

# THE ROLE OF CULTURAL AND TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO TACKLE HIV AND OTHER HEALTH ISSUES

**Prof. Twaha K. Kaawaase PhD)**

**1<sup>ST</sup> DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTRATION, ICT AND INNOVATION,  
KINGDOM OF BUGANDA**

**Chiang Mai, Thailand / 16 December 2022.**



- ❑ UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador for ending AIDS among men (since March 2017)
- ❑ Trusted, listened to and influential in the Country, Region & Africa
- ❑ Positively harnessing cultural norms, beliefs, practices and customs in the fight against HIV and other health issues

**HM The Kabaka (King) Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II**



## The King's birthday cultural norm and the Annual Kabaka Birthday run

- ❑ A platform to sensitise people on HIV Prevention, Testing, ARV uptake, discouraging stigma
- ❑ Started with 1,000 participants in 2014 to 80,000 in 2022 [2023 : 100,000; 2024 : 120,000, 2025 : 150,000]
- ❑ 2014-2017 : Fistula theme
- ❑ 2017-2019: Sickle cells theme
- ❑ 2020 – 2022: ‘Men are stars’ in the HIV fight to save the girl child
- ❑ 2023 – 2025 : HIV campaign to continue



## The traditional cultural Fire Place Meetings” [Ebyoto]

- ❑ Deployed to create awareness, and advocacy and prevention of HIV/AIDS. In a day we have 174 ‘byooto’ & find men and youth in their localities.
- ❑ HIV/AIDS prevention messages have been disseminated using the cultural structures; Masaza(Counties), Magombolola (sub-counties) Miruka (parishes) and Byalo-Batongole (Village).



## The traditional administrative units (18 Masaza/counties + 52 Clans) football Tournaments

- Attracts over 30,000 fans 'Buganda wide', provides direct audience to disseminate HIV fight messages to men and youth
- We find Men and Youth in their environments with the same messages



## The traditional annual King's Canoe Regatta (18 Masaza /Counties & 52 Clans) competitions

- ❑ Attracts over 10,000 fans, provides direct audience to disseminate HIV fight messages to men and youth.
- ❑ Competitions put up to find Men and youth in their environments

# Some negative cultural norms and beliefs 'modified' due to prevalence of HIV

- Cementing brotherhood through blood contact with the use of coffee beans (Okutta omukago)
- Celebrating the birth of Twins (Initiation ceremonies)



# The Impact

This approach has significantly improved HIV- Cultural- related behaviors in Buganda Kingdom between 2016 and 2020 including;

- ❖ Increased knowledge of HIV status from 89% to 94%,
- ❖ Increased HIV treatment coverage from 64% to 92% .
- ❖ A 52% decrease in new HIV Infections.





*Appreciation Award*

Presented to

Your Majesty  
Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II  
For your role as  
UNAIDS Africa Goodwill  
Ambassador







Other African Cultural leaders have often visited the Kabaka discussions have been on the HIV theme and other health issues

# COMMITMENT FROM THE KINGDOM OF BUGANDA.

The Kingdom of Buganda commits to continue the campaign for HIV/AIDS and other health related issues awareness, advocacy and prevention in Buganda and Uganda.



The full documentary on Buganda Kingdom's leveraging of culture to engage Men in the fight against HIV is available at the link below.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YwyawCnsYDbKWw7gEhxlXJsmwK4brpQQ/view?usp=share link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YwyawCnsYDbKWw7gEhxlXJsmwK4brpQQ/view?usp=share_link)

# CONTACTS

---

**Oweek. Charles Peter Mayiga**  
**The Katikkiro of Buganda**  
**Bulange Building, Bulange Mengo**  
**P.O.Box 7451**  
**Kampala**  
**UGANDA**

[www.buganda.or.ug](http://www.buganda.or.ug)  
[katikkiro@buganda.or.ug](mailto:katikkiro@buganda.or.ug)

**Prof. Twaha Kigongo Kaawaase (Ph.D)**  
**First Deputy Katikkiro & Minister in Charge of**  
**Administration, ICT & Innovation**  
**Chairman Kabaka Birthday Run**  
**Bulange Building, Bulange Mengo**  
**P.O.Box 7451**  
**Kampala**  
**UGANDA**

[twahakaawaase@buganda.or.ug](mailto:twahakaawaase@buganda.or.ug)  
+256 772 525235 | 708 525235