

Medicines Transparency Alliance: Criteria and procedure for exit from the alliance

Introduction

The Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) is a global health initiative focused on improving access to quality-assured medicines in developing countries by increasing transparency and accountability in the pharmaceutical sector. The initiative was piloted during 2008-10 and has now entered its second phase, MeTA 2, which will run from 2011-2015.

The purpose of MeTA is to encourage a multi-stakeholder approach to improve transparency around the selection, regulation, procurement, sale, distribution, promotion and use of medicines. Through this approach, the initiative aims to strengthen governance, improve efficiency, and encourage innovative and responsible business practices.

Seven countries: Ghana, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Peru, the Philippines, Uganda and Zambia have participated in the pilot phase of MeTA and are continuing on to Phase 2 of the project. In the pilot phase multi-stakeholder groups were formed to collect and share data on the selection, pricing, procurement, quality, availability, promotion and use of medicines. The goal of the second phase is to convert the multi-stakeholder dialogue into concrete actions that improve access to medicines.

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to outline the criteria that may lead to the withdrawal of administrative, technical and financial support from the MeTA international secretariat to MeTA country programmes. The process by which consideration of termination of support is to be communicated is also outlined.

Exit Criteria for countries to join MeTA

- Failure to commit to MeTA principles in theory and evidence of the MeTA council acting contrary to MeTA Principles, which are:
 - Governments are responsible for providing access to health care, including access to essential medicines.
 - Stronger and more transparent systems and improved supply chain management will increase access.
 - Increasing equitable access to medicines improves health and enables other human development objectives to be achieved.
 - Improved information about medicines can inform public debate and empower customers and patients.
 - A multi-stakeholder approach that involves all sectors (private, public and civil society) will lead to greater accountability and provide a basis for better policy.

- Failure to secure or loss of high level political support for the MeTA programme.
- Failure to secure government commitment to the implementation of policies and reforms that enhance transparency of the pharmaceutical sector and increase access to medicines.
- Failure to engage multiple stakeholders (private and public sectors and civil society) in the MeTA project.
- Failure to include a WHO country representative on the MeTA council with observer status.
- Failure to work to agreed deadlines.
- Failure to deliver on agreed milestones in a timely manner.
- Fraud within MeTA operations, including undisclosed conflicts of interest, misuse or misdirection of allocated funding.
- Change in national security which makes MeTA unworkable both in-country and internationally

Process for discontinuation of MeTA support in countries

Watch list: The IMS will inform the MeTA country secretariat in writing of their concern that one of more of the above exit criteria apply. The IMS and MeTA country secretariat will together identify support needs and agree on a timeline during which the MeTA country secretariat will be allowed to address the issues.

Yellow Card Warning: Failure of the MeTA country secretariat to respond in a timely manner to the concerns will result in a written warning that IMS is considering withdrawal of administrative, technical and financial support to the MeTA country programme. The IMS and MeTA country secretariat will identify requirements for support and agree on a timeline during which the MeTA country secretariat will be allowed to address the issues raised.

Red Card Warning: Failure of the MeTA country secretariat to respond in a timely manner to the IMS Yellow Card Warning will result in the withdrawal of administrative, technical and financial support to the MeTA country programme. The IMS will inform DFID, and will agree a timeline for exit from the country with the MeTA Country secretariat.

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