IDRC but were not successful. . In a related development, there was remarkable success in the fund-raising drive for the conference as reported above.

7.0 East, Central and Sothern Africa Public Health Association (ECSAPHA)

UNACOH as the convenor of ECSAPHA continued to maintain contact with the member Associations and used internet as a means communication.

In April 2008, Dr. D.K. Sekimpi, A.g. Executive Director, UNACOH and Secretary, ECSAPHA, attended a Conference on PHC and the Health Systems in Africa- in relation to the MDGs. The Conference was organized by WHO Afro, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Fasso 27-30 April 2008. He made a presentation on Public Health Associations in the Health Systems. One of the key outcomes from the conference was the Ouagadougou Declaration on Primary Health Care and Health Systems in Africa: Achieving better Health for Africa in the New Millennium. UNACOH and ECSAPHA have since continued to advocate for more national Public Health Associations to be formed or to more active in Public Health issues in Africa Region. To this end ECSAPHA and RASPAF (from Francophone West Africa) are spearheading a drive towards an African Public Health Associations Forum.

8.0 Village Health Team (VHT) implementation Program

UNACOH had two projects implemented based on the Village Health Team Strategy. The one funded by Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) and Canadian International Initiative for Immunization (CIII2). The project which ended in September 2008 was aimed at improving immunization coverage in Kyaka, Kyejojo District. The other project that is still on-going in Bujenje HSD, Masindi District. The project is funded by Barclays Bank and its intervention is on Malaria

Control. The Village Health Team Strategy is the practical implementation of Community Empowerment and Mobilisation for Health, using trained village members as agents of change.

9.0 National Executive Committee Meetings

The National Executive Committee conducted business at its monthly meetings. Some of the tasks handled included; guiding and reviewing the Secretariat work, developing annual action plan, organizing the conference and the Dr Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture, project planning and evaluation among others.

10. Conclusion

Despite very limited financial resources, UNACOH used the volunteer action of members and the modest financial support from international and local partners to achieve some gains for the health of Ugandans. We are grateful to all those who made this possible.