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NCD PILOT PROGRAM SUCCESS PRESENTED IN UGANDA

LN presented successes from its NCD pilot program at the Masaka Diocese Health Assembly

Masaka, Uganda: In October 2018, LifeNet International (LN) Country Director Joshua Guenther and a representative from Letshego Financial Services presented the results of a successful pilot program targeting NCD care—the first of its kind in Uganda—at the 10th Annual Masaka Diocese Health Assembly. The assembly is influential in the local healthcare community and was attended by national Ministry of Health officials, hospital managers and other local community leaders.

The non-communicable disease (NCD) pilot program in Uganda removes bottlenecks currently present in NCD care, by task-shifting care to lower-level health facilities, where most Ugandans seek care. This program provides the training and tools necessary for local facilities to diagnose and treat NCDs. The pilot was launched through a collaborative public/private partnership between LN, Primary Care International, and Letshego Financial Services.

Through the project, LN led trainings in three health facilities in the Masaka Diocese in Uganda, empowering health workers with the ability to identify and treat hypertension and type II diabetes. In just nine months, the health facilities in the pilot program have hosted 40 community outreaches and screened over 1,500 patients. To ensure that all participating facilities had the equipment required to diagnose and treat patients, facilities were provided with medical supplies, including disposable gloves, biohazard bags, glucose strips, and blood pressure machines.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, non-communicable diseases are a prevalent problem. In Uganda, 24% of adults suffer from hypertension and 1.3% suffer from type II diabetes.

This project is the first of its kind in Uganda, a country where non-communicable diseases have largely been ignored, and results from the project are promising. By January 2019, the project will expand to include 10 additional health facilities.

Guenther announced that, “as a result of Letshego’s initial investment into this pilot program, LifeNet was able to enter into a competitive grant challenge program with the Medtronic Foundation that we were successful in. Now, because of [Letshego’s] initial investment we can double their dollar and expand the program.”

As patient mortality and morbidity due to NCDs continue to increase in Uganda, it is essential that health workers understand how to treat these potentially fatal diseases. LN is proud of the work that has already been done and excited to quadruple this impact by leading trainings and hosting outreaches at 13 health facilities in 2019.

About LifeNet International: Founded in 2009 by an entrepreneur, LifeNet International partners with local, last-mile health facilities in sub-Saharan Africa to bridge the deadly gap separating existing knowledge, tools, and resources from the health workers who need them to save lives. LifeNet rapidly and effectively deploys life-saving and life-improving interventions directly to health workers and staff at last-mile facilities. Through its growing franchise network of 120+ facilities, LifeNet transforms healthcare for more than 1.2 million patient visits every year in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Malawi.