

# KANCO

Healthy people, empowered communities

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

February 6<sup>th</sup> - FEBRUARY 13<sup>th</sup>

2023

Vol 2/23

## UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS KENYA

**KANCO JOINS OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN A MEETING WITH WINNIE BYANYIMA VISIT TO KENYA AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF INCREASING INFECTION RATES IN THE COUNTRY**

The UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima, is on an official visit to Kenya.

Byanyima met the Kenyan Deputy President HE Rigathi Gachagua for a joint meeting hosted together with the a Delegation From the United Nations Body in Kenya Led by Resident Coordinator Stephen Jackson and Representatives From the Ministry of Health, Kenya, at Harambee House Annex Office.

Later on Monday, the UNAIDS Executive Director met civil society organisations and other stakeholders. KANCO's Executive Director Prof Allan Ragi gave his remarks during the meeting as one of the trailblazers in the concerted efforts to fight HIV/AIDS in Kenya.

The Executive Director also gave a public lecture at the University of Nairobi on 8<sup>th</sup> February. The lecture was premised on the topic "Can we end the injustice of AIDS in the world and be ready for the next pandemic?"

HIV infection in the country increased for the first time in 10 years according to The World Aids Day report 2022. The country recorded an increase in new HIV infections for the first time in a decade with more than 2,000 cases from 32,025 to 34,540.

In 2021 alone, the country recorded 34,540 HIV new cases.

The report attributed the increase to the constant new HIV infections among children, adolescents and younger people, and the shortage of HIV drugs.



Prof Allan Ragi Executive Director KANCO making his remarks during the meeting with Byanyima at the Pan Africa hotel, Nairobi on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

Byanyima stated that the UNAIDS salutes the Kenya government for its commitment to universal healthcare for all citizens. She urged HE Deputy President to include HIV services in the Universal Health Care package in order to end inequalities.

UNAIDS has helped Kenya in several ways in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The assistance in providing technical and financial support for the implementation of national HIV/AIDS programs and policies, as well as supporting the scale-up of access to life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) for people living with HIV and the strengthening of health systems and building the capacity of health care workers to provide comprehensive and quality HIV/AIDS services will help the country to continue fighting against the pandemic.

**NEWS****KANCO ATTENDS THE GLOBAL FUND PROJECTS REVIEW MEETING WITH OTHER SUB-RECEIPTS IN MOMBASA****KANCO, A KEY SUBRECEIPT WAS REPRESENTED IN THE EVENT BY SYLVIA AYON AND ELIJAH OTIENO**

Kenya through the Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism (KCM) started preparations in November 2019 to ensure timeliness in the submission of a sound funding request application. Key activities included the orientation of KCM members, a funding request development roadmap, the development of Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Writing Team and the nomination of a writing team. A funding request core team was set up composed of three members from the Government, three members from non-state and one member representing the development partners.

Kenya received the 2020-2022 allocation letter from The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria on, 16 December 2019. From the letter, Kenya had been allocated US\$ 415,310,170 for HIV, Tuberculosis, Malaria and building Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH).

**COVID 19 PANDEMIC**

The Kenya Global Fund 2021 – 2024 application process occurred during the peak of the COVID 19 pandemic. Consequently, most of the meetings were held virtually with constituencies supported with data bundles and airtime. This allowed more people to participate due to the reduced cost of travel and accommodation costs. At the same time, challenges posed by the virtual meetings included the use and access of the new technology for the application process.

Limited knowledge of the Global Fund guidelines  
The window for virtual meetings brought together teams with different levels of knowledge on the country's health strategic plan, data and the Global Fund guidelines. Some of the application materials were new to some members with others citing challenges with some of the technical language used in the application process.

**CONSULTANTS**

Some of the respondents indicated that their consultants were not helpful and did not understand their language and needs. Complaints of arrogance and intimidation were leveled against the consultants engaged to support the Key Populations and



During the Global Fund Meeting in Mombasa

Adolescent young people.

**LIMITED RESOURCES**

The civil society expressed a lack of adequate resources to participate fully in engagements and dialogues. They indicated that they had no budget provision, unlike the state officers for whom participation was supported by hefty allowances which also affected participation in the writing.

**COUNTRY DIALOGUES**

CSOs highlighted the lack of strategic and meaningful engagement which involved and incorporated all members in the process. The CSOs indicated that they were shot down and intimidated by the GOK officials who outnumbered them in the meetings. The dialogue meetings did not reach the community levels.

**STATE DRIVEN**

While the process was cited as the most inclusive ever, the civil society representatives viewed the process as mainly state-driven. They stated that the state had more say in what was finally put down in the application document by taking common positions on matters of discussion and out-numbering them.

**PR SELECTION**

The PR selection running concurrently with the FR brought uncertainty which interfered with the commitment of some FR team members. The late inclusion of KRCS as a PR affected resource allocation for HIV with a huge that should have gone to communities going to the state.

**NEWS**

**THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE CONVENES INAUGRAL CANCER SUMMIT**



Health CS Nakhumicha Wafula, National Cancer Institute of Kenya CEO Dr. Alfred Kiragu and the Chairperson Dr. Githinji Gitahi pose for a photo at the Cancer Summit (Photo Courtesy of Nakhumicha Wafula)

**Key Facts:**

- The two days summit sought to review the status of the cancer response to date in line with the Cancer Prevention and Control Act 2012 and the attainment of Universal Health Coverage.
- The summit also aims to commit to a joint action plan and define a results accountability framework for cancer prevention and control in Kenya.

The National Cancer Institute of Kenya Cancer Summit was held from 2nd-3rd February 2023 at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.

Breast, cervical, prostate, oesophagus and non-Hodgkins lymphoma are the five top cancers in the country. According to the National Cancer Institute CEO Alfred Karagu, these five cancers account for nearly half (48 per cent) of the cancer burden in the country. Notably, cervical and breast cancers contribute to almost a quarter (23 per cent) of all cancer-related deaths in the country.

Currently, two out of every three persons diagnosed with cancer will die of the disease since 70 per cent of cases are diagnosed in advanced stages, when a cure

is impossible.

The summit which was attended by local and international cancer stakeholders evaluated the progress made in the war against cancer.

The theme of the inaugural cancer summit is “Uniting our voices and taking action”.

The convention on cancer control will be held alongside the global commemoration of World Cancer Day, each February so as to enhance joint advocacy efforts in cancer control.

The National Cancer Summit 2023 provided an appropriate platform for stakeholders from across all sectors to review the progress made over the last 10 years in addressing the cancer burden.

It will also identify areas of learning from successful strategies and together, formulate solutions for collective action.

**MRS. IRENE KAMAU, KANCO BOARD MEMBER RECEIVES HER BIZZ AWARD**

KANCO was awarded the Bizz Award last year in December. This prestigious award recognises the exceptional work that the organization has been doing to address on Health advocacy.

The Executive Director KANCO and his board members were awarded for their astute leadership, as the



Irene receives her Bizz award from Prof Allan Ragi

institution was awarded for being in the apex of advocacy.

The award not only brought recognition and accolades to KANCO, but it has also provided a boost to the morale of the staff and volunteers who have been working tirelessly to make a difference in the world. The award serves as an encouragement for KANCO to continue its work and strive to make an even greater impact in the future.

**ALL IN A DAYS WORK...**

*Doctor: "I have some bad news and some very bad news."*

*Patient: "Well, might as well give me the bad news first."*

*Doctor: "The lab called with your test results. They said you have 24 hours to live."*

*Patient: "24 HOURS! That's terrible!! What could be worse? What's the very bad news?"*

*Doctor: "I've been trying to reach you since yesterday."*

## WE NEED REALISTIC HEALTHCARE REFORMS



Through a number of health-care reforms, Kenya has demonstrated its intention to extend financial risk protection and service coverage for poor and vulnerable groups. These reforms include the provision of free maternity services, user-fee removal in public primary health facilities and a health insurance subsidy programme for the poor. However, the available evidence points to inequity and the likelihood that the poor will still be left behind with regards to financial risk protection and service coverage. This study examined the experiences of the poor with health financing reforms that target them.

Health financing reforms comprise a crucial part of the development of the health sector in low and middle-income countries. Ongoing global debates have been advocating for health systems to transition from high dependency on out of pocket payments towards prepayment arrangements that enhance financial risk protection for the

poor. The Kenyan constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to the highest achievable standard of health, which entails the right to health services. In addition, Kenya has made a commitment to reform its health financing system to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) by the year 2022. The goal of UHC is to ensure that everyone can use the health services they need without the risk of impoverishment.

Pro-poor health financing reforms improved access to care for the poor to some extent. However, there is a need to address barriers to healthcare seeking across all access dimensions.

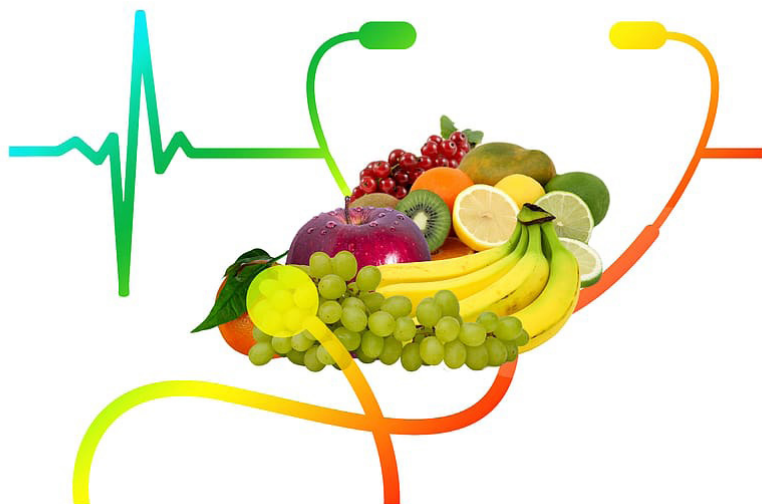
A PUBLICATION OF KENYA AIDS NGOS  
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## WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF M-HEALTH?

The global mHealth market size was valued at USD 56.8 billion in 2022 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.8% from 2023 to 2030. The rising focus on improving personal health and fitness using smart devices and wearables is the major factor accelerating market growth. Besides, increasing penetration of the internet and smartphones and growing adoption of mHealth technology and platforms by physicians and patients are also anticipated to propel market growth. Furthermore, the rising penetration of digital health services for remote patient monitoring is also increasing the demand for mobile health apps, which in turn is expected to propel market growth over the forecast years.

One of the key advantages of mHealth is its ability to improve patient engagement and communication with healthcare providers. Patients can use mHealth applications to track their health status, schedule appointments, receive reminders for medication and treatment, and communicate with their healthcare providers through secure messaging platforms. These tools can also provide patients with access to educational resources, support groups, and other forms of health information.

Despite its many potential benefits, mHealth also presents a number of challenges. For example, there are concerns about privacy and security, as personal health information can be vulnerable to hacking and theft. There are challenges related to interoperability.



Thomas Alva Edison once said that the doctors of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition. We could as well be already living in that future!

Our fast-paced lives have made junk foods a part of our lives. While clean eating and keeping unhealthy meals at bay is important, we need the motivation to make those changes.

The world of nutrition is constantly evolving, and new trends emerge every year. While some of these trends are based on solid scientific evidence, others are driven by marketing and social media. In this article, I will discuss some of the most prominent trends in nutrition today, and provide my opinion on their merits and drawbacks.

First, let's talk about plant-based diets. This trend has been gaining popularity in recent years, with more people choosing to eliminate or reduce their consumption of animal products in favor of plant-based foods. Proponents of plant-based diets are

healthier, more environmentally sustainable, and more ethical. They point to studies showing that a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes can reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

While I agree that a diet rich in plant-based foods can be very healthy, I think it's important to recognize that not all plant-based diets are equal. For example, a diet that consists mostly of junk food such as potato chips and French fries is not likely to be very healthy, regardless of whether it is plant-based or not. It is also important to consider individual nutrient needs and personal preferences when choosing a diet. For example, some people may find it difficult to get enough protein on a strictly plant-based diet, and may need to supplement their diet with plant-based protein powders or other sources of plant-based protein.

Another trend in nutrition is the use of functional foods. These are foods that are specifically designed to have a health benefit beyond their

basic nutritional value. For example, some functional foods are fortified with vitamins and minerals, while others are formulated to help with weight management or to improve gut health.

While I think that functional foods can be useful in certain circumstances, I think it's important to be cautious when using them. For example, many functional foods are high in added sugars or other unhealthy ingredients, and may not actually provide the health benefits that they claim to offer. Additionally, relying too heavily on functional foods can make it difficult to maintain a balanced diet, as people may become too focused on these foods and neglect other important components of a healthy diet, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

In conclusion, while new trends in nutrition emerge all the time, it's important to approach them with a critical eye and to consider their potential benefits and drawbacks. Rather than jumping on the latest trend, I think it's important to focus on eating a balanced diet.



#### ENLIGHTENMENT

*Did you know that there are people who are immune to certain types of pain? This is a real condition called Congenital Insensitivity to Pain (CIP), which is a rare genetic disorder. People with CIP are unable to feel pain, and this can result in a number of serious health problems, such as repetitive injury, tissue damage, and joint destruction. It can also make it difficult for individuals to recognize when they are injured or sick, which can lead to delayed treatment and further complications. Despite the challenges that come with this condition, it has also provided valuable insights into the biology of pain, and has helped researchers to better understand how the nervous system processes pain signals.*

# MY DATA OUR HEALTH

#MyDataOurHealth

"Health data is the pulse  
of your well-being,  
measure it regularly for  
a healthier life."

Join the global campaign demanding regulation  
on the use of your personal health data

Join the movement [bit.ly/mydataourhealth](https://bit.ly/mydataourhealth)

**KANCO**  
Healthy people, empowered communities



**Transform  
Health**

## EXCERPTS

**DR YUSUF KODWAWALLA DAWOOD OF THE SURGEONS DIARY RESTS AGED 94**

*In memory of one of the most influential medical columnists, we feature one of his pieces on the Sunday Nation*

A few years ago, while I was flying from Dublin to London, I saw a catchy headline in a British newspaper that I read: “How playful squeeze by a husband saved his wife’s life.”



Dr Yusuf Kodwawalla Dawood  
(Photo courtesy of Daily Nation)

Under the caption was the news item which ran as follows: “A husband saved his wife’s life when he playfully touched her breast and felt a hard lump. The wife was diagnosed with cancer within a week. She had the growth removed soon after and being diagnosed early she was pronounced cured.”

The wife’s comment, also mentioned in the newspaper, was equally interesting: “If my husband hadn’t given me that squeeze, it might have been too late as the cancer could have spread farther.”

As a surgeon who has devoted a significant part of his professional life to the female breast, I could see in this true story a salutary message for my readers and patients. And I saw a useful message to promote the breast cancer awareness campaign — in which I was heavily involved. It would sound something like this: please, please examine your breasts regularly. If you wish to delegate this duty to someone else, that is entirely up to you. The important thing is the examination of your breasts. As to who carries it out is immaterial — surgically speaking!

As I sipped my Irish Jameson whisky and munched on the news item, I was taken a few years back and was reminded of one of my patients who went one stage further than the lady in the newspaper.

I was flying to a Surgeon’s Conference in Bangkok when a bustling old lady with a round unwrinkled cherubic face and short curly coppery grey hair reached out.

“Doctor, you may not remember me but you took out my gall bladder 20 years ago. Of course I was much younger and glamorous then. Perhaps showing you my scar will remind you.”

She started to unbutton her blouse quickly. Flushed with embarrassment, I said I believed her — much

to the amusement of the passengers and crew near us. Little did I know I would encounter Mrs Jenkins years later.

This triggered the memory of an incident when the shoe had been on the other foot. Marie and I were staying in our usual haunt on the North Coast in Mombasa for Easter. One evening as we took our daily walk on the beach, I was confronted by a buxom lady wearing a skimpy bikini.

“Doctor, do you remember me?” she asked, stretching her hand out to shake mine. I was trying to remember who she was and how to respond to this overt sudden challenge appropriately.

I was a bit anxious as Marie was watching this encounter with more than a passing interest. Looking at my totally blank face, and presumably to give me a clue, the lady added: “Five years ago, you removed a very large lump from my breast and told me you had done so through a tiny keyhole incision which would leave me with a scar almost invisible.”

Relieved to know she had no incriminating evidence against me, and elated by her complimentary remark, I replied, “Now madam, if you had shown me the scar first, I would definitely have recognised you!”

A few years later I bumped into Mrs Jenkins walking around Muthaiga on the arm of a handsome elderly gentleman.

“Hello again, doctor. How wonderful it is to see you again!”

She indicated to the gentleman that she wanted a private chat with me. She said that she had met the gentleman a few weeks early and had come to spend the weekend with him.

Excerpt courtesy of Sunday Nation. You can read the full article [here](#).

**PERLS OF WISDOM**

*“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”*  
- Edmund Burke

KEEP THE  BLAZING!

