

ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF UGANDA

Dr. Magid Kagimu, Executive Director and founder of IMAU, now oversees over 400 health workers in 15 IMAU branches throughout the country.



Photo: Emily Katarikawe

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— DR. MAGID KAGIMU

The Islamic Medical Association of Uganda (IMAU) consists of a clinic, an office, and a training center. But more than its buildings, IMAU is a group of dedicated Muslim health professionals. As a faith-based, nongovernmental organization grounded in the wisdom of Islam, IMAU strives to combine science with faith in the delivery of quality health services. Its work in HIV/AIDS began in 1989 when it started mobilizing Muslim communities and leaders, declaring war on AIDS. In fact, IMAU has been an international leader in the Islamic community’s response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, calling for action and providing guidance on how a Muslim organization ought to respond to the devastating pandemic.

As the organization has grown and confronted the harsh realities of HIV/AIDS over the years, several new challenges sprouted up within the organization. Even though IMAU was recognized both nationally and internationally, the agency lacked proper internal management systems, which obstructed its ability to adequately deliver services. To identify weaknesses in its management systems and correct them, IMAU enlisted the support of the AIM Program.

In 2003, along with nine other national nongovernmental organizations, IMUA participated in the Joint Institutional Assessment, which AIM created to help HIV/AIDS organizations strengthen their management and programmatic capacity. IMAU, founded in 1988, now boasts membership of over 400 health workers in 15 branches throughout Uganda. Dr. Magid Kagimu, the founder and director of IMAU, explained, “We are lucky that AIM came in at the right time... AIM and the JIA assessment provided us with a chance to plan properly what we want in our systems.” By the end of the JIA process, IMAU had developed a strategic plan, a human resources manual, a monitoring and evaluation manual, and a financial management manual for the organization.

Concentrating on these vital components of internal management not only facilitated sharing amongst its members—improving internal focus and reflection—but also provided the necessary means for IMAU to raise funds for its program activities. Dr. Kagimu believes that IMAU was able to later access Global Fund money because it had gone through the process of creating and

Photo: Amy Finnegan



AIM Trainer Emily Katarikawe (in blue),
Dr. Magid Kagimu, and IMAU Staff.

operationalizing key management systems. Beyond accessing more funds, IMAU has successfully used the newly-developed human resources manual to recruit more staff, a task made easier by the existence of job descriptions and personnel policies. Previously, IMAU had relied almost solely on volunteers to carry out its work.

While many people working in the HIV/AIDS field may not appreciate the importance of managing an organization well, both AIM and IMAU have demonstrated the need and advantage of this type of commitment to capacity building. Today, IMAU continues to be a leader in both Uganda and the broader Muslim community on HIV/AIDS issues and

AIM'S ROLE	Provided funding, technical assistance, and capacity building
TOTAL GRANT	Ush 53,749,500
CONTRACT PERIOD	July 2004 to December 2005
ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY AIM	Joint Institutional Assessment Capacity building for institutional strengthening
OTHER DONORS	Ministry of Health Uganda Moslem Supreme Council Partners

as a provider of quality health services. It is widely recognized both in Uganda and internationally as a leading example of a Muslim nongovernmental health organization that is responding effectively to the HIV/AIDS crisis. ■