

Uganda Christian University MPHL program at the 4th National Safe Motherhood Conference

Ministry of Health – Uganda has convened the 4th National Safe Motherhood Conference that started on 29 October 2024. The conference that will run until 31 October 2024 at Speke Resort Munyonyo – Kampala was officially opened by Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng, Minister of Health – Uganda, on 29 October 2024.

Dr Jean Chamberlain, founding Director of Save the Mothers, delivered the keynote address at the Conference under the theme 'Experiences from Community Engagement for Safe Motherhood. Dr Jean noted that to promote safe motherhood, every link is needed, thus the need for integration of different sectors such as faith-based organizations, education sector, and agriculture, among others.

She shared the case of Uganda Christian University's flagship program for safe motherhood, the Master of Public Health Leadership (MPHL), which uses a multidisciplinary approach to promote safe motherhood. The MPHL program trains multidisciplinary professionals to advocate for safe motherhood.

Citing the example of the Mother Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative implemented by Save the Mothers aimed at promoting friendly, respectful, safe and dignified maternal health services, Dr Jean stressed the need to make maternity services attractive and friendly in order to drive change.

Additionally, Dr Jean urged stakeholders to involve community members in the maternal and prenatal reviews. She noted that this would enable communities to appreciate and address factors in the communities that fuel the delays in seeking care under skilled attendance. Regarding promoting safe motherhood, Dr. Jean said: “We need to use individual stories and be intentional as well as persistent like the corporate world does.”

The participation of the MPHL - Save the Mothers program at the National Safe Motherhood Conference is pertinent, given its significant contributions to advancing safe motherhood.

Dr. Diana Atwine, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Health Uganda. “We need to work and help people appreciate that things have changed and thus the need to deliver at the health facilities. Let’s talk about the ills that divert our people to TBAs. I congratulate all men here today because this safe motherhood journey cannot be complete without men.

Hon Ruth Aceng, Minister of Health -Uganda, officially opened the 4th National Safe Motherhood Conference. In her opening speech, Dr Ruth Aceng invited cultural and religious leaders to be involved in safe motherhood: Ending teenage pregnancies and maternal mortality is in your hands as cultural and religious leaders. The communities listen to you. Explain to them the dangers of teenage pregnancies since their bodies are not ready.

Prof Florence Mirembe – a founding member of Save the Mothers; **Janet Simpson**, MD Save the Mothers Canada & Heather Sinclair – Vice Chairperson STM Canada; Dr Mushin Nsubuga, Executive Director, Save the Mothers East Africa; **Josephine Namyalo** – Academic Coordinator, MPHL program,