

Dear Friends and colleagues;

I became acquainted with the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) activities, in 2005, during a meeting in Washington, DC, where I was an American Epilepsy Society (AES) International Scholars awardee. The passion and professionalism of the various epilepsy researchers I interacted with, inspired me to set up a local chapter in Uganda. The vision of the Epilepsy Society Uganda (EPISOU) is to work towards a Uganda where “no person’s life is limited by epilepsy”. In collaboration with the local International Bureau of Epilepsy (IBE) Uganda chapter, EPISOU, has held joint educational meetings to raise epilepsy awareness and inform the public on its care; held media conferences and talk shows on epilepsy, and conducted epilepsy outreach clinics.

Over the years I have served in various capacities within the ILAE, which experience has enabled me demonstrate my ability as a firm and committed leader, helped me to understand the ILAE system as regards budgetary, monitoring and management issues of allocated CAA funds and enlightened me on the critical role the League has accomplished together with its partners in improving the lives of people with epilepsy (PWE). In addition, by harnessing on the important successes the League has achieved over the years, my pursuit in making epilepsy a health care priority in Africa, has been further enhanced.

Africa bears the impact of carrying the burden of the highest incidence and prevalence of active epilepsy compared to that of all other continents. The majority of PWE on the continent dwell in the rural areas, with the burden of disease aggravated by the high incidence of acquired causes, low community awareness, lack of basic infrastructure for adequate management and the large treatment gap.

If elected, I will bring on board the over 20 years’ diverse and rich experience I have gained in the course of my clinical work, research and academic training, plus the service on these various committees that have greatly expanded my knowledge regarding the plight of PWE. I also bring a unique perspective from exposure to the health systems in countries in the developed world and developing world as well as established collaborative networks developed over the course of my career. My goal would be to ensure that the President elect’s key priority areas are upheld, and in pursuing this goal my specific concerns would be to:

1. Ensure that the ILAE’s role as a leader for optimal and comprehensive epilepsy care is maintained through advocacy and support of the existing activities carried out in liaison with concerned stakeholders, national chapters, regional commissions, the IBE, local organizations and parents.
2. Promote epilepsy awareness at all levels but especially the basic primary care level, through fostering programs that utilise innovative, cost effective, improved communications that are user friendly, acceptable and accessible.
3. Understand and explore ways of responding to the visible and invisible barriers that hinder PWE from accessing the best possible sustainable care, through interpretation of the issues from the local perspective and offering support of the evidence based, culturally appropriate and viable options.
4. Encourage several other non-participating African countries to set up ILAE Chapters and strive to involve their respective governments in enhancing the care of PWE, promote public awareness and allocate resources to epilepsy research.
5. Develop the human and research capacity in epilepsy care through nurturing partnerships of multi-site epilepsy projects and creating more collaborative links of lead investigators from Africa with those from European/American/Oceania/Asian countries that are directed towards the enhancement of the practice and career development of professionals involved in epilepsy care.

I believe that this shared vision and shared responsibility will contribute to a world in which ‘no person’s life is limited by epilepsy’ and will build on the work of my former predecessor in promoting the education and continued advocacy initiatives for PWE in Africa.

Yours sincerely,



Angelina Kakooza-Mwesige