



Extending SRH Services to Persons with Albinism During National Day Commemoration in Kigoma

**UMKOBA Dialogues
Spark New
Momentum for Male
Involvement in Family
Planning**



Executive Directors Message

Dear friends, partners, and supporters,

Warm greetings from UMATI Tanzania.

At UMATI, we remain deeply committed to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights for all Tanzanians. This edition of our newsletter highlights the strides we are making to reach underserved communities, empower youth, and promote inclusive health services across the country.

Our work goes beyond service delivery as we strive to break barriers, challenging stigma, and fostering meaningful SRH environment that leads to lasting change. We are grateful for the continued collaboration with partners and supporters who share our vision of equitable access to quality SRH services. Together, we will keep pushing forward to ensure every individual has the knowledge, services, and support they need to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Thank you for being part of this journey and let us keep working together to create an enabling SRH environment especially for women and youth in Tanzania.

UMKOBBA Dialogues Spark New Momentum for Male Involvement in Family Planning



UMATI through the UMKOBBA Project funded by Bergstrom Foundation, rolled out a series of targeted community dialogues in hard to reach communities such as Mvugwe, Kaguruka, and Ilagala villages in Kasulu - Kigoma Region. The dialogues focused on critical but often overlooked issue in reproductive health especially the absence of men in antenatal and family planning (FP) services.

Conducted in informal community spaces, locally known as “vijiwe vya kahawa”, these dialogues offer a culturally sensitive platform for men and women to engage openly on sensitive reproductive health matters. This approach proves to be highly effective, not only in mobilizing participants but also in breaking the silence around male involvement in sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

The dialogues in Mvugwe and Kaguruka each brought together 84 participants, while Ilagala recorded 63 participants in the first session and an impressive 127 in the second. These numbers reflect the community's strong interest and enthusiasm to engage in open discussions on reproductive health and male involvement in family planning.

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I didn't know men could support family planning openly, now I feel encouraged to talk with my partner, shared one male participant from Ilagala, capturing the transformative impact he experienced from the sessions.

Throughout the dialogues, participants discuss a range of crucial SRH issues including: Myths and misconceptions surrounding contraceptive methods such as implants causing infertility or reducing libido, the secrecy that surrounds family planning use among women, often driven by fear of conflict with partners, persistent communication gaps between partners on family planning and reproductive health matters cultural and economic expectations linked to maternal health.

The sessions also reveal a strong underlying willingness among men to become more engaged once given a safe, respectful, and culturally relevant platform to share their perspectives.



Women need safe spaces too, but men should not be left behind in reproductive health matters because they also have a role to play, emphasized a female participant in Kaguruka.

Although these dialogues achieved strong community engagement, some challenges still remain. In some areas of Kigoma, cultural beliefs, stigma, and lack of information about reproductive health services are still making it hard for men to get involved in sexual and reproductive health services. These dialogues are a strong reminder that involving men is not only possible—but also key to long-term success in family planning and reproductive health. However, the success of these dialogues through the UMKOBA Project is a big step forward in UMATI's commitment to delivering inclusive, equitable, and community-driven reproductive health services across Tanzania.



UMATI and UNFPA Expand Access to Post Abortion Care in Underserved Regions

UMATI, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), conducted a six-day training on Comprehensive Post Abortion Care (cPAC) for health care providers in Songwe and Dodoma regions. The goal of this training was to strengthen the capacity of health providers in providing high-quality, compassionate, and stigma-free post-abortion care services. A total of 50 health care providers from different levels of the health system were equipped with practical skills and knowledge necessary for effective cPAC service delivery.



Participants listening attentively during the training session

The training covered essential technical modules such as manual vacuum aspiration (MVA), post-abortion contraception, infection prevention, pain management, and client-centered counseling. These components are crucial in reducing maternal morbidity and mortality resulting from unsafe abortion complications, especially in underserved and rural areas.

Eva Mwakyusa, Regional Reproductive and Child Health Coordinator of Songwe, expressed her appreciation for UMATI's continued commitment to reaching marginalized regions.

“

We sincerely thank UMATI for prioritizing Songwe District, as we have often been overlooked by many stakeholders. This training is very important for our health workers, and I urge them to share the knowledge by mentoring their fellow colleagues at their respective health facilities. That way, even if someone is transferred or promoted to another facility, the services can still continue to reach our clients,” she said.

The initiative aligns with national efforts to strengthen maternal and reproductive health outcomes under the Ministry of Health's Safe Motherhood Strategy, and supports Tanzania's commitments to reducing preventable maternal deaths under sustainable development Goal 3.1 which focuses on reducing of maternal mortality. Through this cPAC training, UMATI continues to demonstrate its role as a key player in advancing sexual and reproductive health in Tanzania.



Group photo of National cPAC trainers and health care providers in Songwe Region

Extending SRH Services to Persons with Albinism During National Day Commemoration in Kigoma

As part of its ongoing commitment to inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights, UMATI, through the UMKOBA Project, participated in the National Day of Albinism held in Kigoma Municipal Council. This outreach served as an important platform to bring health services closer to a group often marginalized in access to care persons with albinism, especially youth and women.

UMATI's involvement in the commemoration of National Albinism day aimed to ensure that no one is left behind in accessing critical SRH and family planning (FP) services. The outreach included mobile service delivery such as family planning counseling, contraceptive provision, HIV testing, and skin health check-ups.

The outreach event attracted over 650 participants, The majority of attendees being youth and adolescents, with a special focus on individuals with albinism, some of whom had traveled from different regions of Tanzania, including Dodoma.



In addition to service provision, UMKOBA used the platform to raise awareness on the rights of persons with albinism to health, dignity, and protection from stigma. Public education sessions highlighted the need for respectful, non-discriminatory care from health care providers and debunked harmful myths surrounding albinism.

The event also provided an opportunity to showcase UMATI's SRHR and FP programs to other partners and promote stronger coordination among regional implementing partners. Participants who visited UMATI booth expressed heartfelt gratitude for the outreach, with many emphasizing the need for continued engagement in their communities:

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I hope this doesn't end here in Kigoma, I am from Dodoma Ihumwe. We need more outreach like this, in our villages.
-Community member with albinism

“Most health providers fear us or avoid us at dispensaries. But here, I got free screening and information — that means a lot.
-Adult woman with albinism

“We often stay home to avoid stares or judgment. Today, we gathered with pride and left with knowledge from UMATI.”



UMKOBA project coordinator Dr. Bakari Omary in group photo with some of the youths who visited UMATI booth during the commemoration event.

These testimonials underscore the power of outreach-based interventions in restoring dignity and building trust between health systems and marginalized populations. UMATI's participation in this National Day of Albinism reflects its broader mission of ensuring equitable access to SRH services for all, including vulnerable and often forgotten groups thus continue to advocate for inclusive, rights-based care in the communities.

Empowering Communities to Protect Girls: Mwanzo Mwema Project Spurs HPV Vaccination Awareness in Katavi



Group of teachers going through the Tujibebe Magazine during the project orientation

UMATI, in partnership with Girl Effect and local government stakeholders, is making remarkable progress in promoting HPV vaccination and strengthening routine immunization through the Mwanzo Mwema project in Katavi Region. Between April and June 2025, the project reached key education and health intermediaries in Tanganyika and Nsimbo districts boosting awareness and advocacy efforts around adolescent health.

Through the project, a total of 20 primary school club teachers and 20 healthcare workers were identified and trained from Nsimbo and Tanganyika Districts. The participants were equipped with age-appropriate, accurate information on HPV, cervical cancer prevention, and practical strategies to promote vaccination among girls aged 9 to 14. Trainings were conducted in small, location-based groups to accommodate the geographical spread of schools and health facilities, and sessions emphasized collaboration between teachers and healthcare providers to ensure sustained, school-based support.

The project also mobilized 40 influential community figures, including district medical officers, headteachers, village chairpersons, and religious leaders. These individuals participated in one-day orientation sessions that tackled vaccine safety, addressed misinformation, and emphasized the importance of community leadership in increasing vaccine uptake. The influential leaders' feedback about the training and overall project aim was overwhelmingly positive, as they made commitment to engage families and communities in support of the initiative.

One headteacher from Tanganyika Council shared, "This project has given us in-depth knowledge on HPV and its vaccine, enabling us to educate students to uptake the vaccine for their life goals." Such testimonials reflect the growing momentum behind the project and the confidence it has inspired among its beneficiaries. Despite some challenges, such as limited training time and long travel distances for participants, the project achieved its intended targets. These challenges were addressed through strategic grouping of trainees and focused facilitation, ensuring each participant received the essential knowledge and tools to make an impact.

Looking ahead, UMATI is preparing to roll out the next phase of the Mwanzo Mwema project, which includes distributing communication materials, supporting content engagement in school clubs and conducting parent health talks. With strengthened collaboration across the health and education sectors and the growing involvement of community leaders, the project is helping pave the way for improved vaccine coverage, greater adolescent health awareness, and the long-term goal of cervical cancer prevention in Katavi Region.

FSPI TanzAfya Project: From Screens to Clinics: Lighting the Path for Youth in Chamwino and Dodoma City Councils



With the steadfast support of the French Embassy in Tanzania Médecins du Monde (MdM), in collaboration with local partners Doris Mollel Foundation (DMF) and Chama cha uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania (UMATI), has been leading a transformative journey through the FSPI TanzAfya project—now entering its final year.

Over the past months, the project team has been on the move literally. From the vibrant streets of Dodoma City to the rural heartlands of Chamwino District, they've brought Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) to life through a powerful blend of storytelling, service delivery, and community engagement.

Edutainment on Wheels



9 Events



6,702 Reach

Armed with a cinebus a mobile, medically equipped clinic—the team hosted nine SRHR activation events, reaching 6702 adolescents and youth (3468 female, 3234 male). These weren't your typical health talks. Each event featured two compelling Swahili-language films, SUBIRA and KITANZI, developed by the project to spark open conversations around menstrual health, early marriage, family planning, and gender-based violence.

Screened in schools and under the stars, and followed by interactive discussions, these films created safe, inclusive spaces where young people could ask questions, challenge taboos, and envision healthier futures.



The Cinebus: A Clinic That Comes to You

More than just a backdrop, the cinebus was a game-changer. Staffed by Health care providers, it delivered convenient SRHR services right where youth gathered. Between January and June 2025, the cinebus reached 10,041 young people (5,187 female, and 4,854 male). Among them: 1,556 girls accessed modern contraceptives (oral pills, implants, and Depo-Provera); while 2,542 youth received HIV testing. 33,560 condoms were distributed to promote dual protection against STIs and unplanned pregnancies.

Spotlight on Haneti: When Music Meets Health

One unforgettable moment came in Haneti, Chamwino, where the team hosted a high-energy Edutainment SRHR activation event featuring a popular music artist. The result? A crowd nearly three times larger than usual. The performance turned the event into a celebration of youth, rights, and health—proving that when you meet young people where they are, they show up in force.

Youth Weekend Clinics: Quietly Revolutionary, Boldly Impactful

While the cinebus brought SRH services to the doorsteps of remote communities, another innovation was quietly reshaping how young people access care—the Youth Friendly Weekend Clinic (YFWC) initiative. Designed with empathy and strategy, YFWCs open their doors on Saturdays, offering a safe and stigma-free space for adolescents to seek SRHR services. For many school-going youth, visiting a clinic during regular hours can be intimidating or even impossible due to school schedules, social stigma, or fear of judgment. YFWCs flip that script. The YFWC initiative alone has made a remarkable impact whereby: 15,481 youth (8,471 female and 7,010 male) accessed services; 3,992 girls received modern contraceptives; 7,130 youth underwent HIV testing and counselling; and 123,014 male condoms were distributed.

But the numbers only tell part of the story.

YFWCs are more than service points they are safe havens. Staffed by trained healthcare providers who understand the unique needs of adolescents, these clinics offer not just treatment, but trust. Youth are welcomed, listened to, and supported without judgment.

The initiative also fosters a ripple effect. As more young people access services confidently, they become informal ambassadors, encouraging peers to do the same. This peer-driven momentum is helping to normalize SRHR conversations and dismantle long-standing taboos in schools and communities.

In essence, YFWCs are redefining what youth-friendly healthcare looks like. They are a quiet revolution one weekend at a time.

SRH In-School Sessions: Empowering Youth Where They Learn

While the cinebus and YWCs brought SRHR services into communities, another powerful arm of the FSPI TanzAfya project reached youth right where they spend most of their time—in school.

Through structured SRH sessions by teachers and peer educators in primary and secondary schools, the project engaged 36,440 adolescents and youth (20,172 female, and 16,268 male) in age-appropriate, culturally sensitive education on topics such as puberty, menstrual hygiene, consent, contraception, and gender-based violence.

These sessions were facilitated by trained peer educators and supported by teachers and healthcare workers, ensuring that the information was not only accurate but also relatable and respectful. The in-school approach helped normalize SRHR conversations in academic settings, equipping students with knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions about their health and relationships. It also fostered stronger links between schools and local health facilities, encouraging referrals and follow-up care when needed.





Community at the Core

This success wasn't achieved in isolation. It was built on a foundation of collaboration—with teachers, peer educators, healthcare workers, and community leaders. Parents were also brought into the conversation through sensitization sessions, helping to bridge generational gaps and foster open dialogues at home. As the FSPI TanzAfya project enters its final stretch, its legacy is already taking root. It's a story of innovation, inclusion, and impact—proof that when education meets empathy, and services meet youth where they are, change isn't just possible—it's already happening.

UMATI Champions Youth Engagement at National Youth Development Forum in Dodoma

UMATI participated in the National Youth Development Forum held in Dodoma, under the theme “Youth Participation in Decision-Making for Sustainable Development.” This important platform brought together youth leaders, policymakers, and development partners to spotlight the role of young people in shaping Tanzania's future. UMATI supported peer educators from Dodoma Region to participate in this important forum thus reaffirmed its commitment to empowering youth as catalysts for change, especially in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, leadership, and civic participation.

UMATI's presence at the forum reflects our broader mission to ensure that young voices are heard, valued, and meaningfully integrated into national development agendas. We continue to emphasize the importance of youth inclusion in policy-making, planning, and community development as a cornerstone for sustainable progress fostering a generation that is informed, empowered, and ready to lead.



UMATI's Dr. Francis Mbwilo receives a medal of appreciation from the Guest of Honor, Mwantumu Mahiza — Chairperson of the National NGO Coordination Board during the Tanzania Youth Development Forum.



Group photo of UMATI peer educators proudly representing Youth voices during the National Youth Development Forum

Transforming Lives of Tanzanian Mothers, one family at a time

UMATI Marks Mother's Day by reaffirming commitment to maternal health and rights. On this year's Mother's Day, UMATI joined the celebration to honor the invaluable role of mothers by reaffirming its commitment to advancing maternal health, rights, and well-being. Through its ongoing programs and partnerships, UMATI continues to promote access to quality reproductive health services, family planning, and safe motherhood interventions across the country. The recognition featured in a national Guardian newspaper highlights UMATI's efforts to ensure that every woman regardless of age, location, or background can access the information and services she needs to live a healthy, empowered, and dignified life.

Monday 12 May 2025

Guardian International Mother's Day SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

MOTHER'S QUALITIES Patient, Generous, Wise, Loving, Knowledgeable, Caring, Encouraging, courageous

UMATI: Transforming the Lives of Tanzanian Mothers, One Family at a Time

By Guardian Reporter

As our country celebrates International Mother's Day this May 12, it is not only a time to honor the remarkable role that mothers play in our families and communities, but also to recognize the challenges that stand before them, working tirelessly to improve their health, income, and opportunities. One such institution is UMATI (United Maternal and Adolescent Transformation Initiative), a national pioneer in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for over six decades.

Founded in 1968, UMATI has grown into one of the country's most respected and far-reaching organizations in the field of family planning, maternal health, and reproductive rights. As an affiliate of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), UMATI has been instrumental in expanding access to health services that empower women, men, and youth to make informed decisions about their health and lives.

A National Footprint

UMATI operates a network of five clinics in four regions and collaborates with over 400 public clinics across Tanzania, providing a wide range of services, from contraceptive care to maternal and child health services, HIV prevention, and screening for reproductive cancers. These clinics are supported by more than 100 trained healthcare providers and coordinated by mobile outreach programs that bring services directly to communities, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas.

UMATI has provided sexual and reproductive health services to over 5 million Tanzanians over the past decade, with a strong emphasis on reaching underserved populations. In 2024 alone, UMATI reached more than 400,000 clients through its clinics, outreach programs, and special initiatives, helping to close critical gaps in reproductive health services.

Youth-Friendly Services: Investing in the Next Generation

Recognizing that today's adolescents are tomorrow's mothers and fathers, UMATI has focused heavily on youth-friendly services. Adolescents face unique challenges in accessing reproductive health services, including stigma, lack of information, and cultural barriers. To address this, UMATI has established youth centers and clinics that provide confidential, respectful care.

Over 100,000 adolescents have benefited from UMATI's youth-friendly services recently, which include sexual and reproductive health education, family planning, HIV prevention, and life skills training. These services help reduce early and unintended pregnancies, lower the incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and promote gender equality.

UMATI also implements the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) program in schools and communities, helping young people build the knowledge and skills they need to make informed, responsible decisions about their health.

HIV Prevention and Cervical Cancer Screening

In a country with a generalized HIV epidemic, integrating HIV services into reproductive health programs is essential. UMATI provides HIV testing, counseling, prevention education, and referral for treatment, reaching thousands of women and youth each year.

Additionally, UMATI has prioritized cervical cancer prevention, a major public health concern in Tanzania. With support from partners and the Ministry of Health, UMATI offers

provide cervical cancer screening using visual inspection with acetic acid (VIA) and other positive cases for treatment. To date, over 25,000 women have been screened through UMATI's programs, increasing early detection and improving survival outcomes.

Mobile Outreach: Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide

One of UMATI's most innovative approaches is its mobile outreach program, which delivers services to remote and underserved communities. Using specially equipped vehicles and mobile teams, UMATI brings comprehensive services, including maternal health care, HIV testing, and cancer screening, to villages that would otherwise have no access to formal healthcare.

In 2024, UMATI's mobile outreach teams served over 80,000 clients, helping to reduce disparities between urban and rural populations and ensuring that no woman is left behind because of geography or poverty.

Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive issue affecting women's health and well-being in Tanzania. UMATI integrates GBV prevention and response into its health programs, training healthcare providers to recognize and support survivors, offering counseling services, and referring women to legal and social services when needed.

This comprehensive approach acknowledges that women's health is not only a matter of biology but also of rights, dignity, and safety.

Creating Lasting Change for Mothers and Families

UMATI's impact goes far beyond individual services. As our country celebrates Mother's Day, it is important to recognize the role this organization plays in shaping the environment in which Tanzanian mothers live, work, and raise their families.

UMATI's work directly supports Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) by improving access to quality maternal

health, family planning, HIV prevention, and youth services. It also advances Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality) by promoting women's reproductive rights, reducing early and unintended pregnancies, and responding to gender-based violence. These contributions help ensure that mothers are not only healthier but also more empowered to participate fully in their communities.

In addition, UMATI engages communities through advocacy, awareness campaigns, and peer educator programs that mobilize local leaders and change harmful norms. This grassroots approach helps create supportive environments for mothers, ensuring that they are not isolated in their struggles but surrounded by informed, compassionate communities.

UMATI's investment in youth leadership and digital health innovations further strengthens its mission by equipping young people with knowledge and tools. UMATI helps prepare the next generation of leaders to advocate for their reproductive health issues confidently, laying the foundation for stronger, healthier families across Tanzania.

Measuring Progress and Future Directions

According to UMATI's annual reports and external evaluations, the organization has made significant strides in expanding access to reproductive health services, improving quality of care, and enhancing community engagement. Notably, UMATI has:

- Increased the use of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) among clients.
- Improved adolescent health outcomes through targeted youth programs.
- Expanded cervical cancer screening coverage, particularly in rural areas.
- Strengthened capacity through workforce development and digital innovations.

Looking ahead, UMATI's strategic goals include further scaling up services in underserved regions, enhancing community and youth engagement, strengthening partnerships with government and private sector actors, and integrating digital health solutions to improve service delivery.

A Shared National Responsibility

As Tanzania celebrates Mother's Day this year, the progress made in maternal health and reproductive rights is a testament to the collective efforts to ensure a better future for all. It is not a matter of "her" or "their" responsibility, but of "our" responsibility as a nation — as government, civil society, healthcare providers, and citizens — to protect and promote the health and rights of women.

Organizations like UMATI demonstrate what is possible when communities, businesses, and partnerships come together. Their work has saved lives, strengthened families, and given millions of Tanzanians the opportunity to thrive.

As we honor the mothers of our nation, let us also honor and support the visionaries that underlie their health, empowerment, and thriving lives.

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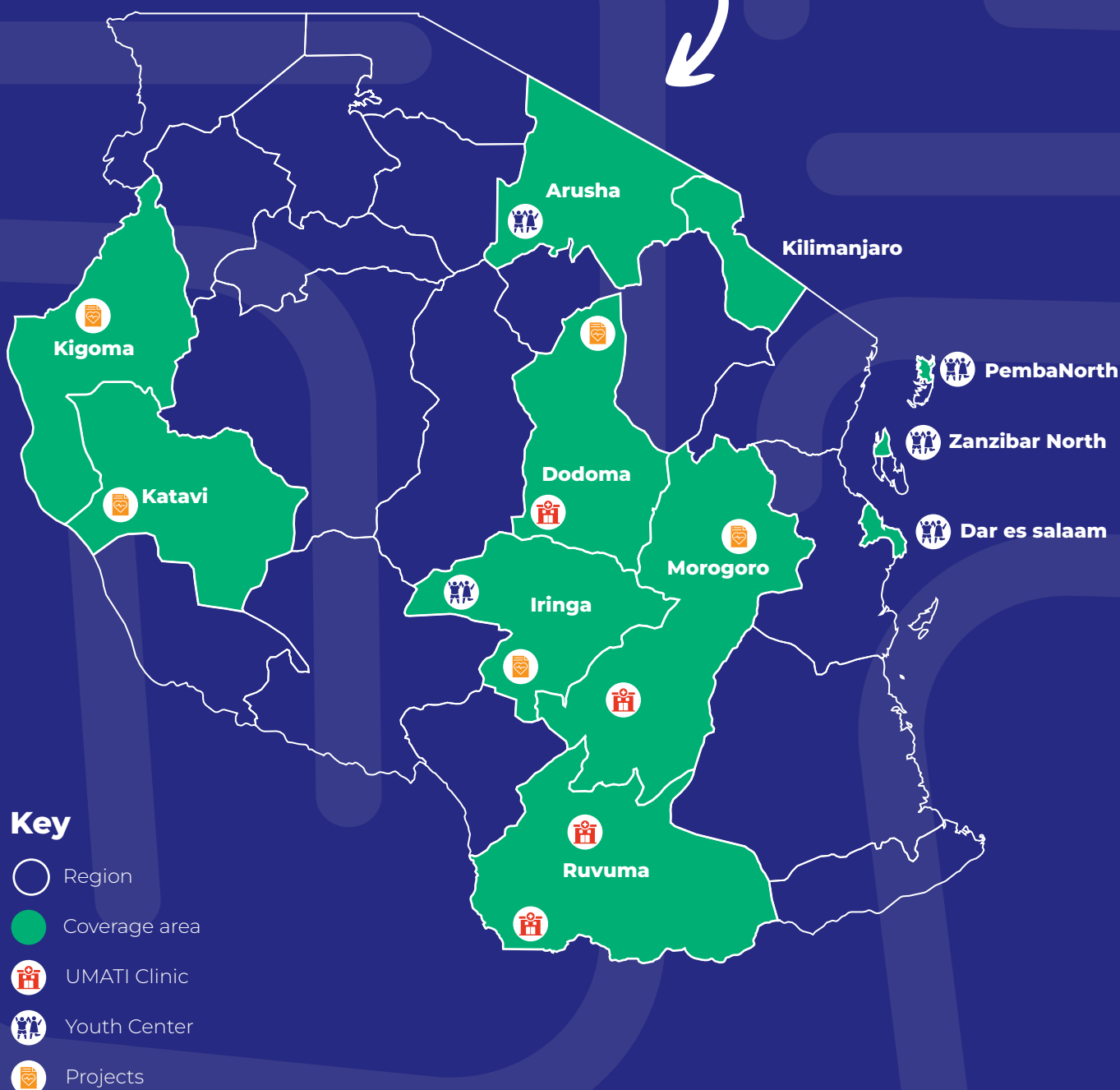
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UMATI's Area of Coverage



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