
Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
 **Religions for Peace**

IRCU NATIONAL HIV/AIDS CONFERENCE 2012
HELD AT HOTEL AFRICANA, KAMPALA, 10TH-12TH JULY
2012

**Theme: Harnessing Inter-Religious action and collaboration for
accelerated HIV/AIDS national response**

Sub-theme: Different Faith, one action

COMMUNIQUÉ

We, the religious leaders together with district leaders from 43 districts, representatives of implementing FBOs, health partners/stakeholders, development partners and other self-coordinating entities gathered here at Hotel Africana, Kampala, from 10th-12th July 2012, in our second National Conference on HIV/AIDS;

Having prayed, reflected and deliberated on the recent HIV/AIDS statistics (the Sero-Behavior Survey 2011) showing a rise in HIV prevalence (7.3%), and gaps in current responses and new strategies proposed to reduce new infections and subsequently reduce the number of people living with AIDS;

Aware of our role as religious leaders in ensuring a peaceful and HIV free Uganda, and the need to integrate HIV/AIDS in our day to-day work.

Convinced that we religious leaders have what it takes to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and provide care for those already affected by the disease;

Hereby Commit to:

- Continuously call people to God and encourage them to always follow his ways.
- Scale-up the spiritual and religious aspects that have proved effective in the HIV/AIDS response; such as prayer, self-control (faithfulness and abstinence).
- Undertake advocacy at national, district and community levels for long-term and sustainable response to HIV/AIDS.
- Build and nurture action-based partnerships with public (local and central governments) and private stakeholders.
- Scale-up and promote scientifically proven HIV prevention interventions such as PMTCT.
- Intensify mobilization of our communities for increased demand and uptake of HIV prevention, care and treatment services through mass media and other channels.

- Intensify our efforts towards prevention of gender-based violence as a driver in HIV infection through sensitization and awareness in families and communities.
- Avail our social, spiritual and material assets as inputs for scaling up HIV/AIDS services.
- Strengthen our intra and inter-religious coordination and networking for enhanced HIV/AIDS response.
- Educate the masses on right theology of prayer and healing.
- Combine prayer with medical attention as a strategy.

We recommend to various actors as follows:

Central Government

- To increase budget support to HIV/AIDS response from the current 11% to 40% by 2015.
- Strengthen the health care system to provide adequate mechanisms for quality HIV/AIDS services.
- Improve the supply chain management systems to ensure regular and adequate supplies of HIV/AIDS and other health commodities at lower level health facilities.
- Streamline and align Government policies in view of the emerging HIV/AIDS trends.
- The Marriage Act of 1904 in its current format is not fully supportive of Christian marriage and needs to be reviewed.

Local Governments

- Support faith-based efforts in mobilizing communities for uptake of HIV/AIDS services.

- Upscale monitoring and supervision of health facilities to ensure health worker attendance and prudent management of health commodities.
- Utilize religious structures for information dissemination and mobilization.
- Incorporate religious leaders and institutions on relevant district committees.
- Support FBO efforts in delivering HIV/AIDS and other health services to hard-to-reach areas.
- Provide technical and other relevant information to faith based institutions to enhance knowledge and action for effective HIV/AIDS response.

General Public

- To know that HIV/AIDS kills and does not have any cure as yet.
- Utilize available HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment services
- Participate and support HIV/AIDS service providers in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.
- Demand quality and adequate HIV/AIDS and other health services.
- Take personal responsibility in protecting ourselves against HIV/AIDS and protecting others from acquiring the disease.

We commit to God the Almighty and seek His guidance to enable us implement these commitments and recommendations.

Signed this 12th Day of July 2012 by:

**HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN JONAH LWANGA
CHAIRPERSON IRCU COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE RELIGIOUS FRATERNITY IN
UGANDA**