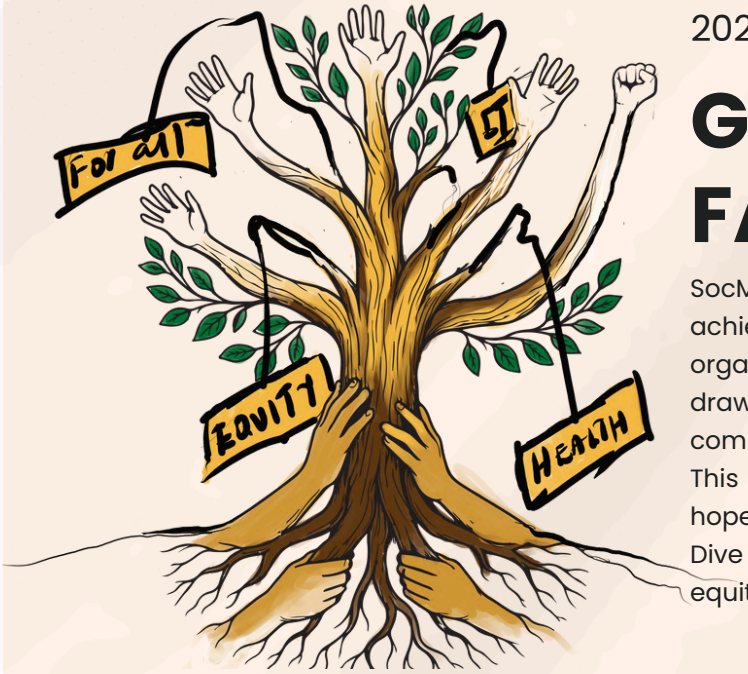
END OF YEAR

NEWSLETTER

December, 2025 Vol.1



2025 in a wrap:

GROWTH IN THE FACE OF CHANGE

SocMed Global Uganda proudly celebrates the year's achievements and milestones as a registered national organization led by the social medicine course alumni, drawing on over 10 years of learning, activism, and community engagement.

This newsletter celebrates progress, leadership, and hope.

Dive in to explore inspiring stories shaping health equity in Uganda!

- **The Social Medicine Course at 15**

  It is 15 years since the Social Medicine course was first introduced in Uganda, and this year, we continue to celebrate the impact the course has created.

- **Alumni Spotlight**

  Join us in celebrating the incredible achievements of the Social Medicine course alumni! Check out who is on the spotlight this month and why!!

TOP NEWS

Policy Development Course

The three-month Global Health Policy Development and Advocacy course held in partnership with the University of Washington empowered CAR members with new skills, cross-country insights, and stronger policy analysis capacity. This milestone program is shaping the next generation of leaders driving debt justice and health equity.



LEADING WITH A SOCIAL MEDICINE LENS

Lucky Ariho, the 37th Guild President of Mbarara University of Science and Technology shares with us the impact of the social medicine course in his role.

ABOUT US

“HEALTH EQUITY FOR ALL”

We are a team of like-minded health professionals who strive to reimagine equitable approaches to healthcare delivery, education, and research that centers communities experiencing and living the effects of social, economic, cultural, geographical, and political disenfranchisement.



- **Vision**

A world of Equity

- **Mission**

To promote healthy equity through practice, education, research, and empowerment



- **Our Programs**

We are committed to four core program areas: Social Medicine education, Service to Community, Campaign Against Racism, and broad Community Outreach

Read More

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"GROWTH IN THE FACE OF CHANGE"

In a quest for a just and fair society, SocMed Global Uganda continues to assert its presence, inspired by our shared stories, lived experiences, and a critical analysis of what is right and not right within our society. Today, the alumni of the Global Health in Local Contexts course have intentionally stepped forward to create a body that coalesces dreams, passion, enthusiasm, and efforts for social justice within Uganda.



From Haiti, to the United States, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Uganda, social medicine alumni have consistently demonstrated the value of viewing health experiences, policies, and systems through a social medicine lens. In Uganda, they have applied these principles across education, campaigns, community services, and outreach.

This newsletter is a testament of progress and inspiration. As you read it, we sincerely hope that you will be inspired by the stories of our colleagues and that you will consider being an active part of our growing community of social medicine leaders, educators, practitioners, and researchers. It shares their leadership, academic journeys, and passionate work, offering hope and momentum.
We look forward to continued growth and engagement in the new year.



Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.
~Alex O. Owilli

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

New Team Member Alert

THIS IS MERCY, OUR NEW COORDINATOR!

Meet Mercy Jane Aceng, an alum of the 2024 cohort, and our new coordinator. We're delighted to have her onboard and excited for the inspiring impact she brings. Welcome, Mercy; here's to an amazing chapter ahead!



CULTIVATING GROWTH FOR SUCCESS AND FULFILLMENT



Storytelling for Health Equity

RONALD'S MILESTONE

We are thrilled to celebrate Ronald Kyambadde upon successful completion of the course: "*Media and Medicine: How to Tell Stories That Make a Difference*" from Harvard Medical School. We are excited to witness this achievement strengthen storytelling as a powerful tool for health advocacy. Ronald's insights will surely amplify the voices of underserved communities, enrich narratives, and inspire meaningful change in healthcare access and equity across Uganda. Congratulations, Ronald!

Resilience in Motion: A Determined Journey Worth Celebrating

ESSIEN'S JOURNEY

This year, we proudly celebrate Essien as he begins a new chapter in the UK, pursuing an MBA in Healthcare Management at York St John University alongside a part-time MPH (Health Policy and Management).
Essien's academic milestones reflect a deep commitment to building equitable, people-centered health systems.

According to him, continued engagement with the Global Health in Local Contexts course has strengthened his dedication to social medicine, narrative justice, and transformative health education.

As a member of the core faculty for the Global Health in Local Contexts course, his work continues to bridge communities, challenge systemic inequities, and expand spaces where health and dignity are accessible to all. We are honored to witness his growth and evolving contributions to this global movement.



GHLC CLASS OF 2025



A Journey Through

The 2025 Social Medicine Course

Our vibrant Social Medicine cohort shone brightly this year, with remarkable commitment and passion. It was a joy to journey with them, and we proudly celebrate their growth.

We're thrilled to see a new set of health equity advocates join the globe, and so excited for the meaningful change they are poised to drive!







"Fifteen years after the social medicine course first began in Uganda, its momentum and impact remain stronger than ever"

A student's reflection

"Now, when I look at my community, I see systems, histories and the quiet "why" behind every health outcome. I have learned to interrogate problems beyond the surface. To see the roots, not just the leaves. To see patterns instead of isolated symptoms. To understand injustice not as coincidence but as design. The faculty created a space where learning felt intentional and human. I leave with heightened awareness and the courage to speak about what is broken. I hope to carry this forward to advocate for systems that heal from the roots, not just patch up wounds or symptoms. "

- Nagawa Hellena

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EXPERIENTIAL TRIPS



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

alumni on the spotlight



BRIAN TURIGYE

(Alum of 2017 cohort)

Brian is advancing health equity through impactful maternal and newborn health research at Mbarara University of Science and Technology, where he coordinates key studies, mentors several scientists, and leads the PhD Symposium. We celebrate these enormous contributions to health and wish him continued success.

TATIAN MUWANGA

(Alumnus of 2015 cohort)

More than 1.75 billion children worldwide lack access to safe surgical care, with most living in low-income countries. Despite its scale, this crisis often remains invisible within global health priorities, overshadowed by political and economic agendas. While global surgery has been called the "neglected stepchild of global health," children's surgery is even further overlooked.

Tatian is working to change this. At Kids Operating Room (KidsOR), he leads global advocacy efforts to confront the systemic exclusion of children's surgical needs. His work draws attention to the profound inequities facing children and underscores the urgent need for surgery to be recognized as essential to global health equity.

Today, KidsOR has more than 120 children's operating rooms installed and over 70 paediatric surgeons in training across 35 countries.

We celebrate Tatian's unwavering commitment to ensuring every child has access to safe surgical care!



Dear alumni,

We delight in celebrating your impact!!!

What meaningful change are you driving in your space?! We would love to hear your story.

Write to us today at info@socmedglobalug.org and let us celebrate the tremendous efforts you bring to global change!!!

Warm Regards

SocMed Global Ug Team

JOIN US IN THE

Campaign Against Racism-Equal Health

check out our activities this year!



Policy Development & Advocacy in Global Health Course

This year, the Cancel the Debt Working Group partnered with the University of Washington to deliver a three-month course on Global Health Policy Development and Advocacy, led by Aidah Nanvuma, BNS, MPH in Policy and Administration (Coordinator). The program brought together 55 participants across 7 different CAR chapters (including Uganda, Brazil, Liberia, Haiti, etc.), creating a dynamic space for cross-country learning and shared insights in policy development and analysis.

Participants found the course intellectually enriching and professionally empowering. Margaret Nabukenya, one participant from the Uganda Chapter, highlighted the balance between technical learning, critical thinking, and networking opportunities, noting that the program's structure encouraged consistent personal growth despite demanding work schedules.

A major takeaway from the course was understanding the complexity behind policy decision-making. Factors such as investment costs, political priorities, sustainability, and feasibility often influence decisions more than equity alone. Tools like multi-criteria policy analysis helped participants examine these trade-offs. The discussions, quizzes, and final policy brief also strengthened their confidence in developing evidence-based arguments. Looking ahead, there is hope that the Cancel the Debt subgroup will apply these policy insights to advance debt justice and health equity.

CALL FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CRITICAL DEBATE AND DIALOGUE

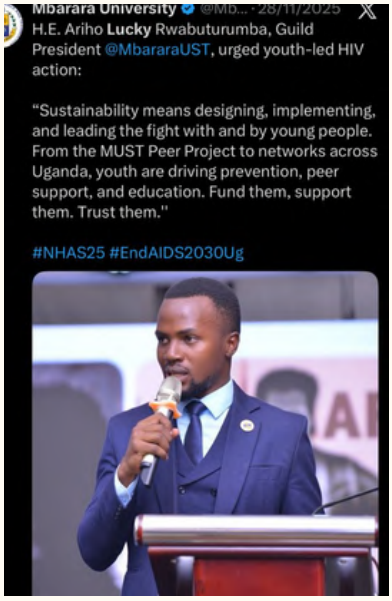
This activity will mobilize students to discuss how historical and modern systems; such as colonialism, racial capitalism, and global economic inequities shape national development and public wellbeing. Young people's participation is vital, as they are directly affected by these forces and play a key role in shaping future political consciousness, social justice movements, and community transformation.

A brief Phase 2 video will be shared during orientation, introducing core concepts like colonialism, its links to racial capitalism, and how these dynamics influence national debt and persistent inequalities.

Through debates, reflections, and essay submissions, this activity builds youth capacity to critique injustice and envision equitable futures, fostering transformative conversations across schools and communities.
This Project is being led by Opoka Godwin and Amugo Joy

Health Equity, Advocacy and Leadership:

LEADING WITH A SOCIAL MEDICINE LENS



"On 28th November, 2025, I addressed the National HIV&AIDS symposium on behalf of young people, and my main point of address was the need for the inclusion of young people in the fight against HIV, while at it, I highlighted the impact of Trump's executive order 14169 that halted USAID funding for 90 days on this important cause.
Being a medical student, it might have been easy to speak from a clinical gaze, but the several SocMed and GHiLC lessons ran through my mind, from neoliberalism to social medicine, from social justice to structural violence and allowed me to speak from a social gaze as well.



The Global Health in Local Contexts course on social medicine shaped me in ways unimaginable; it enabled me to view the world in a different lens, understand health care through the social context, and most importantly, shaped my view of leadership.
It taught me that in small acts such as involving the people I lead in decision making, by consulting and engaging them, I could arrive at better solutions for our societal problems than if I took the decisions alone.
Whenever challenges mounted, the values of resilience instilled in me by this course came through.

I graduated from this course one month before I officially joined the campaign, and it helped me build my campaign around advocacy, social justice, student welfare and equitable, fair policies.



Little to say that the leadership experience this course gave me, from becoming one family with my course mates and teachers, to being voted social chair for the class of 2024, to discipline in attending the lectures amidst a busy schedule (instilled by Essien), all the powerful lectures such as those on organizing, campaigning, and so many others. Surely, the Global Health in Local Contexts course made me the man that I am today."

~ Ariho Lucky Rwabuturumba
Alumnus of 2024 Cohort
37th Guild President of Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

OUR KEY PARTNERS

• EqualHealth

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to EqualHealth, whose dedication and partnership have been central to our work in Uganda. Their solidarity, support, and shared commitment to health equity continue to strengthen every step we take.

Together, we celebrate 15 years since the Social Medicine Course first began in Uganda, a milestone that reflects the vision and groundwork EqualHealth established.

For years now, our collaboration has created sustained impact, shaping learners, strengthening systems, and advancing a shared belief in social justice and people-centered care across several activities.

We are deeply grateful for this long-standing partnership and look forward to many more years of meaningful collaboration rooted in our common values and collective purpose.

• Mbarara University of Science and Technology

We sincerely thank Mbarara University of Science and Technology for their cooperation, hospitality and support. Their collaboration enriches our work and experience such as for course related activities. We are truly grateful for this partnership and look forward to continued collaboration in advancing transformative education and health equity.

• Amuru Village Health Team (VHT) Association

For years, our social medicine course has been enriched through sustained collaboration with the Amuru Village Health Team (VHT) Association. Their participation and commitment have been instrumental in our annual experiential learning in Amuru, bringing community-based health care to life. We are very grateful and deeply appreciate their dedication, partnership, and invaluable contributions to student learning and community engagement.

happy holidays

The December holiday is here!!!
Wishing you a joyful season filled with celebration, rest, and beautiful memories



Enjoy the season's festivities, make wonderful memories, and we hope you come back bigger and better in the New Year.

We hope you enjoy the holiday!!!

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COLLECT OF THE YEAR

the gallery moments!!!

OUR COLLECTION REFLECTS OUR COMMITMENT TO BOTH LEARNING AND SOCIALIZING! JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THIS YEAR'S EXCITING MOMENTS



















Congratulations





to the class of 2025

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