

News for the Global TB Partnership News Letter,

Source: Uganda (Uganda Stop TB Partnership)

## **TB gets separate seats on the Global Fund, Uganda Country Coordinating mechanism (CCM)**

Following sustained efforts to have a separate seat for TB on the Uganda CCM board, the constituency's efforts were honored through a vote to the effect in May 2017. Before this time, like it is in many GF-supported countries, there was one seat shared by both TB and HIV constituencies. This was creating a challenge of TB being overshadowed. This situation, according to many stakeholders in Uganda, had led to inadequate attention being put on TB leading to undesirable effects. This state of affairs led to the sustained efforts that saw TB getting a separate seat at the CCM.

Following the above developments elections were held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017 to elect representatives on the board and Mr. Robert Nakibumba and Dr. Joseph Kawuma were respectively elected as substantive and alternate members of the Uganda Country coordinating mechanism (CCM) for the Global Funds for the TB constituency in a democratically well managed electoral process.



These developments came at a time when country is undergoing serious issues that need a paradigm shift in TB care and prevention and when efforts to this effect are underway. The population-based 2014/2015 TB prevalence survey reported higher incidence and prevalence of TB than originally

estimated (234 and 253) per 100,000 population as opposed to 159 and 161 respectively.

Dr. Kawuma has been a cornerstone in the National TB response and TB/HIV. In his acceptance speech the veteran TB Specialist said he was happy to be given the opportunity to serve in yet another capacity to fight TB. He was visibly happy that, as he put it, the national TB response was taking a paradigm shift. It is a great achievement; we have come a long way as a country. Dr. Kawuma has served and still continues to serve in a number of portfolios including national and international ones. He is currently serves in the following positions:

- ✓ Medical Adviser, German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association,
- ✓ Regional Adviser (GLRA East Africa Region),
- ✓ Member of Medical Advisory Board GLRA HQ.,
- ✓ Chair of the Sub-Group on CM-NTD for WHO AFRO

He also fulfills the responsibilities below:

- ✓ Member WHO Expert Panel on Leprosy Control
- ✓ Honorary Executive Secretary, Uganda Stop TB Partnership
- ✓ Member of the International Society of Dermatology (ISD)
- ✓ Member Board of Governors, Buluba Hospital (National Leprosy Referral and Training Centre)
- ✓ Patron, Uganda National Alliance Against Leprosy (UNALEP)
- ✓ Vice –President (for African region) of the International Leprosy Association (ILA)



***Mr. Robert Nakibumba and Dr. Kawuma delivering their acceptance speeches***

Mr. Nakibumba is a long time TB activists and has worked with many different organizations that implement or support TB or TB/HIV control activities. He had been the alternate member on the CCM representing the TB/HIV constituency but through his very good representation he managed to convince the board that the two diseases needed separate seats and his unwavering passion paid off eventually. He is involved in many researches including in TB vaccine research. For several years he has been at the forefront of Advocacy communication and social mobilisation for TB in Uganda and Globally.

Ms. Angela Mugume who attended the function as an observer for the electoral process from the Uganda Country Coordinating Mechanism congratulated the TB constituency and thanked the elected CCM members for accepting the responsibility ahead of them.

The TB constituency has a lot of hope in the representatives and they promised to work hard to deliver on the constituency needs among which include;

1. Increased advocacy (targeting decision makers) for more resources for TB and TB/HIV care and response.
2. Engaging non-traditional stakeholders (those beyond the TB in particular and the health fraternity in general
3. Engaging community structures and offering them technical assistance to effectively support TB initiatives
4. Empowering communities to be able to contribute to the national response against the disease

The community engagement in the TB response needs to be stepped up and engagement of many other non-state stakeholders is taking root. In the recent past three other important mile stones were achieved;

1. Formulation of a Uganda Parliamentary TB caucus
2. Formulation of a TB National coordination Committee for the Key top stakeholders to coordinate the national TB response
3. Engaging the private health sector to contribute to the National TB response is being enhanced.
4. Engaging non-traditional stakeholders are being brought aboard the national TB response.



*Group photo for some of the delegates after the TB CCM constituency elections*