

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 Uganda, through the engagement of all stakeholders with an interest in the outcome of the medicines market.

MeTA Uganda Pilot Phase

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

Key successes in the Pilot Phase:

- The first forum in Uganda to bring all stakeholders in medicines together
- Increased engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in advocacy for access to medicines
- Inclusion of private sector and CSO's in the National Pharmaceutical Sector Strategic Planning process
- Increased media coverage of medicines issues
- Routine publication of data on the registration status of medicines, distributors and pharmacies

MeTA Phase 2

The activities of MeTA will support the government of Uganda to improve access to medicines in both the public as well as the private sector. The initiative is in line with the objectives of the Uganda Health Sector Strategic Investment Plan (HSSIP) and the National Pharmaceutical Sector Strategic Plan (NPSSP). MeTA Uganda will over the next three years focus on four critical elements of the pharmaceutical supply system namely:

1. **Access** to and **Availability** of medicines; for example the selection, procurement, supply system efficiency and ensuring value for money.
2. **Cost** of medicines to consumers involving *inter alia* pricing policy options including the regulation of mark-ups and therapeutic value for money.
3. **Quality** of medicines, involving quality standardization and registration, Quality Assured procurement practice and importation procedures.
4. **Rational Use of Medicines (RUM)** by prescribers and users.