

Urban Health in Kampala City: An Assessment using the WHO Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool

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World Health Organization (WHO) recommends the use of the Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool (Urban HEART) to assess urban health and inform planning for more equitable health outcomes. The Urban HEART focuses on five domains: physical environment and infrastructure, social and human development, economics, governance and population health. The indicators included in each domain are used to quantify the discrepancies that already exist within that population. Each indicator is disaggregated by population group or geographical area. This is because one's residence affects access to infrastructure, consumption patterns and vulnerability to natural hazards.

Kampala City is the largest and most urban city of Uganda. It has an estimated population of 1.7 million people however; the city has a dynamic and transient day population estimated at 4 million people. The annual population growth rate in Kampala is 5% and about 60% of this growth is by immigration into the city. The population is not evenly distributed among the five divisions of the city, this is mainly due to the distance to the city center, the varying levels of economic development and availability/affordability of residential space. Kampala City hosts people from all over the country and across borders since it is a national and international transport terminus. It is characterized by high mobility within the dense populations, informal settlements and urban refugee influx among others.

We adopted the indicators defined in the Urban HEART manual and identified national averages and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as our benchmarks for this study. SDGs were established in 2015 as an action plan to reduce poverty, create a healthy planet and ensure a prosperous and peaceful future for all. With 17 goals and 169 targets, they provide a blueprint for actions that should take place to achieve sustainable development. We also used the population average derived from the 2022 population census as our national average for the study. Other data sources for this Urban HEART analysis were:

District Health Information System 2 (DHIS2); This is an open-source web-based platform that is used to collect, report, and analyze aggregate data that is routinely generated across health facilities in Uganda.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS): This is the principal data collecting, processing, analyzing and disseminating agency responsible for coordinating and supervising the national surveys and censuses.

Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA): Is the administrative body responsible for the operations of the capital city of Kampala in Uganda

Urban health matrix for Kampala City

Diabetes prevalence in residents of 3/5 city divisions (Areas) was lower than both the national average and the SDG target (table 3) but six times higher than the national average in Area A. Both Tuberculosis prevalence and deaths by road traffic accidents were higher in 4/5 of the divisions than both the national average and the SDG target. All except Area A performed better than both the national average and SDG target for skilled attendance at birth. All divisions performed better than the national average for immunization completion rates and 3/5 performed better than the SDG target for the same. All divisions performed better the SDG targets for access to safe water, access to improved sanitation and prevalence of tobacco use.

Table 3: Urban HEART matrix for Kampala City, 2022

Indicator	Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Area E	National average	SDG Target
Diabetes prevalence	32	1.2	1.1	3.0	2.2	5	2.5
TB incidence	1146	239	270	149	260	200	160
Road traffic deaths	38	87	8	31	64	15	17
Access to clean water	99	97	94	98	96	82	90
Access to improved sanitation	97	96	98	88	97	31	90
Skilled attendance at birth	99	101	100	102	103	91	100
Prevalence of tobacco use	0.55	0.09	0.06	0.16	0.29	3.8	2.7
Immunization completion rate	150	103	121	89	76	54	95

- ✚ Red: the area performance is worse than the national average
- ✚ Yellow: the area performance is worse than the SDG target but better than the national average
- ✚ Green: the performance is equal to or better than the SDG target