



Plot 35 Central Street
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WORKSHOP ON CIVIL SOCIETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

This is Activity 4.2b - *Conduct awareness campaign on pricing, quality and availability of Medicines for pilot phase CSO Coalition*

Organisation

The workshop on 27 August 2013 in Solwezi was organized on behalf of MeTA Zambia by Treatment Advocacy Literacy Campaign (TALC). The local organizer in Solwezi was Hellen Chiyenge.

The workshop took place at Mwaaka Lodge from 08.30 to 16.30 hours and was attended by 35 participants from various Civil Society Organisations in Solwezi. The Ministry of Health was well represented through the Principal Medical Officer Ms Catherine Chidumayo, Mr Bale Mwamba the Provincial Pharmacist and Mr Lupiya Banda the Pharmacist at Solwezi General Hospital – which is the referral hospital in North Western Province.

Presentations

The workshop started with registration followed by introductions of participants and facilitators. The facilitators from Lusaka included Masautso Phiri, Banza Chela and Zindaba Ngwenyama and local facilitator provincial pharmacist Bale Mwamba.

The workshop's two objectives were outlined as follows:

1. Create awareness of the issues of medicines, their pricing, quality, accessibility and availability to ordinary Zambians in Solwezi
2. Create a sense of ownership of MeTA Zambia's objectives by the local community so they can take it upon themselves to claim the right to access quality, affordable medicines and encourage the establishment of a district focus group that can draw funding on the Constituency Development Fund

The expected outputs of the workshop were listed as follows: That participants will



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1. Understand the importance of access to essential medicines especially with regards to their pricing, quality and availability in Solwezi
2. Be able to understand the difference between counterfeit, substandard, generic and branded medicines
3. Have a good understanding of the Medicines Supply Management System and their role in it.
4. Be able identify medicines issues for advocacy in their district
5. Be able to understand the MeTA pilot phase studies and the role of CSOs in phase two.
6. Agree to establish a MeTA Zambia Focus Group in Solwezi.

As the main facilitator Masautso Phiri talked about MeTA's background, its principles and objectives and how Zambia became involved in the project. He explained that United Kingdom Department For International Development (DFID) funded the project piloted in seven countries. He explained about MeTA Zambia during the pilot phase, the role of Civil Society Organisations then which was separately funded. He discussed the CSO training programme and the lessons learnt which have led to the role of CSOs in the second phase. He noted that because CSOs such as NZP+ and Treatment Advocacy Literacy Campaign (TALC) were involved in the pilot and applied lessons learnt to their national network, MeTA Zambia would use these CSOs in the second phase as a basis for MeTA Zambia focus groups.

The main advocacy message repeated during the workshop was that Medicines were a Human Right and that the community through CSOs must be involved in demanding this right is fulfilled especially with regard to the availability, accessibility and affordability of medicines.

Banza Chela discussed advocacy and through group work asked the participants to identify medicines issues in Solwezi district and how these would be addressed through the MeTA Zambia focus group.

Bale Mwamba the provincial pharmacist was one of the facilitators. He discussed issues related to counterfeit, substandard, branded and generic medicines. The presentation generated a lot of discussion on the quality of medicines in Solwezi. It also brought to the fore the question of shortages of ARVs and the BCG vaccine. The question that was raised again and again was why the shortages if the medicine supply chain was working efficiently and effectively.



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Ms Chidumayo during the workshop and on the right Mr Mwamba making his presentation

Mwamba brought some samples of medicines to illustrate his presentation.



Solwezi MeTA Zambia Focus Group

During the workshop a MeTA Zambia focus team was identified to carry forward the issues raised during the workshop. The following members of the Solwezi MeTA Zambia Focus Group were identified and the group setup

1. Catherine Chidumayo – 0966 452551 – cathymwenda@yahoo.co.uk
2. Bale Mwamba – 0977 243958 – balemwamba@yahoo.co.uk
3. Lupiya Banda – 0977 438125 - lupiyabanda@gmail.com
4. Mercy Sandondi – 0964 424800 – 0978 296715 – nzpsolwezi@yahoo.com
5. Hellen Chiyenge – TALC Coordinator – chiyengehellen@yahoo.com (as group interim contact person)
6. Kenneth Kapata – 0965 400734



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7. Justin Simanana - 0975 934052

The group met after the workshop and it was agreed that a letter to the ministries of Health and Community Development should be written by MeTA Zambia to introduce the group. It was also agreed that other letters should be written to the MPs of the three constituencies and to the mining companies operating in the district.

Programme on Radio Kabangabanga

This activity was implemented as a one hour phone-in live radio programme from 20hrs to 21 hrs on August 27, 2013. The programme was well received by listeners though many could not get through due to congested lines. However, we received calls later after the programme from some listeners because of the advert we ran during programme.



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