

FIJI GRAPPLES WITH SOARING HIV CASES

SUN

As evening falls in Fiji's capital, a steady stream of people approaches a makeshift clinic that is a first line of defence against one of the world's fastest-growing HIV epidemics. In the South Pacific nation — a popular tourist destination of just under a million people — there were over 2,000 new HIV cases recorded last year, a 26 percent increase from 2024.

The government has declared an HIV outbreak and described it as a national crisis. "It is spreading like wildfire," Siteri Dinawai, 46, who came to be tested, told AFP.

The Moonlight Clinic, a converted minibus parked in a suburban cul-de-sac in Suva, is part of a push to bring testing into neighbourhoods.

Volunteers from the Survival Advocacy Network — a group supporting sex workers — and Rainbow Pride Fiji, which works with LGBTQ+ communities, are on hand to speak to those who may be reluctant.

Ana Fofole and her team at Medical Services Pacific,



This picture taken on March 19, shows a Medical Services Pacific Moonlight programme team offering free HIV testing during an outreach visit to a suburb of Suva. As evening falls in Fiji's capital, a steady stream of people approach a makeshift clinic that is a first line of defence against one of the world's fastest-growing HIV epidemics. In the south Pacific nation and popular tourist destination of just under a million people, there were over 2,000 new HIV cases recorded last year, a 26% increase from 2024.

which runs the clinic, hand out condoms as part of their awareness drive and test for syphilis and hepatitis B.

"We do not just turn up anywhere — we have to do it the right way," Fofole says. Irinieta Foi, 45, is among

those Medical Services Pacific hopes to reach by bringing testing into neighbourhoods.

Foi, who is able to get a result in 15 minutes, says she stumbled upon the clinic.

"I decided, okay, why not?" Many stay away for fear of

returning a positive result, said 28-year-old Ecelina Lalabalava, who also got tested.

TRANSIT HUB FOR DRUGS

Clinics like this raise awareness about the blood-borne disease

and can help pin down just how many people are living with HIV in Fiji and refer them to treatment.

The number of known cases is around 5,000, according to Renata Ram, country director for Fiji and the Pacific at UNAIDS, who says the crisis has been building for years.

That number was as low as 500 in 2014, according to estimates by UNAIDS, which classifies Fiji as having among the world's fastest-growing HIV epidemics.

Transmission rates began to increase around 2019, when a group of "very high-risk" injecting drug users emerged, primarily in the sex worker community, Ram explained.

"Fiji, like other Pacific islands, for a long time have been transit hubs for drugs from Latin America and Asia destined for Australia and New Zealand," said Virginia Comolli, Pacific programme head at the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime.

The flow of highly addictive drugs such as methamphetamine and cocaine to those lucrative markets rose sharply after a lull during the Covid pandemic, she explained.

Those drugs are increasingly seeping into the Pacific's domestic markets — in part due to foreign criminal syndicates opting to pay their local facilitators in kind, she said. For those living with the virus, the social stigma can weigh heavy in a country where conservative values largely prevail.

WAIT TO DIE?

One of the few public faces of the crisis is Mark Lal, who was diagnosed with HIV two years ago.

"In Fiji, whenever the topic of sex comes up, everyone just disperses," says Lal, 24, a gay man who said he is not a drug user.

He originally knew little about HIV and the available treatment.

"When I was diagnosed, the first thing I asked the doctors was: 'What now? Do I just wait to die?'"

On his "Living Positive Fiji" page on Facebook, Lal has fielded questions from more than a hundred people.

Most are aged 17 to 20 and are unsure whether to disclose their HIV status out of fear of discrimination.

"If you come out publicly as someone living with HIV, there's a chance where you might actually not get a good reaction," Lal said.

His own hospital visit for his initial diagnosis left its mark.

"I saw some walking out with fear in their eyes, and I was like: 'I want to change this. I want to help people!'"

Fiji has a tough task to rein in case numbers, according to Ram of UNAIDS, who said the country is "15 to 20 years behind" in its HIV efforts.

"A needle-syringe programme is what is very much needed right now."

The government has said it will adopt a plan to prevent the spread of disease through drug injections, but implementation of its programme to provide safe injecting equipment has been delayed.

For Foi, one of the women attending the outreach clinic, the task is simple.

"It is really important for everybody to get tested."

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
The Administration of Estate (Small Estates) (Amendment of Jurisdiction of Magistrates (Court) Order 2008.
IN THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE'S COURT OF KAMULI MAGISTERIAL AREA AT KAMULI.

ADMINISTRATION CAUSE
NO. 005 OF 2026

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF THE LATE MUTIBWA RONALD FORMERLY A RESIDENT OF BUGOBI BUKOSE L.C.I, BUGULUMBYA PARISH, BUGULUMBYA SUB-COUNTY IN KAMULI DISTRICT

AND

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION BY MS. MBIRIRE WINNIE (SISTER) TO THE DECEASED.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

TAKE NOTICE, that an application for Letters of Administration to the Estate of the LATE MUTIBWA RONALD formerly a resident of BUGOBI BUKOSE L.C.I, BUGULUMBYA PARISH, BUGULUMBYA SUB-COUNTY IN KAMULI DISTRICT has been lodged in this Court by MS. MBIRIRE WINNIE (Sister) TO THE DECEASED.

This Court will proceed to grant the same if no caveat is lodged with this in Court within fourteen (14) days from the date of this notice, unless cause be shown to the contrary.

Dated at Kamuli, this 4th day of March 2026

[Signature]
CHIEF MAGISTRATE

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
IN THE HIGH COURT OF UGANDA AT MUBENDE

MISCELLANEOUS CAUSE
NO. 07 OF 2026

ATTORNEY GENERAL APPLICANT
VERSUS
1. RUGWE FRANCIS
2. VICTORIA NAKYAMBADE
3. YOWANA NZIGE
4. NIKODEMU MUSISI
5. PETERO ALIBATAFUDE
6. ALIFUNSI MULINDWA
..... RESPONDENTS

HEARING NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE that hearing of the above application has been fixed for 14th day of May, 2026 at 9:00AM before His Lordship Justice Tadeo Assimwe, in the fore noon or soon thereafter as the application shall be heard.

Your hereby required to appear in person or by an advocate duly instructed to appear and proceed with the same on your behalf.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if no appearance is made by you or by the said advocate on your behalf, this Honorable court shall proceed to hear and determine the application in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court this 29th day of April 2026.

[Signature]
DEPUTY REGISTRAR
Extracted by: Attorney General Chambers
JLOS Towers,
Plot 98-102, Katalina Road-Naguru
P.O Box, 7183, KAMPALA

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
IN THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE'S COURT OF WAKISO AT WAKISO

ADMINISTRATION CAUSE
NO. 07 OF 2026

AND

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF THE LATE KATENDE ALAN (DECEASED) FORMERLY OF KIKALJO-KIKUBAMPANGA ZONE, KAKIRI TOWN COUNCIL IN WAKISO DISTRICT

AND

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION BY KESIME AGNES (WIDOW) TO THE DECEASED

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TAKE NOTICE that an application for letters of Administration to the estate of the late KATENDE ALAN has been lodged in this Court by KESIME AGNES (WIDOW) This Court will proceed to grant the application if no caveat is lodged within (14) days from publication of this notice, hereof unless cause shown to the contrary. GIVEN UNDER my hand and seal of this honorable Court this 10th day of April 2026.

[Signature]
CHIEF MAGISTRATE

[Signature]
KESIME AGNES (WIDOW)
(APPLICANT)

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
IN THE HIGH COURT OF UGANDA HOLDEN AT KAMPALA (FAMILY DIVISION)

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF THE LATE KATUMBA AMONI (DECEASED) FORMERLY RESIDENT OF MAGANJO A CELL, NABWERU DIVISION, MANSANA MUNICIPALITY, WAKISO DISTRICT

AND

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION BY KATUMBA CHRISTINE AND SSERUBIDE IAN

ADMINISTRATION CAUSE
NO. 1286 OF 2025

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TAKE NOTICE that a petition for letters of Administration of the Estate of the Late KATUMBA AMONI (DECEASED) has been lodged in the High Court of Uganda at Kampala - Family Division by KATUMBA CHRISTINE and SSERUBIDE IAN (DAUGHTER & SON Respectively). This Court will proceed to grant the same if no caveat is lodged with this Honorable Court within (14) fourteen days from the date of publication of this Notice, unless cause is shown to the contrary. DATED at Kampala this 22nd day of April 2025

[Signature]
DEPUTY REGISTRAR
Extracted by: M/s Soita & Co. Advocates,
Buganda Road Flats,
Block 606, Flak K, 2nd Floor,
P.O Box 72550, Kampala.

[Signature]
KATUMBA CHRISTINE
(DAUGHTER)
(APPLICANT)

[Signature]
SSERUBIDE IAN
(SON)
(APPLICANT)

LOST
LOST NUMBER PLATE
For Motor Vehicle
No. UBN 440W
Contact: Omoding John
0781807893

LOST
LOST NUMBER PLATE
For Motor Vehicle
No. UA709AL
Contact: Omoding John
0781807893

LOST NUMBER PLATE
For Motor Vehicle No. UAN 170N
Contact: 0754 207620 ZIJING Great Wall

AFP