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## Uganda has 'lowest child immunisation in E. Africa'

### IN SUMMARY

Health. The report blames foreign aid as the major blame to government's laxity.

Uganda's immunisation coverage remains low compared to other East African countries, with experts now calling for a better plan to address the gap.

A report by the advisory committee on vaccines and immunisation of the Uganda National Academy of Science (UNAS) shows that in the 1990s, Uganda had one of the most successful immunisation programmes in East and sub-Saharan Africa.

With 52 per cent national immunisation coverage, Uganda has the lowest number of fully immunised children in East Africa against the 90 per cent target of the global immunisation vision and strategy. This makes Uganda the country with the highest infant mortality rate in the region.

The report released yesterday shows that at 55 per cent, Uganda has the lowest measles vaccination coverage against Kenya's 86 per cent. Rwanda's coverage stands at 82 per cent while that of Tanzania is at 92 per cent.

It further shows that Uganda's immunisation coverage for Hepatitis C stands at 60 per cent compared to Kenya's 83 per cent, while that of Rwanda is at 80 per cent. In Tanzania, the coverage stands at 91 per cent.

The study conducted by UNAS shows that Uganda's poor performance in the region stems from the intervention by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI), where government relaxed upon receiving the financial support rather than step up the immunisation programmes.

According to the president of UNAS, Prof Paul Mugambi, among the key setbacks to immunisation coverage are the large disparities between urban and rural health centres, vaccine shortages and lack of sensitisation about the importance of immunisation.

He said government appointed them to gather scientific evidence for policy formulation.

Full article available at: <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Uganda-has--lowest-child-immunisation-in-E--Africa--/688334/1679242/-/1465gqjz/-/index.html>