

Fort Portal HIV burden a shame – Bishop Kisembo

FACT CHECK
14.3%
 The estimated prevalence percentage of HIV in Fort Portal city, with 14-18 out of every 100 people infected.

FORT PORTAL

By Jonan Tusingwire

The high HIV prevalence, which remains far above the national average, brings ridicule to Fort Portal city, Rwenzori Bishop Reuben Kisembo has said.

The city has the highest prevalence in the country (about 14.3%), with 14-18 out of every 100 people in Fort Portal being infected with HIV, according to recent statistics from the Uganda AIDS Commission. The national average stands at about four to five out of every 100.

The HIV epidemic is geographically diverse, with prevalence ranging from 7.7% in central to 2.3% in West Nile.

While leading prayers at All Saints Jesus Supply Church in Fort Portal on Sunday, Kisembo urged city residents to deliberately fight the spread

of HIV/AIDS. During the same service, Kisembo launched the construction of the first floor of the church.

“We have a problem of HIV/AIDS in Fort Portal, it is a shame on us,” he said

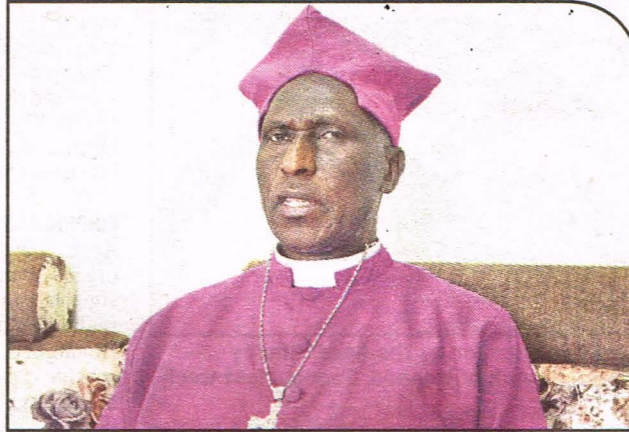
“Recently, I was at a function in Kyegegwa district, and the master of ceremonies asked me: ‘How are you, bishop? How is HIV faring in Fort Portal?’ Everywhere, we are being ridiculed,” he said.

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Kisembo asked the people to respect their bodies and avoid sexual immorality. The bishop emphasised the importance of self-control and faithfulness, saying many HIV infections can be prevented if people avoid risky sexual behaviour.

Kisembo told worshippers that sexual desire should never be treated as a matter of survival, saying individuals can exercise discipline.

“You cannot die because of



Rwenzori Bishop Kisembo called for responsible living

HIV PREVALENCE IN OTHER AREAS

According to Uganda’s 2025 HIV estimates by district, Gulu city’s prevalence stood at 7.5%, Pader at 8.4%, Kyotera (12.6%), Kasese (2.4%) and Wakiso (7.1%).

Among adults aged 15 to 49, women had the highest prevalence rate (6.4%), while men had 3.4%. On a general rate, HIV prevalence stands at 4.9%.

People living with HIV came to 1,527,238 in the 2024 statistics, with 37,000 new infections recorded.

sexual starvation, but you can die because of food starvation,” Kisembo said.

ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

The cleric urged young people in particular to focus on building their future and to avoid lifestyles that expose them to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Kisembo said many people engage in sexual practices that expose them to HIV despite the ongoing awareness campaigns and prevention efforts.

“The high number of HIV infections shows that we, as religious leaders, have not done enough to encourage people to guard against sexual immorality.

“People are involved in sexual immorality. If you are not ashamed by that, I am,” Kisembo said.

He called on fellow religious leaders, parents and community members to promote

abstinence, faithfulness and responsible living among young people and adults alike.

CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE LIVING

The city mayor, the Rev. Willy Kintu Muhanga, who attended the service, urged residents to take greater responsibility for their health and wellbeing to fight the virus.

“It is true that HIV is high in Fort Portal. This is not good for us, and it shames us,” Muhanga said.

The mayor urged residents to be vigilant and make choices that protect their lives, emphasising the importance of moral values and faith in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

“As your leader, I call upon you to be careful and protect your life. Let us protect ourselves and fear the Lord because when you do so, you cannot engage in sexual immorality, and you cannot abuse alcohol,” Muhanga said.