

# ISER Photo Essay

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## **Poor health infrastructure makes quality health service delivery a distant dream for many Ugandans**



**ISER**

Facilitating Social Justice

INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

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### Introduction

Every Ugandan dreams of walking to a well stocked and fully equipped health facility from where they can access treatment from highly trained and specialized medical personnel when faced with an ailment. Much as this would be the ideal situation, the reality is distant and dim in comparison.

The lack of accountability for social service delivery in Uganda has encouraged the government's poor delivery of the minimum health care package to Ugandans – a commitment that the government has made under the Health Sector Strategic Plan.

From incidents where ambulances are used to ferry water instead of the sick, to the dilapidated structures that render them unsafe for habitation, it is not surprising that patients pick up new infections from the places where they go to seek treatment.

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) commissioned Yusuf Muziransa, a photojournalist to tell the story of the health sector infrastructure around the country and the findings are more appalling than comforting.

In this photo essay, we have highlighted the fact that most health facilities have inadequate and faulty equipment with some patients being forced to share beds or occupy the floors due to congestion in the wards. Most structures are also very old and dilapidated while the sanitary conditions in these facilities leaves a lot to be desired.

Despite the World Bank loan of US\$ 144.31 million advanced to Uganda in 2010 towards the delivery of the Uganda National Minimum health care package (NMHCP), delivery of the same has been rendered ineffective and inefficient by the weak legal and policy framework, poor infrastructure, limited human resources and challenges of access to essential drugs. This photo essay therefore intends to disseminate information about the realities facing our health system, a wakeup call to policy makers and implementers about their duties and obligations, as well as serve as a catalyst for community participation in the demand for transparency and accountability in the health sector. Access to quality healthcare is an entitlement, not a privilege!



A nurse checks on a drip for a sick child sharing a bed with other sick children.





A mid-wife examines an expectant mother on the floor in Abim District Hospital.



A female patient abandons her bed-bug infested hospital bed in Moroto Regional Referral Hospital.



An expectant mother lying on a bed without beddings in a former tea room in Buwenge Health Center IV.





An expectant mother shares a mattress with sick children in Abim District Hospital.



Necessity creates innovation - limited space in Masindi Hospital forces mothers and caretakers to place new born babies in the hospital abandoned sinks. The Medical Superintendent of Masindi Hospital checks on a newly born baby in a sink.





No hospital beds - A child admitted to Abim Hospital Childrens Ward being attended to by her sister.



On the floor of Abim District Hospital lies a child undergoing treatment.



Table -turned - bed, such overcrowding at Bwera Hospital in Kasese District can result in new infections.





Struggling for free specialist medical services- A typical free health camp in Karamoja.



Treatment centres set up by Ministry of Health for Nodding disease victims in Northern Uganda are usually overcrowded.





A dysfunctional refrigeration system at Buwenge Health Center IV. The facility cannot operate a blood bank or keep drugs that require refrigeration.





A nurse at Masindi Hospital shows off equipment rendered useless due to lack of electricity.



A nurse explains how women in labour cannot access the sanitation facilities within the Iganga Hospital Maternity Ward due to lack of running water.



A nurse shows off an abandoned bath tub that is supposed to be used by women in Labour at Iganga Hospital.





Boilers at Kiryandongo Hospital Kitchen stopped working several years ago.



Broken windows such as this one in Kiryandongo hospital increase the risk of the mother and her new born baby to diseases like pneumonia and malaria.



The sterilization equipment at Kiryandongo Hospital broke down several years ago and has never been repaired or replaced.





In place but not working, an oxygen machine at Kiryandongo Hospital.



Medical waste under tables in a room acting as the children's ward in Iganga Hospital. The waste is only disposed of once a week putting patients at risk of contracting infections.





The dysfunctional mortuary of Buwenge Health Center IV.





Traumatising the sick, a dead body left unattended in a ward at Iganga Hospital.



When the sink drain clogged, the alternative was to use a bucket in Kiryandongo Hospital.



Medical waste including human body parts in polythene bags in the corridors of the female ward in Iganga Hospital.



## About the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) is a registered national not-for-profit human rights non – governmental organization (NGO) in Uganda. ISER was founded in February 2012 to ensure full recognition, accountability and realization of social and economic rights primarily in Uganda but also within the East African Region.

To read more about ISER,  
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