

NEW NEW CONFERENCE ANOUNCEMENT

Twenty Five Years of the Uganda Trypanosomiasis Control Council
(UTCC): Sharing Partnership Experiences and Achievements

JINJA, UGANDA, 14TH OCTOBER 2017

Introduction

Human African Trypanosomiasis (Sleeping sickness), a tsetse transmitted disease, is mainly a problem of poor rural populations who primarily depend on their land and labour for livelihood. The disease affects all age groups especially the most productive age group of 15-45 years and is 100% fatal if not treated. For the past decade, Uganda has been registering declining numbers of HAT cases.

Animal African Trypanosomiasis (AAT) commonly known as Nagana is one of the most significant constraints to livestock production in Uganda. Continentally, the disease is presumed to be widely spread across the tsetse-infested territories of sub-Saharan Africa, with over 60million cattle at risk of AAT infection. Unfortunately, these animals also serve as reservoirs for the rhodesiense type of sleeping sickness. The true picture of AAT spatial distribution for the entire country remains a challenge as no comprehensive national disease survey is known to have been conducted.

Tsetse infestation negatively impacts on human health, livestock production and productivity and limits land utilization. There are 11 sub-species of tsetse belonging to the Genus of *Glossina* in Uganda. The most predominant tsetse subspecies is the *G. f. fuscipes* which is currently the known vector responsible for both HAT and AAT transmission. Over 140,000 Km² of the land surface of Uganda is infested with tsetse flies with varying levels of infestations.

Justification

In history, a lot of effort has been put towards solving the Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis problem in the region and Uganda in particular. The set agenda of HAT elimination as a human health constraint by 2020 remains alive among the different government agencies and partners involved in HAT control in the country. While the numbers of HAT cases have reduced significantly in both foci for the last

10years, there is every reason for the players, both local and international, to exert maximum effort to achieve total elimination. This event is one supportive activity that gives stakeholders an opportunity and platform to evaluate what has been achieved towards the elimination agenda and setting options for consideration onto the drawing board for HAT and AAT elimination.

UTCC as a national agency is mandated to coordinate all activities / efforts that drive the HAT elimination agenda in the country. Therefore, during this event, UTCC and its partners will take stock and share experiences of what has been achieved during the past 25yrs of its existence. The conference is expected to show case what has been achieved and what is in plan with respect to the long-term plan by the different partners for elimination of HAT and AAT in Uganda. It is highly envisaged that stakeholders will get an opportunity to understand the traces of HAT scales during the low and high tides. Thus, it is expected that various partners together with UTCC, will lay on table the nature of support that will be needed to achieve the goal of elimination of trypanosomiasis.

Objectives

1. Take stock of what UTCC has achieved over the 25years and draw strategies for what remains to be done to achieve trypanosomiasis elimination?
2. Mobilize communities and stakeholders through setting up demonstrations depicting tsetse control, HAT and AAT diagnosis, surveillance and elimination during the 3days' celebration engagements
3. Recognize and re-energize the UTCC institution for its 25years of service.
4. Increase access to national and international collaboration in support of HAT and AAT elimination efforts in Uganda through targeted dialogue.

The UTCC Secretariat will use three days for community engagement on interventions in the different regions of the country. Partners on different projects are expected to be with the COCTU teams on the ground. Two days will be devoted to practical field visitations by conference participants in selected communities and health centers. There will be demonstrations within the community setting of tsetse control technologies and disease diagnosis and treatment approaches. Major activities will include; tsetse trapping, animal spraying, human screening, livestock screening, training and sensitization. The third day will be fully devoted to the conference at a hotel venue in **Jinja** with approximately 100 core participants. However wider information dissemination using TV, radio and news print will run for the three days.

Invitation

This is to cordially invite you to be part of the celebrations as UTCC / COCTU marks its 25 years in existence. Please do send us your expression of interest to attend as soon as possible to facilitate better planning for the event. We encourage those that have a story to tell to send us abstracts on *the theme 'experiences on partnerships in the control of tsetse and trypanosomiasis in Uganda'* early enough to enable review and communicate back early enough on those selected for oral or poster presentation. Contact: admin@coctu.go.ug

The following partners have already expressed interest and readiness to attend the celebrations; WHO, UoE, LSTM, FIND, CEVA, IKARE, etc in addition to the many local partners

Prof. Charles Waiswa
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
COCTU
WWW.COCTU.GO.UG