

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kampala, Uganda – 15 July 2026

IDI Executive Director Addresses Media on Africa's New Health Security Hub at Makerere University

Dr Andrew Kambugu, Executive Director of the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) at Makerere University, has today, 15 July 2026, addressed journalists at a Makerere University press briefing on the significance of the Joint Continental Incident Management Support Team (IMST), now hosted at IDI's McKinnell Knowledge Centre in Kampala. The IMST is a partnership between the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) Africa, coordinating partners to support preparedness and response to outbreaks across Member States.

Addressing the briefing, Dr Kambugu said IDI is honoured to host the Joint Continental IMST in Kampala, noting that the IMST coordinates partners towards preparedness and response to outbreaks across Member States, and that IDI's role as host reflects the important contribution of African academic and scientific institutions to emergency coordination, evidence use, training and learning.

"Hosting the continental IMST is not simply about providing a location, it is about creating an environment where science, evidence and partnerships strengthen Africa's capacity to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies," Dr Kambugu told reporters.

"The greatest legacy of the Joint Continental IMST will not only be the support it provides during the current response, but the stronger institutions, stronger partnerships and stronger public health systems it helps build for the future," he added.

Dr Kambugu noted that hosting the IMST aligns with IDI's mission of advancing science, innovation and public health, demonstrates how academic institutions can support continental public health priorities beyond research and clinical care, and strengthens collaboration between governments, regional institutions and academia. He described the arrangement as reinforcing IDI and Makerere University's contribution to research, learning, innovation and workforce development in support of Africa's health security agenda.

He also recognised Uganda's leadership in advancing regional and continental health security, expressing gratitude to His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for supporting Uganda to host the continental coordination platform, and commending Hon. Dr Chris Baryomunsi, Minister of Health, for officially launching the Joint Continental IMST. Uganda's support, he said, reflects its longstanding commitment to regional cooperation and African-led solutions to public health emergencies.

On why the IMST matters, Dr Kambugu explained that it strengthens coordination among Member States and partners to support faster, more effective emergency preparedness and response, and that, building on lessons from previous emergencies, including Mpox, it promotes a unified approach to coordination, information sharing and evidence-informed decision-making. While supporting the current outbreak response, he noted that it is equally important to strengthen preparedness for future public health threats.

Main locations:

“Makerere University is proud to host the Continental IMST at its Infectious Diseases Institute. This is compatible with the University's commitment to societal transformation,” Dr Kambugu said in his closing remarks.

About the Infectious Diseases Institute

The Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) is a not-for-profit health research and capacity-building institution wholly owned by Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. IDI works to strengthen health systems in Africa through research, training and policy engagement, with a focus on infectious diseases and health security.

Media Contact

Fred Ouma | Corporate Communications Specialist

Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI), Makerere University

Tel: +256 752 844 400 | Email: fouma@idi.co.ug

— ENDS —

Main locations: