

Dr Tim Reed meets MeTA ZAMBIA's Focus Groups from Chongwe and Kafue

MeTa Zambia organized a meeting for focus groups from Chongwe and Kafue on 26 June 2014 at Mika Lodge. The aim of the meeting was to introduce Dr Tim Reed to the MeTA Zambia program of focus groups which were present in eight districts. MeTA Zambia chairperson Hon Lazarus Chota welcomed the participants and introduced them to Dr Reed.



Here is the chairperson's full speech:

"I wish to welcome our focus group members to this meeting. you are here so you can meet dr tim reed from the meta international secretariat.

I welcome you for having found time to come to this meeting. Yesterday the MeTA council was looking at the MeTA Zambia budget.

In that budget we are trying to respond to the role focus groups should play in MeTA Zambia. We have planned three major activities which we hope we shall be able to implement

1. The first one involves regular monthly meetings by the focus groups in each district. Under this activity Meta Zambia hopes to receive regular information about the status of medicines in various districts. How efficient is the medicines chain in reaching the consumer.
2. The second activity aims at policy dialogue. We have planned three radio programmes in each district where focus group members can discuss medicines issues with their members of Parliament. We hope such an activity will encourage members of parliament to dialogue with

people on issues of medicines. These programmes will be broadcast live and will allow for the public to phone-in.

3. The third activity will involve some investment on the part of MeTA Zambia. we hope we can purchase one phone for each focus group through which
 - A) Information can be sent to MeTA Zambia through SMS
 - B) Focus Groups can access the MeTA Zambia facebook page and post information about the group's activities

It is our hope that these two activities would herald a new role for MeTA Zambia focus groups and encourage CSOs to participate in actively monitoring the medicines chain, the quality and affordability of medicines.

We are aware that part of government's plans is to build health facilities within 5km reach in various districts. It will be the work of focus groups to monitor these developments and report to MeTA Zambia.

I want to encourage you to speak freely about medicines issues in your districts and how you see your role in MeTA Zambia developing.



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