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## **Minutes of the Medicine Transparency Alliance (MeTA) Zambia Council Consultative Meeting**

**Held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014 at Courtyard Hotel in Lusaka.**

### **1.0 Present**

- |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Hon. Lazarous Chota   | - Chairperson       |
| 2. Mr. Goodwell Lungu    | - Secretary General |
| 3. Mrs. Ruth Mudondo     | - Member            |
| 4. Mr. Billy Mweetwa     | - Member            |
| 5. Mr. Frank Ng'ambi     | - Member            |
| 6. Mr. David Banda       | - Treasurer         |
| 7. Mr. Masauso Phiri     | - MeTA Coordinator  |
| 8. Zindaba Ngwenyama     | - Camera man        |
| 9. Mr. Nervious Himabala | - Minutes Recorder  |

### **2.0 Absent with apology**

- |                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1. Mr. Chikuta Mbewe | - Member |
| 2. Mr. Liyoka Liyoka | - Member |

### **3.0 Opening Remarks**

The MeTA Council Chairperson, Hon. Lazarous Chota called the meeting to order at 11:10 hours. In his opening remarks the chairperson welcomed the Council members in attendance to what he described as the first ever MeTA Council meeting in 2014. He further apologized on behalf of the Executive Committee for not holding any MeTA Council meeting in 2013. He was also quick to mention that during the second phase MeTA held two council meetings and the first was the inaugural council which was held at CIRDZ on



21<sup>st</sup> October 2011 and the second council meeting was held in 2012 when a team from IMS visited the country.

He further reminded the meeting that the process of getting MeTA Zambia off the ground during this second phase has been slow and somewhat difficult, slow in the sense that it took the whole of 2012 to complete the first country workplan. The MeTA workplan was finally approved by IMS in December 2012. He further informed the meeting that unlike the pilot phase when the budget was £100,000 for MeTA Zambia and £50,000 for CSO Coalition, the funds for the second phase was £71,000 which was divided into two streams namely £40,000 as Administrative funds administered by Health Action International (HAI) who are the International MeTA Secretariat (IMS) and £31,000 as Technical funds handled by World Health Organisation (WHO). He further stated that in early 2013 a yellow card was flashed at MeTA Zambia by IMS for not meeting some disputed benchmarks and he was also quick to mention that between January and June 2013 a Coordinator was employed who unfortunately just worked from March to June and resigned.

He further told the meeting that in June 2013 the IMS finally disbursed the funds amounting to (£26,078) translating into two hundred and eight thousand six hundred twenty five kwacha (K208, 625) which marked the beginning of the implementation of some of the workplan activities some of which are listed below:-

- Thirteen (13) Radio Programmes were aired ON ZNBC Radio 4 every Thursday from 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2013
- Procurement Workshop was held in Lusaka on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and in Livingstone on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2013
- CSO Workshops in Solwezi on 27<sup>th</sup> August and in Ndola on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Finally the chairperson reiterated that during the period under review MeTA Zambia notwithstanding the fact that it recorded several successes it had also faced a number of challenges and called upon all the participants to participate fully in the discussions.

#### **4.0 Adoption of the Reports**

The meeting adopted both the narrative and financial reports with various suggestion for changes.

## **5.0 Objectives by Mr Goodwell Lungu**

5.1 Mr. Goodwell Lungu, the Secretary General for MeTA Zambia and also the Executive Director for Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) presented on the objectives of the meeting as follows:-

- To get an update on the activities that had been implemented during the period under review so that the council can make reflections and also to know if there are lessons needed to be learnt.
- To get financial update in order for the council to know whether there was anything to be done to improve.
- To reflect on the activities undertaken and make recommendations thereto on how they can benefit the public.

## **6.0 Presentation on MeTA Zambia from pilot to Second Phase -Administration Arrangements by Mr. David Banda (Treasurer)**

6.1 Mr. David Banda presented on behalf of Mr. Liyoka Liyoka who was not present in the council meeting as he was attending another meeting. Mr. Banda, explained that MeTA Zambia was launched on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 following an agreement initially signed between International Secretariat (UK) and the Ministry of Health accepting MeTA principles while a Memorandum of Understanding was later signed between Transparency International Zambia (TIZ), MeTA Zambia Council and MeTA International to facilitate the disbursement of funds.

He further stated that in terms of funding, the UK Department of International Development (DfID) was providing the initial funding to the project and other partners include governments, global and international civil society organizations, pharmaceutical and other business interests, the World Health Organisation and the World Bank. Furthermore he said the pilot project is being implemented in seven countries that include Kyrgyzstan, Philippines, Peru, Jordan, Ghana and Zambia. He also said that during the pilot phase, MeTA Zambia carried a survey and developed a position paper on counterfeit and substandard drugs with TI Zambia as the fund holder.

Therefore, in the second phase MeTA Zambia is focusing on sharing the phase one findings with all stakeholders through workshops, weekly radio programmes, round table discussions et cetera. Furthermore, he said this is aimed at providing evidence based information that is aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to manage the medicine supply chain and to facilitate improvements at the various stages in the supply chain and in the second phase the Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia is the fund holder and host to MeTA Zambia Secretariat. He also said that MeTA Zambia is made up of Ministry of Health (MOH), including other quasi government Institutions like Medical Stores, Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority, Civil Society Organisations and the private sector involved in the manufacturing of medicines.

He further explained that MeTA Zambia National Executive Committee acknowledges the fact that it is the responsibility of Government to provide access to health care including access to essential medicines to the people of Zambia. However, universal health coverage in this country can only be achieved through multi-stakeholder participation and mutual accountability in line with one of MeTA Zambia's objectives to partner with Government through multi-stakeholder participation in forming stronger and more transparent systems and improved supply chain management that will increase access to essential medicines.

He further added that this can only be achieved through:-

- Mutual accountability through mutli-stakeholder approach that involves all sectors – private, public and civil society.
- Evidence-based policy Improved information about medicines that can inform public debate, and provide a basis for better policy.
- Affordable medicines prices.
- Rational selection.
- Reliable and transparent medicines supply chain systems.
- Sustainable financing; and
- Creating structures within the Ministry that support the medicines supply chain systems for instance, a Directorate of Pharmaceutical Services.

Finally the presenter stated that there was need for information sharing on medicines market and the demand for disclosure on pricing policy and Importation of genuine generics and local medicines. He said this can be achieved through transparency in the supply chain allowing CSO participation from policy level to community e.g. Procurement and supply management information in the public domain to enhance accountability, reduced pilferage and capacity building for effectiveness.

## **7.0 Video Presentation of Five (5) Workshop Activities Implemented by Mr. Masautso Phiri (MeTA Zambia Coordinator)**

7.1 Mr. Goodwell Lungu suggested that Mr. Phiri just present about three (3) videos in such a way that he balanced both workshops and radio programme activities because at the time of presentation the Council Members had already watched all the videos and Mr. Billy Mweetwa seconded which resulted into Mr. Phiri only showing two videos as follows;-

### **7.1.1 Ndola Radio Programme**

The Ndola Radio Programme was presented and the Council Members present had the following observations:-

The Chairperson, Hon. Lazarous Chota observed that in the in a radio programme Mr. Lutangu stated that some patients are taking the Sondashi Formula and wanted to find out the status quo and in response Mr. Billy Mweetwa stressed that the formula is still undergoing some clinical tests but people are taking it already. On the same observation Mrs. Ruth Mudondo bemoaned that notwithstanding the fact that the formula is not regulated people are taking it hence the need to regulate the herb.

Mr. Frank Ng'ambi added that these herbs are being administered by herbalists and consumed by patients without a prescribed dosage but unfortunately Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority (PRA) has no authority and only hope that The Traditional Healers Practitioners Associated of Zambia (THPAZ) in whose jurisdiction they fall under will do something. However, Mr. Mweetwa added that there is a draft bill which the Ministry is working on to regulate the traditional medicines.

The Chairperson also had the second observation. In the radio presentation he observed that participants were also mentioning the issue of consumers buying drugs from illegal outlets and wanted to find out how true that was. In response Mr. Ng'ambi agreed that there is a practice of illegal selling of drugs from these compounds and gave an example of Mandevu Township where there is a presence of illegal drug outlets.

Mrs. Mudondo observed that there was a clip where it was mentioned that Doctors prescribe drugs and advise patients where to buy those drugs from and added that it has become a common practice for Doctors running drug outlet

businesses and stated that Zambia Medicines Regulations Authority (ZAMRA) should deal with this issue as it has gone out of hand. She also informed the meeting that there was also a lesson to learn from the Radio Programme regarding the acquisition of ARVs.

Mr. Mweetwa stated that the video was good and further advised that there should also be more talks on the radio to generate confidence as real issues were coming out very well by the people that were featured and further stated that there was also need to get the views of listeners and response from Government, Professionals and Civil Society Organisations by conducting calling in Radio Programmes. Mr. Goodwell Lungu stressed that the video was very good as it brought out issues very well and advised that all the videos should be made in the similar mode. He further advised that the Livingstone procurement workshop video must be redone. He also advised that there should be a narration between the videos so that the message is not distorted.

**Action Point 1:** There must be a narration to link the activity videos together

Mr. Ng'ambi observed that generally the video was good save only that there was also some more work that need to be done; there was need to give an opportunity for maybe one patient to give a statement in local language. The chairperson advised that there was need to come up with distances between Lusaka and a district where an activity was taking place so that even people from overseas can be able to know the coverage.

**Action Point 2:** Distances must be measured to estimate the coverage

### **7.1.2 Solwezi CSOs Workshop held on 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2013**

Mr. David Banda stated that the video was very good as it was bringing out issues. For example something should be done as it is still a challenge for people to buy medicine from designated areas. On the same video Mr. Lungu observed that the speech of the presenter (the pharmacist) was too long and needed to be shortened to allow the participants give their views as they are also relevant but Mr. Mweetwa's view was that there was no need of cutting the presentation as it is alright the way it was especially that people were appreciating the work of MeTA Zambia and also the fact that there are counterfeit drugs. Mrs. Mudondo observed that there was no correlation between the actual presentation and the views of the people after the workshop hence the need to improve on the presentations.

## **8.0 Presentation of the Narrative Report by Mr. Masauso Phiri and Mrs. Ruth Mudondo**

8.1 Mr. Phiri explained that the importance of the narrative report was to ensure that the Council and the Secretariat was on the same page regarding the activities that had been done and those that are still pending and also to seek Council approval on certain activities.

However, Mrs. Mudondo added that the document was a bit bulky but expected the members to participate as it was emailed to them all prior to the meeting. She was also hopeful that the council would adopt the same and give a go ahead on the pending activities. Mrs. Ruth Mudondo further stated that The Medicines and Allied Substance Act No. 3 of 2013 created the Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority (ZAMRA) replacing the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority (PRA) and just like before the Act does not give ZAMRA the mandate to regulate prices of essential medicines but among other functions it provides for registration and regulations of medicines and allied substances and also provides for the regulations to manufacture, importation, exportation, possession, storage, distribution, supply, sale and use of medicines.

She further stated that in the post pilot phase the Government, in order to overcome the “LAST SMILE” delivery challenge which imparted negatively on the availability and accessibility of medicines in rural areas, established a policy of a Medical Stores Hubs in the provinces and one has since been opened in Southern Province. She also stated that Government is establishing more structures of Health service delivery through the construction of more Health Centers and Hospitals which will demand an increase in medicines and human resources that will help improve accessibility of medicines by the citizens. She also informed the meeting that a number of studies and surveys were made in the pilot phase and the second phase is to build in terms of dissemination and policy lobbying by MeTA. She also added that in order to increase access to medicine locally, the local pharmaceutical markets needs to grow and in order to bring down the prices in the locally produced medicines and to achieve this tax on inputs needs to be removed. MeTA ,therefore, needs to lobby Government for policies that can support these outcomes. Finally she said in the narrative report in order to demonstrate the spread of the MeTA Zambia activities, the distances of locations of activities could be included or map of Zambia added.

## **9.0 Matters Arising from the Presentation**

- 9.1 The Chairperson suggested that there was need to make a follow up on the six hundred and fifty (650) health Centers Government is saying is constructing around the Country as all those Institutions when completed will need medicines and human resource.
- 9.2 On the issue of price control Mr. Mweetwa suggested that there was need to design a research so that there is scientific backing as MeTA Zambia need not relax on collecting and analyzing data. He also said there was also need to regulate the health shops that are dotted around the country.

## **10.0 Presentation on the MeTA Zambia Website by Mr. Jason Mulikita**

The consultant Mr. Jason Mulikita thanked the Council for an invitation to make presentation on the Website. He told the meeting that the website has and is still being worked on and the meeting was going to make it easier for him to complete the work as certain things needed council approval. He stated that the Website has different links (pages) which will enable it operate properly; it has the home page where you can be able to post information, there is also a calendar for the coming activities et cetera. He further said he also opened MeTA Zambia facebook page where the fans can be posting comments and download the information posted. Photo gallery shows all the photos uploaded. There is also a video page which will enable the public access activity videos.

Furthermore Mr. Mulikita said the website will be integrated with the use of youtube which provide free service and finally there is a contact page where contact details for the Office and Executive Members are to be found.

## **11.0 Matters Arising from the Presentation**

- 11.1 Mrs. Mudondo stated that she knows facebook on an individual basis and wanted to findout how it can work in the context of MeTA and in response Mr. Mulikita stated that people (fans) will like the page and by doing so they will be kept in the know as to what is happening. He added that just like facebook, twitter will also be opened and fans will be



able to follow the activities. Mr. Ng'ambi added that the opening of the Website and other social networks was a very good innovation to MeTA Zambia as an NGO and was interested to know when the works will be completed; and in response the consultant stated that the Website will be completed in five (5) days time as the most important thing was the meeting and as for the facebook page it was already done but there was need for contents. Mr. Phiri added the there was need for the information to be posted on facebook for instance information from Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia, Focus Group Discussions et cetera.

The consultant also stressed that there was need for training to people from MeTA on how to update the website and the meeting resolved that Mr. Masauso Phiri and Mr. Zindaba Ngwenyama will be trained and whenever the Coordinator will be recruited he/she will also be oriented on how to update the website.

**Action Point 3:** Mr Masauso Phiri and Mr. Zindaba Ngwenyama to be trained on how to update the MeTA Zambia Website.

Mr. Mulukita further stated that there was need to have internet facility at MeTA Secretariat as the Website will need reliable internet to run effectively and suggested that the Council could choose between zamtel and microlink to supply internet and when he was asked to recommend one he stated that since the Office does not have a lot of computers, Microlink is appropriate. He further added that Microlink gadget costs nine hundred fifty kwacha (K950.00) and the monthly subscription is two hundred and ninety kwacha (K290.00).

## **12.0 Presentation on the Financial Report by Mr. David Banda**

12.1 Mr. Banda explained to the meeting that the amount of £71,000 was approved to fund MeTA Zambia activities and of that total the amount of £33,700 was received which show 99% utilization and the balance of £37,300 is expected to be received for the implementation of the pending activities for the period January to June 2014. He further stated that there was also an amount of £24,031 which was being requested for the additional activities.

## 12.2 Matters Arising from the Presentation

12.3 Mr. Mweetwa drew the attention of the meeting to the activity number 1.1 which read *National Secretariat running costs* item number 1.1.0 (Office supplies and stationary). He observed that the amount budgeted for was K16,000 while the total expense showed K17,332.00 indicated as an under budget; he wanted to find out if it was correct to indicate under budget when there was over expenditure and in response Mr. Lungu argued that in accounts that is how it is. The chairperson, however advised that wherever there was an under budget there is need to put an explanation why that is the case.

**Action Point 4:** The treasurer to put an explanation wherever there is an over expenditure.

The Meeting however made the following amendments to the budget:-

- The word contingency be changed to Office contingency
- Under Staff cost for part time coordinator and Office Administration Assistant the meeting resolved that the coordinator salary be increased from K5,000.00 to K8,000.00 per month for six month (January to June 2014).
- The meeting also resolved that the Desktop should be budgeted for at K10, 000.00 while the printer should be put at K6, 000.00 and stationery was put at K1,000.00.
- The meeting also agreed that communication fee be put at K480.00 monthly for six months the microlink gadget and its monthly subscription was said to be covered from the communication fee

The chair therefore added that there must be a brief narrative on the budget of about a page and a half also. Therefore, Mr. Lungu observed that in some areas the budget was too high and some are just alright hence the need for budgets to pass through internal structures like the committee for approval before implementation.

12.4 Mr. Mweetwa wanted to findout if from the previous budget there was anything budgeted for PSZ and the meeting agreed that that issue should be dealt with before the budget is sent to donors.

## 13.0 Resolutions

- The following were the meeting's resolutions:-

- The meeting resolved that microlink gadget be purchased
- Members should be actively involved in the discussions to make the Website alive
- The Website to be opened on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2014
- Organisational email addresses to be created where usernames should be full names.

#### **14.0 Way Forward**

- Make amendments to both reports
- Administration costs to PSZ should be budgeted
- When eighty (80%) of budget expenses is reached the Secretariat need to notify the Executive to avoid budget overrun
- The videos which will be couriered to be shared
- Videos be put on you tube
- The internet must be installed and the Computer and printer for the office be purchased too.
- The study for the medicine price control to be done
- Videos (both whole and edited) must be put on CDs be couriered to IMF for transparency purposes.

#### **15.0 Closing Remarks**

The chair thanked the Executive Members for attending the meeting which he described as an achievement and he was happy that it took place. He further stated that he hope that Zambia will again rank among the best in MeTA.

Having been no other business to transact the meeting came to a close at 15:25 hours

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**Hon. Lazarous Chota**

**Chairperson**

20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014

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**Masauso Phiri**

**Secretary**

