

# **UGANDA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (UNACOH) ACTIVITY REPORT FOR PERIOD JANUARY – DECEMBER 2007**

## **Introduction**

This report gives a summary of the activities carried out in 2007 according to UNACOH Strategic Plan 2004-2008. The five strategic objectives include: “to advocate and promote community and occupational health, and prevention of disease and injury”, “Membership Development Programme”, “Strengthening of Branches”, “Developing Sustainable Core funding” and “Strengthening UNACOH Secretariat”. The year 2007, had historical significance for UNACOH in a way that UNACOH marked her 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, held the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific conference and the 6<sup>th</sup> Dr. Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture.

## **Advocate, promote community and occupational health, and prevention of disease and injury**

There were a series of meetings held with relevant stakeholders in the effort to contribute and/or influence policies and decision making in as far as the health agenda is concerned. Some of the Organizations that UNACOH had close contacts and collaborative activities included: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, WHO, School of Public health, Parliament and other relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions. The activities in which officials from the foregoing organization were involved in include: East Central and Southern Africa Public Health Association (ECSAPHA) revitalization Workshop, The 15<sup>th</sup> UNACOH Annual Scientific Conference, Tobacco Research dissemination workshops, Village Health Team survey, Integrated Pesticide Management study, Malaria Control project Using Village Health Team (VHT) strategy in Masindi District, VHT Project on Improving Immunization Coverage in Kyenjojo District. Another collaborative activity was the Tobacco or Health monthly meetings organized by Ministry of Health, which UNACOH has continuously participated in activity.

At the international scene, UNACOH was represented at a number of fora namely: Leadership on Tobacco Control for Public Health Associations in Maputo, organized by Canadian Public Health Association in May 2007, attended Dr. Victoria Muksasa., Vice Secretary General of UNACOH then, She also represented UNACOH at the Global Health Professional Students Survey Analysis and Training Workshop supported by RITC/IDRC in August 2007, The WFPHA 11<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Public Health was attended by Dr. D.K. Sekimpi in August 2007, who was then the President of UNACOH. He also attended the Small Grants Workshop, organized by RITC/IDRC, Canada in May, 2007 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Scientific Conference of the East African Public Association and Tanzania Public Health Association in Arusha , November 2007.

In November 2007, UNACOH created a website: [www.unacoh.org](http://www.unacoh.org) which is operational. In addition, there were a number of publicity activities carried out, notably, TV feature programmes, Newsletter publication, and video documentaries for some activities.

## **Membership Development Programme**

The Secretariat updated the membership data base and kept in touch with the 21 District branches in the country. There were several visits and interactive meetings made with branches especially where there were on-going project activities .The membership recruitment exercise is an on-going activity and has continued for as long as there is an opportunity. The Annual General Meeting was

held in September, 2007 and new office bearers elected on the National Executive Committee, with Dr. H. Kyabaggu as the President for term 2008/2009

### **Strengthening of District Branches**

The District branch members have participated in some project implementations like Tobacco research and VHT Survey in the districts where these projects have taken place. The district branches have also been encouraged to develop project proposals and submit to potential funders for possible funding. There are some branches that have made the effort in this direction though not being successful.

### **Develop Sustainable Core funding**

The great task that the National Executive Committee embarked on during the year was to strengthen the working relationships and linkages with existing partners and creating new strategic partnerships. In addition, much effort was made in project proposal development and a remarkable success was achieved. The projects that were developed and funded include : Improving and Sustaining Immunization Coverage Using Village Health Team (VHT) in Kyaka Health Sub district, Kyenjojo District, funded by Canadian International Development Agency through Canadian Public Health Association. The Malaria Control Project, in Masindi District funded by Barclays Bank Uganda, proceeded by the fundraising drive by car washing organized by Barclays Bank Uganda... Also, a VHT survey, funded by WHO Global Health Workforce Alliance, Tobacco control Research was funded by Research for International Tobacco Control (RITC) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. The UNACOH 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Conference and 6<sup>th</sup> Dr. Mathew Lukwiya Memorial Lecture got financial support from several partners that included: UNICEF, WHO, Austrian Scholarship Programme among others.

### **Strengthening UNACOH Secretariat**

At the Annual General Meeting in September 2007, among other resolutions made, was the creation of the position of the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director with the aim of strengthening the Secretariat. Apparently, Dr. D.K. Sekimpi and Dr. Victoria Mukasa volunteered to act as Executive and Deputy Executive Directors respectively until UNACOH is in position to recruit full time paid personnel for the foresaid positions. In addition, two, University graduates have been attached to the Secretariat as volunteers and some members who on part-time basis handle specific tasks whenever called upon.