



PRESS RELEASE ON PRIORITIZATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE FIRST PHASE OF COVID-19 VACCINATION.

Today 18th March 2021, the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) has called this press conference to call on government to prioritize persons with disabilities in accessing the COVID-19 vaccine in the first roll out phase. NUDIPU appreciates the efforts by government of Uganda through Ministry of Health for taking part in the roll out of the Global COVAX initiative for COVID -19 vaccine in Uganda. Ministry of Health is rolling out the first phase of the vaccine targeting the most vulnerable and those at more risk who are the Health workers, Security personnel, Persons with underlying health conditions aged below 50 years, and other emerging high risk and priority essential groups.

However, regardless of their vulnerability, persons with disabilities have not been recognized among the first categories of people to receive the vaccine and this continues to be a threat to their lives and be left further behind.

According to World Health Organization, persons with disabilities are categorized as vulnerable populations during public health emergency situations. When infected by the virus, they are more likely to develop more severe symptoms risking death. persons with disabilities are also at high risk of contracting the virus due to existing health conditions and contact with their support system of the guides, helpers and interpreters.

NUDIPU therefore, calls on government to;

1. Recognize the need to prioritize persons with disabilities and their support networks like the guides, helpers so as to have access to the vaccination during the first phase roll out plan for the vaccine which started on 10th March 2021.
2. Ensure that information in the vaccination campaign is inclusive and accessible to persons of all categories of disability like the deaf and blind, to enable them take part in the vaccination processes against COVID-19.

3. Ensure that NUDIPU and other Disabled People's Organisations meaningfully participate in planning on how the roll out of COVID-19 vaccination strategies can be made inclusive to cater for persons with disabilities in Uganda.



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