

OKEMA JAMES NELSON (Dr/MD)-2025

Email: ojamesnelson@gmail.com | Mobile: +256776994589

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/dr-okema

Website: drokema.com.

Personal Profile:

I am a research-driven Medical Officer with a strong clinical foundation as a former Clinical Officer and a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) graduate of Gulu University. Currently serving as a Pre-intern at St. Mary's Hospital Lacor, I bring over six years of progressive experience delivering frontline healthcare in resource-limited settings across Northern Uganda. Growing up, studying, and working in a region that endured over two decades of armed insurgency has profoundly shaped my commitment to strengthening fragile health systems through contextually relevant, evidence-based research.

I have actively contributed to multiple clinical and public health research projects across Sub-Saharan Africa, with research interests spanning emergency medicine, cardiology, infectious diseases, maternal and adolescent health, and health systems strengthening. My research experience includes protocol development, data collection and management, statistical analysis, academic writing, and dissemination of findings to inform patient-centered care and policy-relevant decision-making. Conducting research in settings with limited infrastructure has strengthened my ability to generate pragmatic, high-impact evidence that addresses real-world healthcare challenges.

I am highly motivated to advance research capacity in underserved and post-conflict regions where evidence gaps continue to undermine effective healthcare delivery. I bring strong analytical skills, scientific discipline, and the ability to work collaboratively within multidisciplinary and international research teams. Through a competitive scholarship opportunity, I seek advanced training to deepen my research methodology expertise, expand global academic exposure, and build leadership capacity. My long-term goal is to become a clinician-scientist and research leader dedicated to strengthening sustainable research ecosystems and improving health outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Key achievement

- Best Undergraduate Dissertation, Faculty of Medicine, Gulu University - 2025
Recognized for excellence in research on the prevalence and factors associated with gender-based violence among pregnant women attending ANC at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital.
- Excellent Student Government Award, Faculty of Medicine, Gulu University -2024
Recognized for leadership and innovation in community health projects, including coordinating medical

outreaches as Project Chairperson of the Northern Uganda Village Health Outreach Project (NUVHOP).

- Excellence in Teaching Award, Gulu College of Health Sciences - 2022
Acknowledged for innovative and effective teaching methods, engaging students in active learning, and fostering critical thinking skills.
- Northern Uganda Village Health Outreach Project (NUV-HOP), Chairperson -2023
Implemented the 2023 edition together with medical students from Belgium and Manchester, UK, in Amuru, Gulu, and Omoro districts.
- Northern Uganda Village Health Outreach Project (NUV-HOP), International Affairs Secretary -2022
Implemented the 2022 edition together with medical students from Belgium and Manchester, UK, in Amuru, Gulu, and Omoro districts.
- Research Grant Recipient, Gulu University Sexual and Reproductive Health Department - 2022
Won USD 1,000 as a co-researcher for a study on gender-based violence among women attending antenatal care at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital.
- Employee of the Year, Dr. Ambrosoli Memorial Hospital Kalongo - 2020
Voted by peers for outstanding performance, dedication, and service excellence in clinical practice.
- State House Academic Scholarship Award -2021
Awarded financial support for tuition and functional fees based on resilience, strong academic commitment, and demonstrated leadership potential.
- NIDA Clinical Trials Network Certificate, Good Clinical Practice - 2023
Completed a six-hour course on Good Clinical Practice for clinical trials.
- Certificate in Clinical Mycology, International Society for Human and Animal Mycology (ISHAM) - 2023

Work Experience/Career History

Medical Officer (Pre-Intern) | 2025–Present

St. Mary's Hospital Lacor, Gulu City

- Manage 30-40 in-patient and out-patient cases daily across internal medicine, emergency, and general wards, ensuring timely diagnosis, treatment, and appropriate referrals in a high-volume teaching hospital.
- Actively participate in daily ward rounds and multidisciplinary team meetings, contributing to clinical audits and case reviews that support continuous improvement in patient care and safety.

- Provide frontline emergency care as part of rapid response teams managing trauma, obstetric emergencies, and acute infectious diseases, supporting stabilization and definitive management of 100+ emergency cases.
- Lead small-group clinical teaching sessions for medical students and interns, facilitating bedside learning, case discussions, and procedural demonstrations during clinical rotations.
- Support implementation of clinical protocols and infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, contributing to improved adherence to standard treatment guidelines and reduced healthcare-associated infection risks.

Project Manager | 2025–Present

LIFE + LIMB – Primary Trauma Care (PTC), Northern Uganda Chapter

(In collaboration with Primary Trauma Care Project, Oxford).

- Designed and led a regional trauma-prevention and emergency response capacity-building program across Gulu City and surrounding districts, with locally developed training curricula, standardized assessment tools, and routine pre-post competency evaluations, reaching over 3,000 direct beneficiaries.
- Led structured trauma-care training for 400+ motorcycle taxi operators using standardized basic life support and hemorrhage control modules, with competencies assessed through objective skills checklists and scenario-based evaluations, achieving post-training competency attainment in over 70% of participants.
- Designed and delivered lay first responder training for 250+ community members using simulation-based instruction and structured observation tools, with post-training assessments demonstrating improved bystander response actions in simulated road traffic injury scenarios relative to baseline.
- Organized emergency skills workshops for 120+ medical students using simulations, quizzes, and objective structured skills stations, with pre-post testing demonstrating significant improvements in first-aid knowledge and emergency response performance scores.
- Coordinated distribution of 500+ helmets and reflector jackets to high-risk riders, with injury risk reduction estimated using established road safety evidence and exposure-based risk models rather than direct injury incidence measurement.
- Led multi-sectoral coordination involving 15+ stakeholders including health facilities, police, community leaders, and the Primary Trauma Care program at the University of Oxford, with referral pathway mapping and process audits demonstrating improved communication flow and emergency coordination compared to baseline workflows.

- Led monitoring, evaluation, and reporting through establishment of routine data collection tools, predefined performance indicators, and quarterly reporting cycles, supporting continuous quality improvement across training, coordination, and community response components.

Project Coordinator – MIMHA Project, Northern Uganda | 2023–Present

- Coordinated day-to-day implementation and stakeholder engagement across the MIMHA project, establishing standardized reporting workflows and review timelines with MEAL Managers and Outreach Coordinators, resulting in improved reporting consistency and reduced activity delays within the first year.
- Led delivery of integrated mental health and substance-use recovery services using structured counseling, psychoeducation, and referral protocols, reaching over 1,200 community members, with routine follow-up tracking indicating improved engagement and continuity of care compared to baseline.
- Designed and facilitated 20+ community outreaches and capacity-building sessions, training 150+ community health workers, peer supporters, and volunteers using national and WHO-aligned mental health and SUD intervention guidelines.
- Oversaw program monitoring and quality improvement using established MEAL frameworks, indicator dashboards, and periodic performance reviews, demonstrating increased service uptake and improved client retention relative to baseline program data.
- Led stigma-reduction activities through community dialogues and structured pre-post perception assessments, with post-intervention surveys showing improved community acceptance of mental health and substance-use services.
- Built and maintained partnerships with 10+ health facilities, community organizations, and local leaders, with referral pathway mapping and tracking demonstrating strengthened access to services and improved referral coordination.
- Integrated evidence-based and sustainable practices into program design by embedding national and WHO mental health guidelines, supporting continuity of services beyond donor-funded cycles.

Clinical Instructor | 2022–Present

Gulu College of Health Sciences

- Supervised and mentored 300+ diploma and certificate-level clinical students annually through structured ward-based teaching and community placements, with learner performance tracked using standardized end-of-rotation evaluation tools, demonstrating improved clinical competence and confidence over baseline cohorts.

- Delivered structured lectures, bedside teaching, and clinical demonstrations across internal medicine, pediatrics, and emergency care, facilitating over 200 teaching sessions, with routine anonymous learner evaluations consistently showing high satisfaction scores.
- Led formative and summative assessments using objective assessment criteria and individualized feedback frameworks, resulting in improved clinical reasoning, documentation quality, and professional conduct, reflected by reduced remediation requirements compared to previous rotations.
- Contributed to curriculum review and development by integrating competency-based and case-based learning approaches aligned with national training standards and institutional accreditation requirements.
- Supported continuous medical education for staff and students through regular skills updates, case reviews, and morbidity and mortality discussions, reinforcing reflective practice and patient safety culture.
- Recognized twice as Best Clinical Instructor through student-voted awards in 2023 and 2024, based on structured learner feedback and teaching performance evaluations.

Project Chairperson | 2022–2025

Northern Uganda Village Health Outreach Project (NUV-HOP)

- Provided strategic leadership for a multi-institutional community health outreach program, coordinating three international partner universities and six or more team leads, using defined workplans and delivery timelines, achieving full on-schedule implementation across Amuru, Gulu, and Omoro districts.
- Strengthened stakeholder collaboration through structured coordination with three District Health Offices, Village Health Teams, and local authorities, using standardized mobilization plans and coverage tracking, resulting in improved community participation and service reach compared to previous outreach cycles.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised over 80 student volunteers annually using standardized orientation, supervision schedules, and attendance tracking tools, maintaining high volunteer retention and consistent participation throughout each outreach period.
- Led large-scale community health outreaches delivering preventive and primary healthcare services to over 5,000 community members across multiple outreach cycles, with service utilization logs showing majority reach to rural and hard-to-access populations.
- Improved access to preventive care, health education, screening, and referral services through structured outreach delivery and referral documentation, with post-outreach follow-up indicating increased early health-seeking behaviors compared to baseline patterns.
- Prepared and submitted technical and narrative reports using standardized reporting frameworks to partner institutions including Gulu University, the University of Manchester, and Ghent University, supporting accountability, continuity of funding, and sustained international collaboration.

Medical Clinical Officer (OPD In-Charge) | 2021

Dr. Ambrosoli Memorial Hospital, Kalongo, Agago District.

- Led day-to-day operations of a high-volume rural outpatient department managing approximately 200–300 patients daily, coordinating triage, clinical decision-making, and referral processes to ensure timely and appropriate patient care.
- Delivered comprehensive frontline medical care for acute medical, obstetric, and surgical presentations using hospital standard treatment guidelines, with routine OPD registers and referral logs indicating high same-day case resolution or appropriate referral rates.
- Supervised and coordinated a multidisciplinary OPD team of over 15 nurses and clinicians through duty rosters, task allocation, and on-site clinical oversight, resulting in improved staff coverage, workflow efficiency, and documentation consistency over baseline.
- Prepared and submitted weekly OPD performance reports capturing patient volumes, diagnoses, referrals, and outcomes, supporting hospital management in service planning, resource allocation, and quality improvement discussions.
- Managed initial assessment and stabilization of complex and referred cases in collaboration with senior clinicians, strengthening continuity of care between the OPD and inpatient wards.
- Mentored junior clinical officers and nursing staff in clinical documentation, diagnostic reasoning, and adherence to treatment protocols, with internal audits showing reduced documentation errors compared to prior reporting periods.

District HIV/TB Focal Person | 2020

Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) – West Nile Project, Pakwach District

(IDI / Ministry of Health Partnership).

- Coordinated district-level HIV and TB service delivery across more than 15 public and private health facilities, supporting implementation, supervision, and compliance with national HIV and TB treatment guidelines under the IDI–MoH partnership framework.
- Monitored performance of ART and TB clinics serving over 5,000 clients using routine program indicators, facility dashboards, and cohort reviews, and led continuous quality improvement activities that demonstrated improved viral load monitoring coverage and treatment retention compared to baseline.
- Conducted structured on-site mentorship and supportive supervision for over 100 health workers, focusing on HIV and TB case management, adherence counseling, and accurate HMIS and EMR reporting, using standardized mentorship tools and supervision checklists.

- Supported district-wide scale-up of Differentiated Service Delivery models, including community drug distribution points and multi-month dispensing, using facility readiness assessments and client stratification tools to expand access for stable clients and reduce facility congestion.
- Strengthened data quality and reporting systems through routine data verification, concordance checks, and feedback sessions, contributing to high levels of timely and complete reporting to district and national health information systems.

Volunteer Experience (UNPAID)

Gulu University Research Club | 2023

- Supported research mentorship and proposal development for undergraduate medical and health sciences students.
- Participated in 10+ research training sessions and journal clubs, contributing to improved research literacy and academic writing skills.
- Assisted in data collection, manuscript drafting, and conference abstract preparation for student-led research projects.

Volunteer Health Worker | 2021

The AIDS Support Organization (TASO), Gulu

- Supported HIV prevention, testing, and adherence counseling activities, contributing to service delivery for 1,500+ clients.
- Assisted in community outreach and health education sessions, improving linkage to care and retention rates.
- Supported data collection and reporting for routine HIV program monitoring.

Volunteer Health Officer | 2019

International Rescue Committee (IRC) -Lamwo Refugee Camp, Lamwo District.

- Supported delivery of essential primary healthcare **services** in a humanitarian refugee setting serving 10,000+ refugees.
- Participated in public health assessments, disease surveillance, and health promotion campaigns, contributing to early identification of priority health needs.

- Assisted in integrated community outreach programs focusing on maternal, child health, and communicable disease prevention.

Additional Information

Interests: Public health research, health system strengthening, emergency medicine, and cardiology.

TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATION

1. Awarded certificate of completion in clinical mycology course by international society for human and animal mycology (ISHAM), 2023
2. Participated in international training on randomized clinical trials held on 20th and 21st march, 2023, organized by OIC ministerial committee on Scientific and technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) and Islamic university in Uganda (IUIU), awarded a certificate of participation
3. Awarded a record of achievement Certificate upon Completing a course on introduction to the clinical management of rape and intimate partner violence in humanitarian settings, under health emergencies, World Health Organization, 2023
4. Awarded a record of achievement Certificate upon Completing a course on latest WHO HIV service delivery and differentiated service delivery for HIV treatment, under health emergencies, World Health Organization, 2023
5. Awarded a certificate of completion in good clinical practice by NIDA clinical trials network, 2023
6. Awarded a certificate of completion in a short course, Research Writing in the Sciences (22) an Author AID course which was Co-sponsored by the East African Science and Technology commission (EASTECO) by INASP, an international development organization based in the UK
7. Completed a training on statistical data analysis for Post graduate students and staff using R programming language with RUFORUM, 2022
8. Completed social Net course with World Health Organization, Empowering communities before, during and after an infectious disease outbreak, 2022. Awarded a record of achievement Certificate
9. Awarded certificate of Participation in Proposal Writing with Impact, 2022, an Author AID course which was Co-sponsored by the East African Science and Technology commission (EASTECO) by INASP, an international development organization based in the UK
10. Awarded certificate of Participation in academic Writing skills, 2022, an Author AID course which was Co-sponsored by the East African Science and Technology commission (EASTECO) by INASP, an international development organization based in the UK
11. Awarded a certificate for attending virtual Emergency Physicians International Conference (EPIC 2025), organized by Zero to Hero

12. Attended Conference “AI IN EMERGENCY MEDICINE, organized by International Federation for Emergency Medicine (IFEM)
13. Attended and awarded a certificate at CIRHT 3rd International SRHR Conference as Conference *Participant & Session Moderator*. Moderated a Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) session during the conference on September 17–19, 2025 – Gulu City, Uganda
14. Attended Conversations in Cardiology: 2025 – Live Virtual Conference as CME *Participant* organized by Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC), USA, accredited continuing medical education in current updates and expert discussions in cardiology.
15. Awarded a certificate for attending a training EKG training program organized by Internal Medicine Interest Group of Nigeria (IMGN), Mastering EKG interpretation: From Basic to life-saving pattern, *October, 2025*
16. Attended and awarded certificate of participation at the 20th Annual International Symposium on Ventricular Arrhythmias: Pathophysiology and Therapy. A 2 days symposium organized by University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, *October, 2025*
17. Presented a poster on *QT Interval prolongation in patients receiving Bedaquiline-based regimens for drug resistant TB in sub-saharan Africa: A systematic review and a meta-analysis*, at 3rd Lung Science and Health Symposium organized by Makerere University Lung Institute on 27th/Nov/2025

PUBLISHED RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Gender-Based Violence among Pregnant Women Attending Antenatal Care at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital: A Facility-Based Cross-Sectional Study
2. Clinical Characteristics, Duration of Hospital Stay, Management, Clinical Outcomes at Discharge of Patients Admitted with Heart Failure at St Mary’s Hospital Lacor in Northern Uganda; A Retrospective Cohort Study.
3. Fishing in Murky Waters: The Challenging Route to Diagnosing Twin-Twin Transfusion Syndrome in a Resource-Limited Humanitarian Setting, A Case Study.
4. Incidence of QT interval prolongation in a patient receiving Bedaquiline for Drug Resistant Tuberculosis in Sub Saharan Africa, A systematic review and Meta Analysis
5. Caregiver acceptability, and uptake of Voluntary Medical Circumcision among male children under 5 years in Gulu City, Northern Uganda

RESEARCH PAPERS (UNDER REVIEW)

- Clinical Characteristics, Duration of Hospital Stay, Management, Clinical Outcomes at Discharge of Patients Admitted with Upper Gastrointestinal Bleeding at St Mary's Hospital Lacor in Northern Uganda; A Retrospective Cohort Study
- Investigating Hospital-Acquired Infections and Antibiotic Resistance in The Intensive Care Unit of teaching Hospital of Gulu University: A Prospective Observational Study.
- Trends In Mortality of Admissions at the Internal Medicine Department, St Mary's Hospital Lacor, Gulu: A Retrospective Cohort Study, 2018- 2022
- Utility And Validity of Shock Index and Glasgow Blatchford Score in Predicting Outcome of Patients Admitted with Upper Gastrointestinal Bleeding at St Mary's Hospital Lacor, Northern Uganda; A Prospective Cohort Study.
- Sociology-demographic factors and anemia among in-patients in medical department of St Mary's Hospital Lacor and Gulu Regional Referral Hospital: A cross- sectional study
- Predictors Of Adolescent Pregnancy Among Girls Aged Between 15-19 Years in Kilak South, Amuru District.
- Prevalence and Risk Factors of Post Cesarean Delivery Sepsis: A retrospective Chart review of hospital record in 2023 in Gulu Regional Referral Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital Lacor, Gulu, Uganda
- The Role of Morning Blood Pressure Surge in Predicting Cardiovascular Disease in Patients with Chronic Kidney Disease in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Protocol for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.
- Smoking-Induced Oxidative Stress and Inflammation in Pulmonary Hypertension: Molecular Mechanisms and Therapeutic Implications, Comprehensive Narrative Review.

EDUCATION.

Foundation of Clinical Research, May 2025-Nov 2025.

2025

Harvard Medical School, US

Faculty of Medicine, Gulu university, GULU (U)

Diploma in clinical medicine and community health, *DCM/CH*

2019

Gulu institute of health sciences, GULU (U)

LANGUAGE

English - Fluent

Luo - Mother Tongue

REFEREES

1. Dr Odong Christopher, Interventional Cardiologist, Mulago National Referral Hospital/Uganda Heart Institute, Kampala, Uganda.
Email: Odong.chris2@yahoo.com.
Contact: +256765377440
2. Dr. Bongomin Felix, Consultant Physician and a lecturer, Dept of Microbiology-Gulu University, Gulu, Northern Uganda
Tel: +256784523395
Email: drbongo@gmail.com / f.bongomin@gu.ac.ug
3. Dr. Oriba Dan Langoya, Ass Physician, a lecturer, Department of int.Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Gulu University, Gulu, Uganda.
Tel: +256775593096
Email: oribadanlangoya@yahoo.com

