

COVID animations – Bringing Film to Life

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Statement of purpose/problem statement

At the pick of COVID 19 pandemic there was limited scientific information reaching the political and technical teams for timely and evidence-based information sharing with the general population. Restrictions aimed at slowing the spread of coronavirus along with disinformation, affected pandemic control measures and general health care delivery. It threatened to undermine public health targets and achievements built up over many years in areas such as Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Childhood Vaccination and Maternal and Child Healthcare.

We adopted a collaborative approach to confront this, building on existing relationships and previous collaborations between diverse disciplines and institutions. This involved researchers, community organisers, community leaders, frontline healthcare providers and health communicators and journalists. The aim was to provide core and relevant information to help communities to improve outcomes from the COVID 19 pandemic, including shielding the elderly and vulnerable and vaccination; to inform about the interaction between COVID and other conditions.

Methods, subjects and procedure



Figure 1: The project main implementation area in South Western Uganda though materials designed and produced to benefit a wide population in Africa.

The Themes were to create COVID-19 community awareness and response through film and animation, and mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 on other health care services.

We conducted snap random baseline community survey interviews with Religious leaders, politicians, general public, community influencers and health care workers to understand their understanding of COVID 19 and its impact.

“.....the jab is the virus vaccinated to you...even the doctor near you can attest to this...so what they usually do is; they get the virus itself and is what is put in the vaccine...it is because the covid virus fights against covid the disease....”

“...They are giving us the virus through vaccines so that they spread the virus....”

Intervention science-backed scripts were written in English, voiced and then translated in different local languages. By combining with a similar project in Zimbabwe, with University of Harare, MRC-CTU at University College London and ViiV Healthcare looking at the impact of COVID on PMTCT, we were able to create 13 videos. This was based on research carried out in both Uganda and Zimbabwe into the impact of the pandemic.

The messaging and images used in the videos were tested for relevance, cultural suitability and technical quality by health care experts, community leaders and selected general public representatives. Changes were made where necessary to fit local requirements. Animations were then released into Audio and video forms to reach target audiences.

Acknowledgment

This project was funded by the Covid-19 Africa Rapid Grant Fund and sponsored by the National Research Foundation, Republic of South Africa and ViiV Healthcare. It was implemented by the Joint Clinical Research Centre, Uganda National Council of Science and Technology, Picturing Health (a UK NGO producing health related films and animations), Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Mimbari Development Agency (a community engagement group), University of Harare, Centre for Sexual Health and HIV AIDS Research ZW, MRC Clinical Trials Unit at UCL..

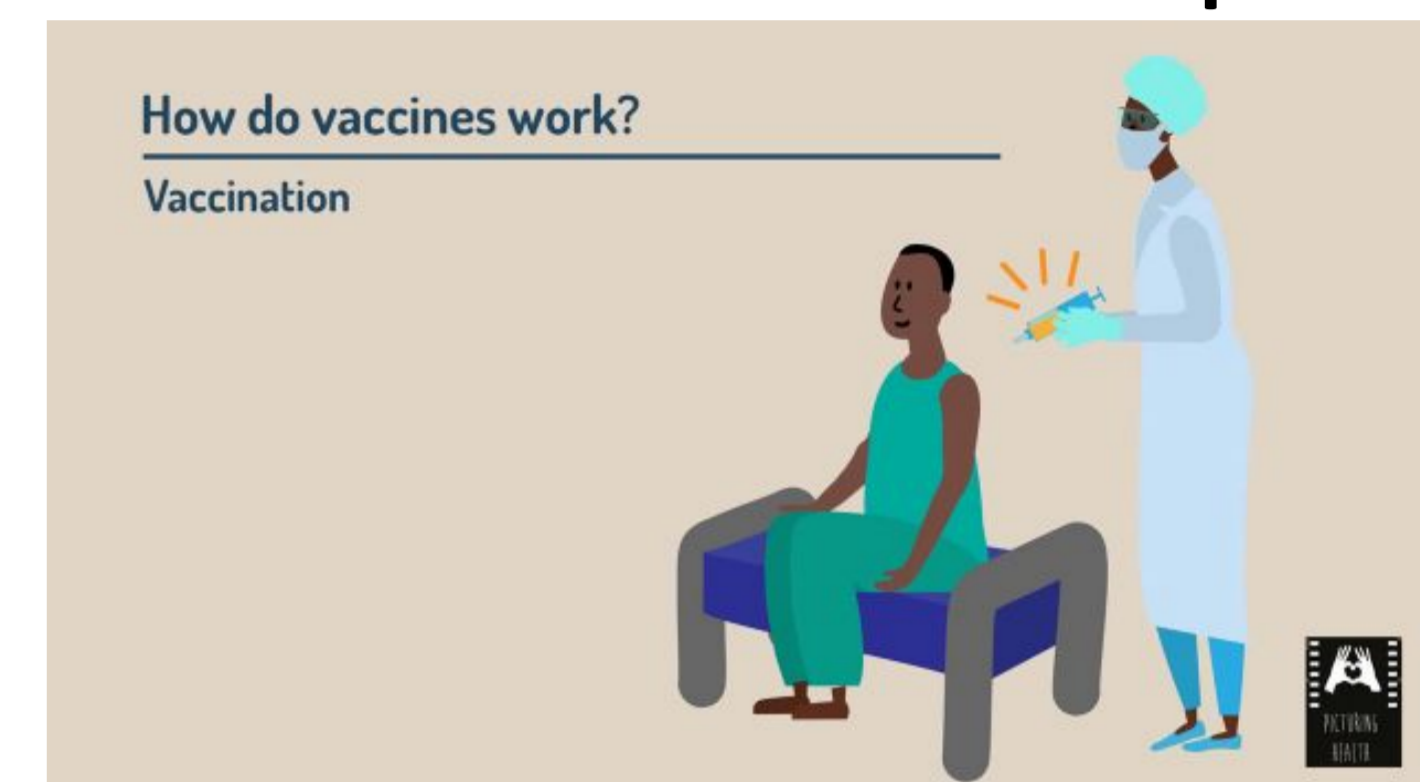
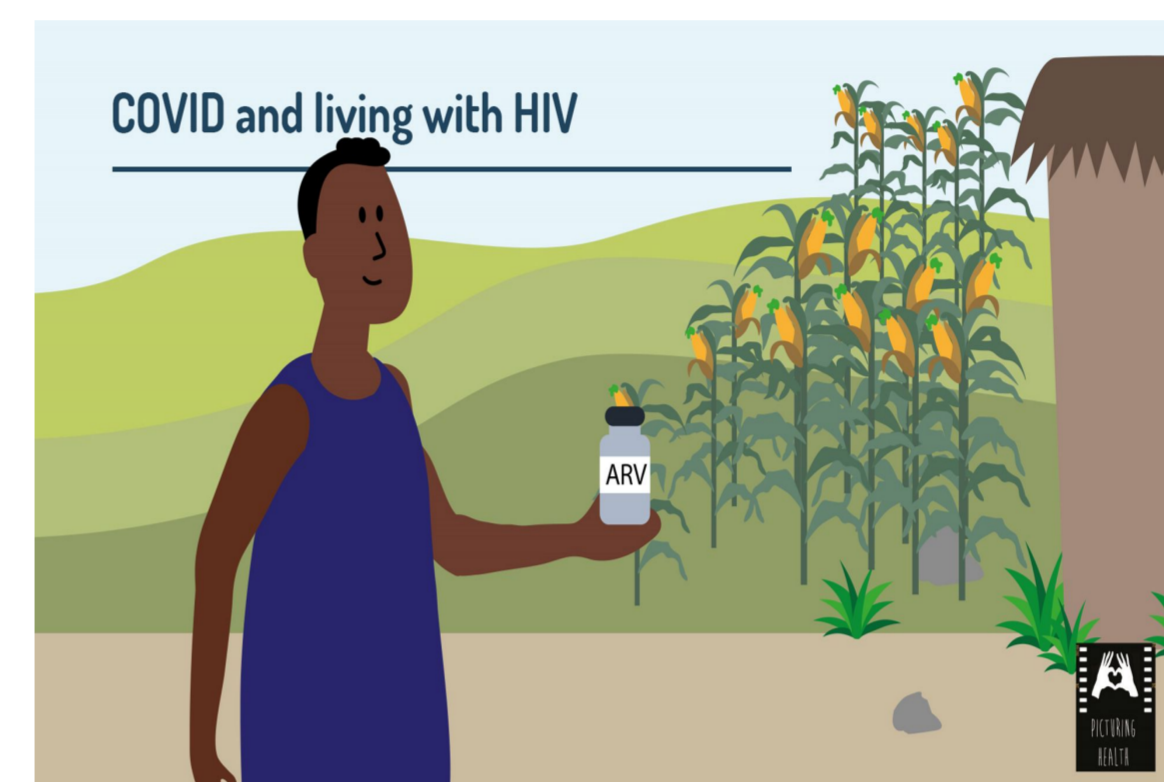


Outputs

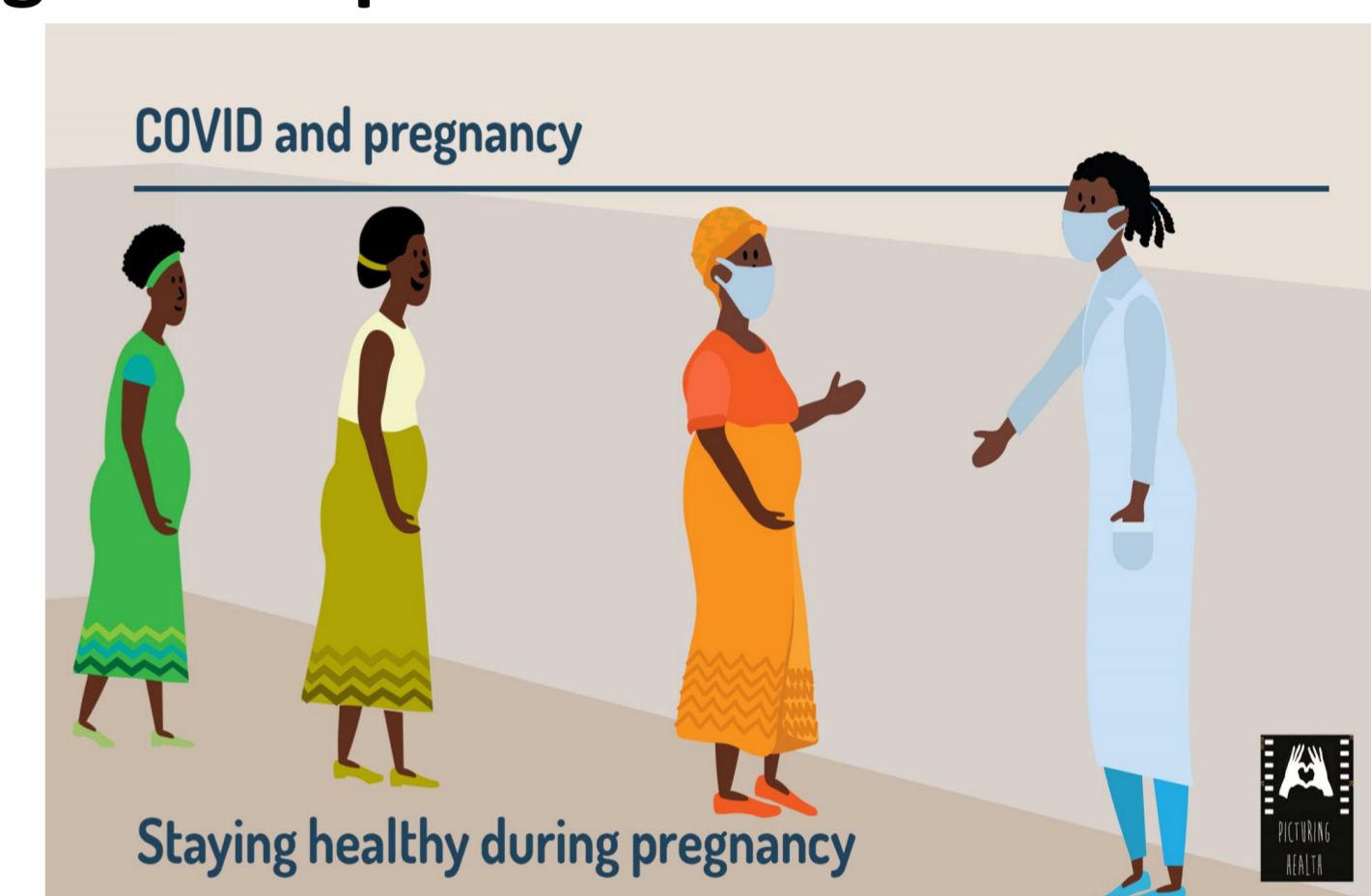
We developed 13 educational animations. All were in English, and were translated into Swahili, Luganda, Luo, Runyankore, Chichewa and Shona.

The topics covered were: Looking after COVID at Home; COVID Vaccination; COVID and HIV; COVID and Pregnancy and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV.

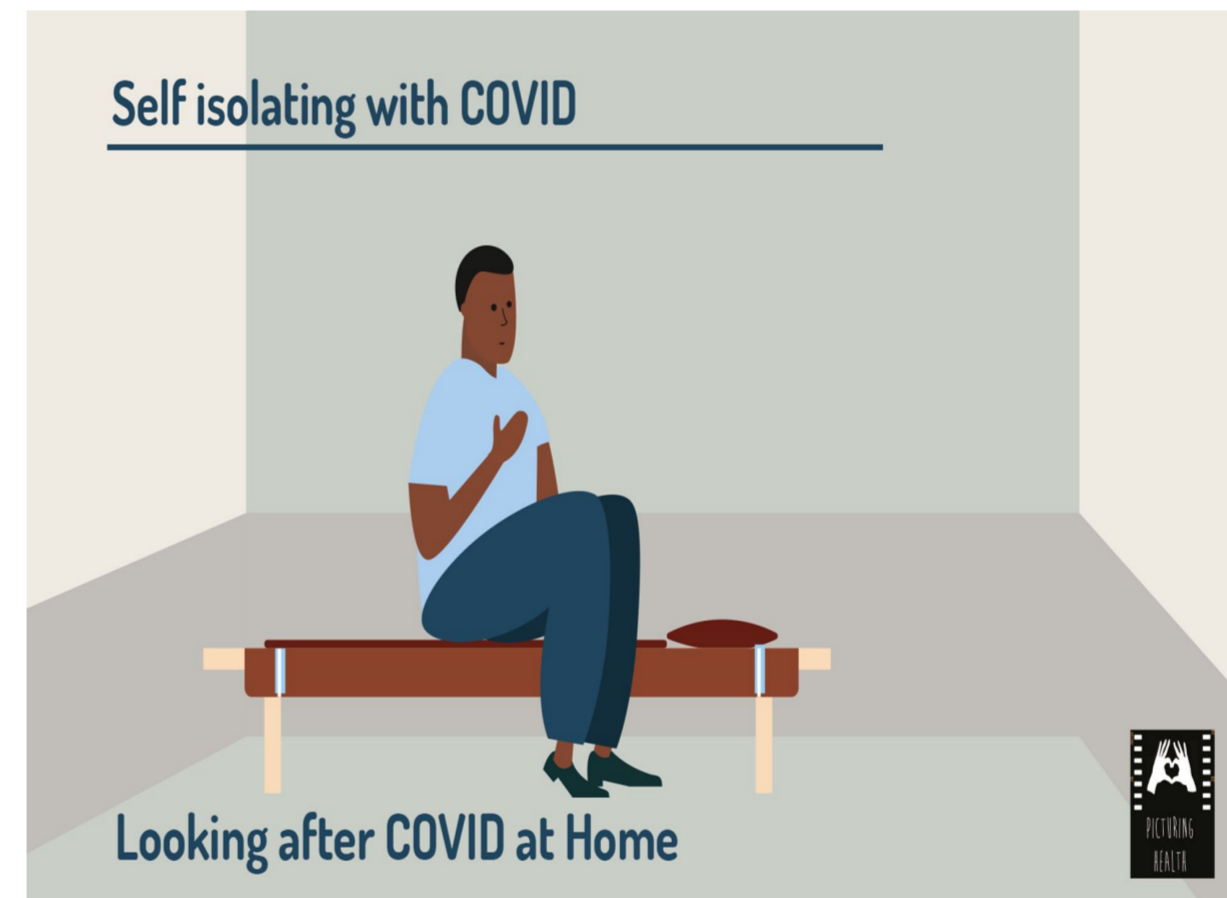
Animations to address COVID 19 misinformation and misconceptions



Animations to address COVID negative impact on health care delivery



Animations for COVID health care delivery like;

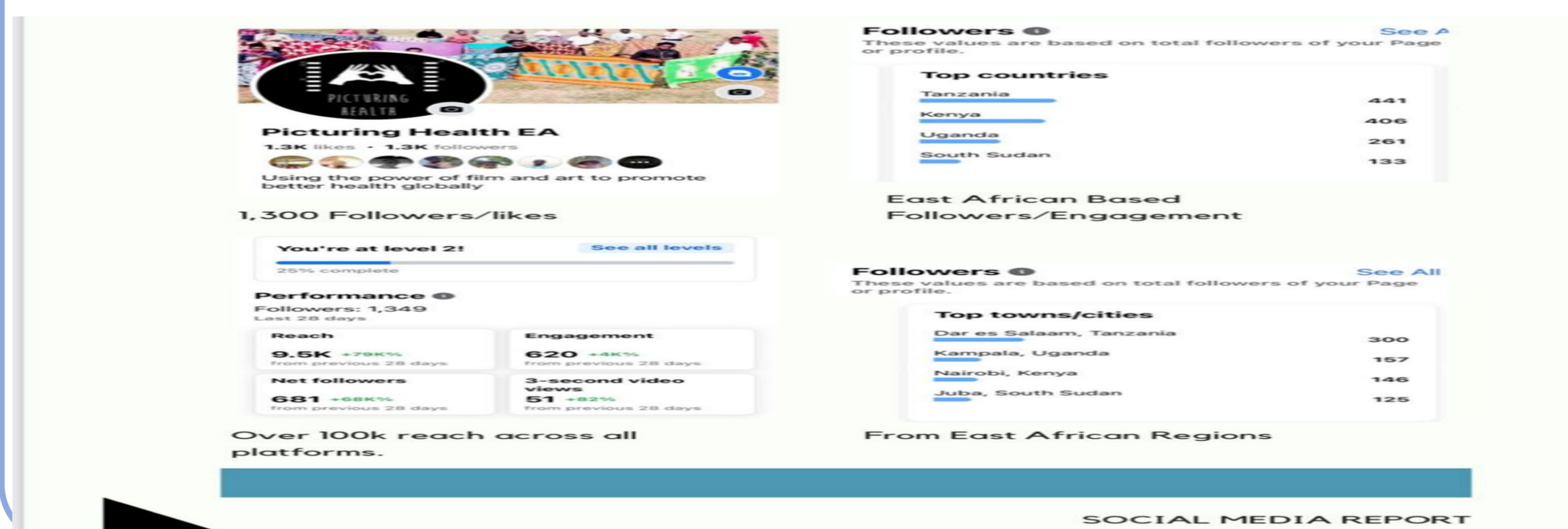


Images and animations by Taty Orellana and Ambika Olney

The animations were between 2 and 4 minutes - with file sizes small enough to be shared on WhatsApp. They are all licensed to download, embed, use and distribute free of charge from:

<https://www.picturinghealth.org/covid-hiv-pregnancy/#vaccination>

The messaging was designed to have relevance and be adaptable to a post COVID situation.



Conclusion

Work under this grant helped strengthen timely African collaborative intervention in combating COVID 19 misinformation and maintaining vital Public health through the pandemic. It shows the benefits of continuous engagement between scientists, communicators and community, even when there is no pandemic.

Dissemination is important in Schools, health facilities and community and the partners are working on expanding the project in the future to include other areas of health education.

references

- 1) Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital OpenMRS HIV/AIDS patient database