What is Measles?

Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus. The disease has no specific treatment but can be prevented by immunisation.

How is Measles spread?

Measles is an airborne disease and highly infectious. Measles is spread by inhaling air that is infected with the Measles virus. Measles affects all ages but it is more frequent in children who are not immunised.

What are the signs and symptoms of Measles?

- Fever
- Generalised skin rash lasting a minimum of 3 days
- Red eyes
- Red lips and sores in the mouth
- Cough
- Runny nose

Measles is usually more severe in unimmunised children
What are the complications resulting from Measles?

- Severe weight loss
- Cough or rapid breathing (Pneumonia)
- Damage to the eyes which may cause blindness
- Pus discharge from the ears, which may lead to deafness
- Convulsions which may lead to brain damage

It is important to note that death can occur if symptoms are not well managed

How is Measles prevented?

Immunisation is the best way to prevent Measles. All children should be immunised against Measles at 9 months during routine immunisation.

The Measles vaccine is SAFE, EFFECTIVE and FREE. It is approved by the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF

Why should we immunise our children against Measles?

Immunising our children against Measles is important because:

- More than 80% of districts in Uganda have not achieved 90% Measles immunisation coverage which is required to interrupt the Measles virus transmission
- Unimmunised children are at risk of getting Measles because of low routine immunisation coverage
- Measles is highly infectious and spreads very fast among unimmunised children
- Measles is still one of the leading causes of death among children in Uganda
- Pockets of Measles outbreaks are still being reported by some districts in Uganda and hence pose a big threat to Ugandan children
Political leaders

- Mobilise communities for routine immunisation
- Sensitise communities on the benefits of immunisation
- Advocate for resources to strengthen routine immunisation service delivery
- Monitor immunisation activities to ensure that people get quality services

Religious leaders

- Mobilise communities for routine immunisation
- Sensitise congregations and the communities on the benefits of immunisation

Cultural / Traditional leaders

- Mobilise communities for routine immunisation
- Sensitise communities on the benefits of immunisation

Civil Societies

- Sensitise the communities on the benefits of immunisation
- Advocate for resources to strengthen routine immunisation service delivery
- Monitor immunisation services to ensure that people get quality services.
Service Clubs (e.g. Rotary, Lions)
- Sensitise the communities on the benefits of immunisation
- Mobilise resources to strengthen routine immunisation service delivery
- Provide resource persons and equipment to support immunisation service delivery
- Empower communities to demand for immunisation services
- Strengthen existing social structures to mobilise communities for immunisation

Development Partners
- Provide technical and financial support for immunisation activities

Media
- Sensitise the communities on the benefits of immunisation
- Disseminate immunisation information to the public
- Monitor and report on immunisation services
- Mobilise communities for routine immunisation

Professional Bodies
- Organise in-service training on immunisation services
- Support the immunisation program by providing scientific evidence on vaccine preventable diseases

Line ministries

Ministry of Education and Sports
- Enable health workers to reach eligible children in schools
- Ensure sustainability of the immunisation programme through updating the health training curricula
Ministry of Local Government & Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development

- Allocate resources from local revenue to support immunisation service delivery

- Ensure utilisation of the existing local structures (Local Councils, Parish Chiefs, Sub County Chiefs, Community Development Officers, Health Assistants and District Education Officers) to strengthen mobilisation and advocacy for routine immunisation

Security (Army, Police, Prisons)

- Mobilise their communities

- Provide resource persons and equipment to support immunisation service delivery

- Support the DHTs to follow up defaulters and resistant groups who are avoiding immunisation services