

EDITOR: On December 10, the United States and Uganda took a bold step forward in global health diplomacy, signing a five-year, nearly \$2.3b (~sh8.09 trillion) Health Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

This landmark document is more than a financial plan; it is a blueprint for how nations can work together through co-investment to save lives, strengthen health systems, and build a safer, more prosperous future for both America and Uganda.

Uganda is among the first of dozens of nations to negotiate such a comprehensive health partnership with the United States. This is not only a testament to Uganda's leadership and vision for the health of the nation, but also a signal of the United States' enduring commitment to Africa's health and development.

The MOU sets a new standard for bilateral cooperation—one that prioritises sustainability, accountability, and mutual benefit.

A MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE HEALTH INVESTMENT

The MOU is innovative in both its ambition and its design. Over the next five years, the Department of State, working with Congress, plans to invest up to \$1.7b in Uganda's priority health programs, including HIV/AIDS; tuberculosis, malaria, maternal and child health, polio eradication, and disease outbreak preparedness.

New era in USA-Uganda health partnership: Investing in resilience, ownership, and shared prosperity

In parallel, Uganda will increase its own health spending by over \$500m, gradually assuming greater financial responsibility as US support tapers.

This co-investment model is critical. It ensures that gains made through decades of US support are not only preserved, but also owned and sustained by Ugandan institutions.

By transitioning procurement of health commodities and integrating frontline health workers into Uganda's payroll, the MOU builds local capacity and resilience.

STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS, EMPOWERING PEOPLE

The MOU recognises that strong health systems are built on more than funding—they require robust institutions, skilled health workers, and inclusive policies.

By supporting Uganda's community health system, sustainable financing models for faith-based and private providers, and private sector innovation, the framework of the MOU ensures that all Ugandans, regardless of where they



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seek care, can access essential services.

Performance incentives embedded in the MOU will drive results and accountability. This approach aligns resources with impact, ensuring that

every dollar spent delivers measurable benefits for both countries.

A PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

This new phase in US-Uganda cooperation is not just about health—it is about shared security and prosperity. Infectious diseases know no borders.

By helping Uganda build a resilient health system, the United States is also protecting its own citizens from global health threats.

At the same time, a healthier Uganda means a stronger partner in trade, security, and innovation.

The United States and Uganda have worked side by side for over six decades to save lives and strengthen systems.

Today, we reaffirm that partnership and chart a course toward a future where Uganda's health gains are sustained by Ugandan hands, for Ugandan communities.

SAFEGUARDING DATA PRIVACY THROUGH A NEW AGREEMENT

The United States and Uganda also signed robust protocols to ensure all health data collected and shared under

the MOU is handled with the highest standards of privacy and security.

It affirms both governments' commitment to ensuring any data is used solely for public health purposes and in full compliance with Ugandan data and privacy protection laws.

PROTECTING HEALTH, ADVANCING PROSPERITY

This framework is the culmination of more than 60 years of collaboration, but it is also a beginning.

It signals a mutual commitment to safeguarding health gains, empowering local institutions, and ensuring that Uganda's health system is resilient, responsive, and sustainable.

As Uganda and the United States move forward together, this MOU stands as a testament to what is possible when nations invest in each other's futures—not just with resources, but with trust, vision, and shared purpose.

The writer is the US Ambassador to Uganda