



Tuesday 16th November 2021

By

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Incident report concerning EMS response to twin bomb blast in Kampala on
16th November 2021

EVERYDAY Emergency Care systems are tested in the way they manage daily emergencies..... MASS CASUALTIES, however, are like that MASSIVE test that sha

Disasters like any other emergencies never warn us—for many of us that is the scariest thing. Never being prepared.

They leave such an impact—we can never forgot what we were doing when some of these catastrophies start.

On 16th November 2021, around 10:08hrs, EMS was activated through the Joint Metro CAD Centre when two explosions went off within Kampala. It started like FAKE news but withing a few minutes of the news breaking, social media and mainstream media were awash with pictures and videos that could not be faked.

Kampala was under attack!!

Presented at **MOH EMS ECHO**

The first bomb blast was at the Central Police Station (CPS) at about 10:03hrs and the other around Raja Chambers and Jubilee Insurance building along the Parliament avenue at about 10:06hrs.

Events that followed:

The scene: ... chaos..terror

Behind the scenes:

Dr. Douglas Akii Bua, Kampala EMS Coordinator notified the Regional EMS Coordinator Dr. Trevor Kambugu and the KCCA Manager Medical Services, Dr. Sarah Zalwango as well as the OC Kampala. Ambulances were dispatched as the notification was cascaded. The Regional EMS Coordinator notified the National Technical Advisor EMS/MoH, Dr. Annet Alenyo as well as other EMS department top management. Mulago NRH and Naguru NRH Casualty departments were notified of the mass casualty event.

In the initial 20 minutes, one scene was known to be the site of the blast and this was along Parliament Avenue however, the CAD centre was notified of another scene at CPS.

Five ambulances had been dispatched to Parliament avenue and these were redirected to the KCCA City Hall clinic where the casualties were rushed for first aid and stabilization. Additional 8 ambulances were dispatched to both scenes. Response teams included MoH, KCCA and Red cross ambulance teams.

Dr. Douglas Aki Bua and Dr. Amable Ainembabazi (KCCA) moved to the City hall clinic to manage the stabilisation of patients and transfers to Mulago NRH and Naguru NRH. Dr. Kambugu Trevor worked around coordination of ambulance teams as well as the information coming in, with support from Denes Nabimanya, a Dispatch supervisor. Dr. Zalwango Sarah, Dr. Annet Alenyo and Commissioner EMS, Dr. John Baptist Waniaye, provided overall coordination of the EMS response.

Within 1 hour from the bomb blasts, all casualties had been evacuated from the scene and the holding area (City hall clinic), having been transferred to 2 government hospitals Mulago NRH and Naguru NRH. 2 casualties with insurance were taken to a private hospital.

Initially, 33 casualties were evacuated to the following hospitals:

- 31 patients to Mulago NRH (7 Red, 24 Yellow)
- 1 patient to Naguru NRH (Yellow)

- 2 patients to Kubuli Hospital (1 Red, 1 Yellow)

A total of 6 persons were reported dead on both scenes.

Of course initial walking wounded had found their way to many facilities around Kampala on their own..... the actual count of injured perhaps is something that we will take days to finalise.

In-hospital support:

Intra-facility movement of patients between Casualty—radiology—ICU and theatre. Which any good mass casualty text will tell you are your biggest bottlenecks in the post-field management of a disaster in the hospital.

POLICY QUESTIONS:

1. What is the role of private facilities in responding to disasters? Is there an opportunity for PPP in responding to mass casualties?
2. Who funds these expensive responses?
3. Are well trained? What is the plan for capacity building? Human resource?
4. Emergency referral and disaster response services...
5. Command Control and Coordination is the foundation of any good mass casualty response. Do we feel we are in a good place as a country? What does our new policy say about leadership and governance for disasters?

The first methane report was as follows

Mass Casualty Event Declared

Location: IGG headquarters, Kila, **Type :** Bomb blasts, **Hazards :** Bomb hazard, crowds, **Access :** Kimathi Avenue, **Number :** several, 4 at City hall clinic, some have been evacuated to Mulago NRH, **Emergency services :** 5 ambulances dispatched. Police notified. Mulago NRH and Naguru A&Es notified. **16th/11/2021. 10:28hrs**

The last Methane Report was as follows:

Mass Casualty Event Declared

Location: IGG headquarters, Kla, and CPS, **Type :** 2 Bomb blasts, **Hazards :** Bomb hazard, crowds. **Access:** Kimathi Avenue. **Number :** several. All casualties from CPS scene have been evacuated to Mulago NRH. IGG building casualties have all been managed and transferred accordingly from KCCA City hall clinic. Triage numbers to be populated soon. **Emergency services:** 12 ambulances dispatched. Police in charge of both scenes. Mulago NRH and Naguru A&Es notified. **16th/11/2021. 11:47hrs**