

MeTA Zambia Holds its first Round Table Meeting

MeTA Zambia held its first Round Table meeting at Courtyard Hotel on 19 September 2014 attended by deputy Minister of Health, the stakeholders from Government, the Private Sector and Civil Society. MeTA Zambia chairperson Hon Lazarus Chota welcomed the minister and all the participants to the meeting where MeTA Zambia used the services of a consultant to focus the attention of participants to the issues at hand. Below is the chairperson's full speech:

"I am pleased to welcome you to this, our first round table during this second phase of the MeTA Project worldwide. From its beginning the Zambian Government has been part and parcel of the MeTA Project.

In 2008 the government of Zambia accepted the MeTA Core Principles thereby paving the way for its involvement in the MeTA Project in Zambia. Part of the MeTA Core Principle the Government accepted was the multistakeholder nature of the organisation. This principle requires that Government, the Private Sector in the Pharmaceutical business and Civil Society must work together to resolve health issues.

The other Core Principle accepted by Government relates to Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Sector.



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Honourable minister, on 8 August 2013, you were kind to receive a MeTA Zambia delegation in your office to discuss various issues covering the Pharmaceutical Sector. You may recall too, Honourable minister that it was at this meeting that you challenged MeTA Zambia to organise a Round Table which would address various issues pertaining to the Pharmaceutical Sector and come up with solutions.

You challenged MeTA Zambia, Honourable minister, not to be a talking shop but to be proactive and provide evidence based information that would be useful in resolving the country's numerous problems in the Health sector.

We are here today honourable minister to answer that challenge. This is one of several other Round Tables that we will host in the coming months.

Today we are looking at the whole field of pharmaceuticals to see what is there or not there and what needs to be done. Take the following

- A) Procurement of pharmaceuticals locally or externally – what is the best option for Zambia. If we procure locally what is the cost implication?
- B) Storage of pharmaceuticals – is this the most cost effective – we get the medicines we want for three or six months period at a time
- C) Taxation – what is our tax regime on medicines?
- D) Local manufacture – is there a policy on this? If so what is that policy?
- E) Pricing of medicines – what is the policy if any?

Honourable minister I am raising these questions to set the level our understanding to the presentation our consultant has prepared.

Our approach today relies on one presentation that covers the whole spectrum of the Pharmaceutical Sector – from selection of medicines to issuance of tenders and actual procurement whether internally



resources efficiently or could we do

the Ministry of Health, at private local or external the private sector or civil

going to the fore the existing honourable minister that as a s can be discussed and

The reason for this is simple. Government, the Private Sector and Civil Society are already part of MeTA Zambia. By hosting such a Round Table we are merely reinforcing this fact and the more we all get used to this reality the better for ourselves, our individual institutions and the country generally.

Honourable minister distinguished participants; I welcome you to this Round Table today.



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