



*“Coordinating the TDDA programme in Uganda was a challenge and a privilege, at a time that was dominated by COVID-19. We began our work before the pandemic hit, supporting the government’s ambitions to strengthen health security, governance and accountability, surveillance and data use. We shifted quickly to new activities to communicate about COVID risks, reduce the spread of infection among communities and health workers, and advocate for vaccination. All this was done while sticking to our pre-pandemic objectives.”*

*“My personal highlight has been to pioneer the involvement of civil society organizations in health security. We helped provide training and supported them to conduct field work since when they have monitored National Action Plan for Health Security implementation, and undertaken COVID-19 vaccine advocacy, with impressive results.”*

*“All this could only be achieved thanks to close collaboration with national stakeholders and partners, with whom we worked closely to harmonize our activities for maximum impact.”*



**Dr. Winyi Kaboyo**  
Country coordinator, Uganda

## UGANDA

After almost four years of support from the TDDA programme, Uganda is building stronger health security systems. We were honoured to be an ally and facilitator in this progress that will help keep people safer from infectious diseases and other health risks that threaten to destroy lives and livelihoods. The capacities strengthened with TDDA’s technical and financial support - across civil society organizations (CSOs), border entry staff, district and village health teams – are tangible evidence of the fruitful partnerships we have forged together. They are achievements in which everyone involved can take pride.

Momentum in health security needs investment from all, from funders and multilateral institutions, to government bodies and civil society. We are working closely on this final stretch with government, as well as technical and financial partners, to secure commitments to support the health security work already underway. We are offering them our recommendations for how our pilots might be replicated and scaled up, with value-for-money a strong focus. We hope these reflections can contribute to a shared vision of a healthier, safer future for the people of Uganda.

The TDDA programme closes in November 2022. This is our last newsletter but we will continue to provide a range of resources via our website. In the meantime, we offer here a few parting insights into what we see as the most crucial next steps to strengthen health security and keep more people safe.



CSO-led community COVID-19 immunisation campaign well received in Mulamba Parish, Kamuli Municipality. Source: UDN

## Forging ahead with the National Action Plan for Health Security

Uganda’s National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) is a vital tool that equips the country so that we are better able to prevent, prepare for, and respond to, outbreaks of infectious diseases. To maximize its effectiveness, the plan’s implementation is best coordinated across national and sub-national levels. This is why we were delighted to support the government’s pioneering monitoring and evaluation (M&E) exercise involving eight districts in West Nile region.

### What next?

Our vision is for the government and its partners (such as WHO, CDC, Baylor Uganda, RTSL/IDI and USAID) to continue and extend this support to more districts, using the M&E tool we have developed and tested in West Nile. By monitoring NAPHS implementation at all levels, the country can ensure plans are kept on track and health security is strengthened for everyone.

## Maximizing civil society’s role in health security

Mobilizing communities makes a real difference to health security, especially during national health crises. In partnership with the National One Health Platform, which coordinates strategy and action across human, animal and environmental health, TDDA was pleased to support health security training for 39 staff from six CSOs. Our joint initiative means the CSOs now offer extra resources which can be used to strengthen the country’s health security plans and help extend services to reach vulnerable and marginalized communities. The success of CSO-led outreach campaigns during January 2022 demonstrated this potential. With our technical and funding assistance, the CSOs raised community awareness of health risks, including COVID-19, and helped to overcome vaccine hesitancy.

We are pleased to see the initiative has since been expanded, with four of our CSO partners (COTFONE, HEPS, TIU and UDN) cascading the training to a further 14 affiliated CSOs. This creates an extra pool of 42 trained staff, with the potential to be a strong community voice on behalf of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

### What next?

The role of CSOs in health security can continue to be strengthened through further training, and support for the invaluable field work they can deliver. Increasing their role in NAPHS monitoring can help improve governance and accountability in health security and service delivery in general. We hope the government and partners such as USAID, RTSL/IDI, and CSOs themselves will support these life-saving activities.



## Strengthening Community-Based Surveillance for faster responses to outbreaks

Strengthening health surveillance within communities ensures decision-makers have the data they need to quickly identify and manage public health events. Village health teams have close ties with the communities they serve. This makes them uniquely well-placed to report local outbreaks as soon as they occur so that swift action can be taken to prevent a wider health emergency.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH), TDDA assisted with surveillance training for 45 health workers and district health team members across three districts of Central region (metro Kampala, Mukono and Wakiso) as well as 119 members of village health teams in five newly designated cities in western and eastern Uganda. This training creates local, multi-disciplinary rapid response teams with the skills and knowledge to report and respond to public health emergencies. With recent outbreaks including anthrax, tuberculosis, typhoid fever and malaria, this is vital health security work.

### What next?

With technical and financial support from other partners such as WHO, CDC, Baylor Uganda and USAID, the MOH can drive Community-Based Surveillance (CBS) further forward. For example, we hope training can be cascaded to sub-district level within the three districts of Central region, to build the capacities of 90 village health teams. By targeting surveillance training, we can support greater geographical health equity, enabling swifter response to outbreaks in all communities and leaving no-one behind.

The quality, completeness and timeliness of the data gathered locally is also what makes CBS a success. Through regular reviews of data quality and electronic data platform use, surveillance will continue to improve, shortening the time between alerts and responses, and saving lives.

Department of Animal Health staff unpack rabies kits, supplied by TDDA



Celebrating International One Health Day with NOHP members and partners





**300+**

district health staff and village health team members supported through surveillance capacity-building and supervision

**100%**

of TDDA-trained CSOs supported vulnerable communities

**75%**

of reports received responses within target of 48 hours, following TDDA-supported CBS training in 4 districts

**200+**

border staff across 50+ Points of Entry received MOH training and supervision, with TDDA support

**100%**

of government, international partners and CSOs surveyed (Mar 2022) said TDDA's work makes a positive difference to health security

**81**

representatives from 20 CSOs trained in health security and COVID-19, with TDDA support

**6**

6 CSO-led pilot campaigns in support of COVID vaccine programme, assisted by TDDA

**78%**

increase in uptake of COVID-19 and polio vaccines in Masindi district, following CSO campaign

DAI Global Health leads a consortium of partners who work together to deliver the TDDA programme.

Principal partners



Resource partners



## Tackling deadly diseases in Africa



For more information go to:

[tacklingdeadlydiseasesinfrica.org](http://tacklingdeadlydiseasesinfrica.org)