

THE ACADEMY NEWSLETTER



It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the quarterly Academy for Health Innovation newsletter. At the Academy, we seek to nurture a culture of innovation, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and empower the healthcare community to leverage cutting-edge solutions for the betterment of society. In this newsletter, you can expect to find updates on our different projects and research in healthcare shared in Uganda and beyond. As we come to the end of the year, whether you are a seasoned professional, an aspiring innovator, or a dedicated supporter of healthcare progress, let this newsletter serve as a nexus for information, dialogue, and inspiration. Happy 2024.



Academy upgrades drug refill technology to support NCD & family planning services

To combat the rise of Non-Communicable Diseases among people living with HIV, the Ministry of Health (MoH) is working closely with the Academy, CDC, Africa Resource Centre & METS towards the development of new services that will now be available to the clients enrolled in ARTACCESS.

The new development will see people living with HIV (PLHIV) freely access medication for ailments like hypertension and diabetes, as well as family planning services like contraceptives when they come to receive their art refills at the pharmacies once every three months. These services are expected to be available starting in January 2024.

ARTACCESS is a web-based digital health system that links patient information on ART and viral load to an algorithm that guides a private community pharmacist on ART refills.

The Ministry adopted ARTsACCESS as a digital health system to support the Community Retail Pharmacy Drug Distribution Program (CRPDDP) as one of the Differentiated Service Delivery models. In this model, stable PLHIV receives ARV refills from the private pharmacies enrolled in the program within communities. ARTACCESS supports over **45,000** clients todate.



Academy partakes in development of Africa Digital Health Strategy

A five person delegation, led by the Academy Co-Lead Dr. Ruth Obaikol was present at the Mobile World Congress (MWC) from 17 - 19 October in Kigali to participate in the Africa Health Tech Summit.

The summit is the pinnacle of healthcare innovation in MWC Africa uniting the power of digital transformation with the potential of cutting edge healthcare solutions.

Dr. Obaikol & The Global Health Security (GHS) Senior Program Manager Dr. Rogers Ayebare participated in a forum to build the Africa digital health strategy. This exercise was led by Africa CDC in collaboration with the Commons Project.

The digital health strategy will increase digitization of health systems across Africa in order to improve efficiencies in healthcare.

MWC also provided the Academy with the opportunity to showcase its innovations alongside the Africa Centre for Excellence's (ACE) virtual reality that is used to teach cardio pulmonary resuscitation.



Academy takes centre stage at inaugural BRii spearheading innovation in health & capacity building for future leaders

The inaugural Biennale de la Recherche, de l'Innovation et de l'Industrialisation (BRii) was a confluence of diverse activities, encompassing exhibitions, strategic networking opportunities, and a significant colloquium dedicated to nuclear medicine.

Organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation in Senegal in collaboration with prestigious entities like IRESSEF, GERMN, and DAUST, the event attracted over 450 distinguished experts from around the globe with the overarching objective of delineating the landscape of innovation, pinpointing pressing challenges, architecting an ideal ecosystem for research and development, and exploring avenues for potential funding.

The Academy's role was instrumental, particularly in the health segment, where it led to the selection and engagement of industry luminaries for various sessions, exemplified by the participation of Dr. Martin Balaba. Further extending its impact, the Academy orchestrated two pivotal capacity building workshops at the Dakar American University of Science and Technology.

These workshops, focusing on Human-Centered design and Intellectual Property frameworks, were adeptly delivered in collaboration with our partners from the African Union and Laboremus Uganda, marking a significant contribution to nurturing the next generation of innovators and thought leaders.

Academy's ground breaking initiatives shine at Inaugural Uganda National Digital Health Conference

The Academy provided technical support to the Ministry of Health to successfully organise the first Uganda National Digital Health Conference. The two-day conference under the theme; *Leveraging Digital Health to Improve Efficiency in Service Delivery* attracted researchers, innovators, policymakers, and digital health vendors to discuss how the country can tap into the opportunities presented by digital health. The Permanent Secretary Dr. Diana Atwine encouraged the Academy to use the medical drones to transport of medical supplies like blood in hard to reach areas.

Two abstracts from the Academy (*Experiences of using unmanned aerial vehicles (Medical drones) to deliver ART in the Islands of Kalangala district, Uganda*) & *Using Digital Health Systems to scale the Community Pharmacy Refill Differentiated Service Delivery Model in Uganda: The ARTAccess™ Application* were also presented by the Social Sciences lead Jackie Ssemata and the Scale Theme Lead Eva Nakibuuka.

Global Digital Health Forum (GDHF)

We were honored to participate in the Global Digital Health Forum from 4th-6th December in Washington DC. Ms. Annet Nanungi made two presentations on ARTACCESS and the AHD toolkit application which helps health-care workers manage advanced HIV disease in resource constrained areas.

The audience that included tech vendors, donors, researchers, & middle income countries appreciated the Academy's ability to integrate the Ministry of Health in its innovations. This is a challenge that most of them noted have been facing.

Hub for Artificial Intelligence in Maternal & Sexual Reproductive Health (HASH)



Dr. Elizabeth Oseku, (HASH) project coordinator & Dr. Agnes (Innovate Theme Lead) attended the AI Global Health Meeting in Nairobi from 13 - 15 November 2023 to share their knowledge and experiences from the project.

The global health meeting brought together representatives of the eight hubs similar to HASH that are based in Asia, Middle East, North Africa and Latin America. This was the first physical meeting of the members and it provided an opportunity to for them to strengthen their connections.

AI4GH is a five year program funded by IDRC that supports researchers in the global south to strengthen health systems by leveraging contextualised responsible AI solutions to improve sexual, reproductive and maternal health and it promotes more effective preparedness & responses to epidemics and pandemics.

The Health Informatics in Africa Conference



The Health Informatics in Africa (HELINA) conference brought together experts, practitioners, researchers, and professionals from the healthcare and information technology fields to showcase some of the digital health innovations and research across the continent. Our software developer Annet Nanungi presented Call For Life PROVE, an IVR system used to monitor COVID-19 vaccination outcomes in Africa.

The Innovate theme Lead Dr. Agnes Bwanika, who successfully applied for the Graduates Research Grant Application that the HELINA SICHAT awarded in August 2023, also shared preliminary findings from her research, A Case Study Exploring the Value Chain, Enablers, Obstacles, And Business Models To Sustain Private Digital Health Business On Global Goods In Uganda: A Mixed Methods Concurrent Triangulation Study Design during the conference. Following her successful application, Dr. Agnes will now produce a manuscript on barriers, and enablers for private businesses, which will be published in the Journal of Health Informatics in Africa.



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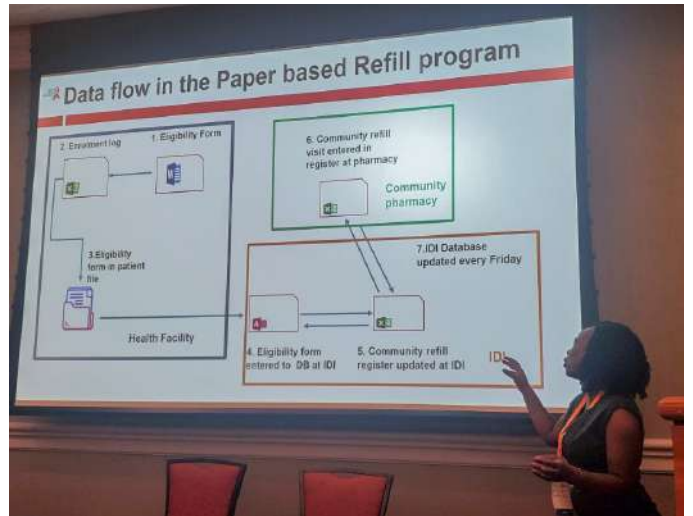
The Minister of Health Dr Ruth Aceng inspects the medical drones at Digital Health Conference



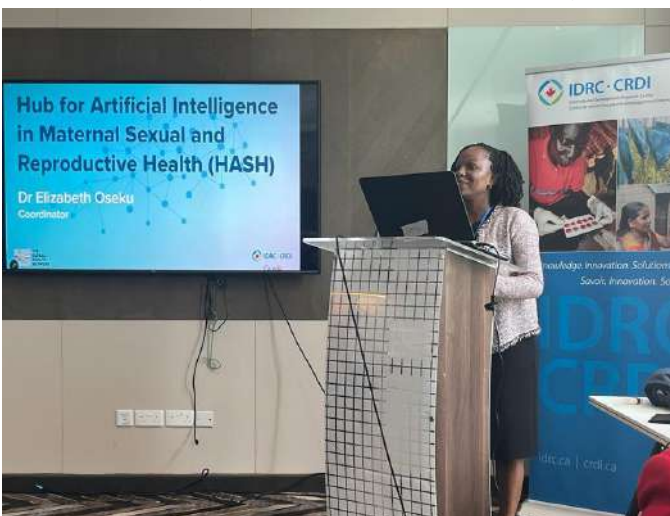
The Academy staff take guests through a role play at the IDI at 20 celebrations



Students interact with the Academy tent at the Youth & Innovation Expo held at Makerere University



Our software developer Annet Nanungi makes a presentation on ARTACCESS at GDHF 2023



The HASH project coordinator at the AI for Global Health Meeting 2023 in Nairobi



The Social Science team lead Jackie Ssemata & Scale theme lead Eva Nakibuuka present at UNDHC 2023