

**MeTA ZAMBIA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WITH THE HONOURABLE
MINISTER OF HEALTH – DR. JOSEPH KASONDE, MP**

8TH AUGUST, 2013

PREAMBLE

Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) is an alliance of partners working to improve access to medicine through transparency and accountability in healthcare marketplace.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) is providing initial funding to the project. Other partners include governments, global and national civil society organisations, pharmaceutical and other business interests, the World Health Organisation and the World Bank. The pilot project is being implemented in seven countries that include Kyrgyzstan, Philippines, Peru, Jordan, Ghana, Uganda and Zambia.

MeTA ZAMBIA

MeTA Zambia was launched on 31st March 2009 following an agreement initially signed between MeTA international secretariat (UK) and the Ministry of Health accepting MeTA principles while a Memorandum of Understanding was later signed between TIZ, MeTA Zambia Council and MeTA International facilitated the disbursement of funds.

It is a multi-stakeholder initiative involving the government, the private sector and civil society organisations and cooperating partners whose ultimate goal is to improve health outcomes for low income and disadvantaged people in Zambia through the following objectives:

- i) Increasing transparency in the selection, regulation, procurement, distribution, supply and use of essential medicines.
- ii) Improving equitable access to affordable essential medicines.

During the pilot phase, MeTA Zambia carried out research, a disclosure survey and developed two position papers on counterfeit and substandard drugs and Tanzania's Accredited Drug Dispensing Outlet (ADDO), with TI Zambia as the fund holder.

In the second phase, MeTA Zambia's focus is to share the findings of phase one with all stake holders through workshops, weekly radio programmes and round table discussion. 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. During the second phase, the Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia is the fund holder and host to the MeTA Zambia secretariat.

MeTA Zambia is made up of Ministry of Health (MoH), including quasi government institutions such as Medical Stores, Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority (formerly Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority) Civil Society Organisations and the private sector involved in the manufacture (import, wholesaling and retail) and supply of medicines.

CSO HEALTH SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Honourable Minister sir, MeTA Zambia National Executive Committee acknowledges that Government is responsible for providing 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.

This is why one of MeTA Zambia's objectives is 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 for all.

This can be achieved through:

- i) Mutual accountability through multi-stakeholder approach that involves all sectors – private, public and civil society - will lead to greater accountability
- ii) Evidence-based policy Improved information about medicines that can inform public debate, and provide a basis for better policy
- iii) Affordable medicines prices
- iv) Rational selection
- v) Reliable and transparent medicines supply chain systems and
- vi) Sustainable financing

APPEAL

There is need for information sharing on medicines market / demand, disclosure, Pricing policy, Importation of genuine generics vs local manufacture

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, reduce pilferage and capacity building for effectiveness

CONCLUSION

MeTA Zambia is currently engaging your Ministry through a policy dialogue on more transparent systems that will lead to improved supply chain management and which will lead to increased access to

essential medicines. This initiative is aimed at improving access to medicines through increased transparency, accountability and good governance in medicines procurement and supply chain systems.

It is our sincere hope that we can continue working very closely with your ministry in order to achieve the above stated objectives.

Hon. L. Chota

Chairperson – MeTA Zambia