

What is MeTA?

The Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) is a DFID initiative that brings together public, private and civil society stakeholders with an interest in the outcomes of the medicines market to agree on through increased transparency in the supply chain. MeTA aims to increase transparency in the medicines market specifically in low- and middle-income countries, thereby strengthening healthcare governance and encouraging responsible business practice. MeTA is currently active in Ghana, Zambia, Uganda, Peru, Philippines, Jordan and Kyrgyzstan and is coordinated by a joint International MeTA Secretariat (IMS) based in the World Health Organization (WHO) and Health Action International (HAI).

Goal: To increase access to essential quality-assured medicines, especially for the poor and vulnerable through increased transparency in the pharmaceutical sector.

Mission: To contribute towards good governance, transparency and accountability, in procurement, management, supply, prescribing, dispensing and use of medicines in Zambia, through the engagement of all stakeholders with an interest in the outcome of the medicines market.

MeTA Zambia Pilot Phase

MeTA Zambia was launched as a pilot in 2009, and was the first multi-stakeholder initiative aiming to improve access to medicines in the country. The initiative was spearheaded by civil society, and with strong support from the government, for the first time brought together the public sector, the private sector, faith based institutions and civil society to discuss the need for more information and greater transparency in the Zambia medicines market. The pilot ended in 2010 and has been proven to work as both a catalyst and driver of change.

Key successes in the Pilot Phase:

- The first forum in Zambia to bring all stakeholders in medicines together
- Outreach programme for rural districts to raise awareness of medicine rights
- Half-hour programmes on community radio to raise awareness
- Live TV debate
- Engaged in parliamentary debate on availability, accessibility, quality and pricing of medicines
- MeTA Zambia became part of the National Medicines Review Process

MeTA Phase 2

The activities of MeTA will support the government of Zambia to improve access to medicines in both the public and private sector. The initiative is in line with the objectives of the Zambia Ministry of Health. MeTA Zambia will over the next three years focus on the following critical elements of the pharmaceutical supply system:

Awareness campaign conducted in six pilot districts on pricing, quality, access, and availability of medicines to create demand for affordable quality medicines

Capacity building and knowledge building among MeTA CSO stakeholders and the community in medicines procurement processes, supply chain systems and regulatory issues

MeTA study results and key messages disseminated to the community, parliament, line ministries and statutory bodies

Policy influence and improved knowledge among policy makers and implementers about MeTA objectives in order to influence advocacy and policy change