

A Match Made in Health: When NIPH, Makerere University, and the Uganda National Institute of Public Health Join Forces

In a significant development for public health research and collaboration between Norway and Uganda, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH), Makerere University School of Public Health (MAKSPH), and the Uganda National Institute of Public Health (UNIPH) have signed a Collaboration Agreement, focusing on the themes of health systems resilience and digital health.

In May 2023, Uganda Country Coordinator Mahima Venkateswaran travelled to Kampala for a fourth time under the [Building Stronger Public Institutions and Systems \(BIS\)](#) program and finalized the signature of a Collaboration Agreement between the three parties. This partnership aims to enhance research capacities, foster knowledge exchange, and address critical health challenges in Uganda, with a particular focus on two projects; harnessing experiences to build health systems resilience, and strengthening the civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems in Uganda.

Photo 1: BIS Uganda Country Coordinator Mahima Venkateswaran looks on as Dr Alex Ario Riolexus, Director of UNIPH, signs the Collaboration Agreement



Investing in the next generation of researchers and professionals is crucial for the long-term impact of any collaboration. The collaboration between NIPH, MAKSPH, and UNIPH recognizes this, and the inclusion of two PhD students to support the two projects, Denis Okethwangu and Evelyn Asio, is an integral part of the strategy. Denis and Evelyn are well underway with their admission to Makerere University School of Public Health, with technical advisors from UNIPH and NIPH, and are already proving to be important and dedicated members of the team.

Photo 2: Evelyn Asio, PhD student supporting the BIS Uganda project, participates in the Bergen Summer Research School Program, June 2023



In the land of public health collaborations, building networks is the name of the game! NIPH, MAKSPH, and UNIPH are on a mission to expand connections in Uganda and beyond. The goal is to establish connections with organizations such as WHO and UNICEF as well as other actors in public health in Uganda, and these organizations will be invited to participate in several thematic workshops as the BIS Uganda project progresses.

The collaboration agreement between NIPH, MAKSPH, and UNIPH marks an important milestone in public health research and intervention in Uganda.

“The signing of the Collaboration Agreement marks an important milestone in our partnership”, says Country Coordinator Mahima Venkateswaran. “The project team on the ground in Kampala, supported by Denis and Evelyn, is already taking ownership of activities and milestones, and there is clear commitment to the project's success. I look forward to working with the team over the next few years and believe that our collective efforts will

make a substantial contribution to improving public health outcomes and strengthening health systems in Uganda.”

More information on the BIS Uganda project can be found at [The Building Stronger Public Health Institutions and Systems \(BIS\) Program in Uganda](#)