**Health Shops Stakeholders Meeting**

**Agenda**

1. Registration of participants
2. Official opening and Welcome Remarks
3. Introduction
4. ADDOS the Tanzania Experience
5. ZAAI Pilot Experience
6. Building Consensus and Regulations on Health Shops
7. The Health Shops Implementation Strategy
   1. Objective
   2. Leadership and Governance
   3. Development
   4. Roll out plan
   5. Monitoring and Evaluation
8. Way forward
9. Closing

**Meeting Objective**

1. To describe the health shops initiative and roll out implementation strategy
2. To obtain stakeholder input and involvement in the health shops implementation strategy

**Purpose**

To improve access to essential medicines through a community-based private and public sector partnership platform for public health interventions.

**Goal:**

The goal of an accreditation scheme of drug stores is to improve legal access to a limited list of basic, high-quality prescription and nonprescription essential medicines benefiting priority rural areas. The health shop accreditation initiative aligns with the National Health Strategic Plan, the objective of which is to push toward universal health care. Health Shops would also contribute to achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals by helping to ensure equitable and sustainable coverage of quality services to prevent and treat conditions that particularly affect women and children, such as malaria, and family planning. Above all, it is meant to improve the health status of communities and their health outcomes

**Introduction**

The Zambian government is committed to providing quality health services to all. However, the country continues to experience a high burden of disease, particularly malaria, sexually transmitted diseases, non-communicable diseases, and high maternal, neonatal, and child morbidity and mortality. To mitigate health sector challenges, the National Health Strategic Plan (2011–2015) is supported by a national drug policy with a mission of ensuring the availability of quality, efficacious, safe and affordable medicines and rationally used as close to family as possible.

The ZAAI pilot results provided evidence on drug stores and how they can play a bigger role in increasing access to medicines. Therefore, Government working with stakeholders developed new regulations to move drug stores into the formal health sector under ZAMRA oversight that the Pharmacy Act of 2004 did not provide. ZAMRA, in collaboration with stakeholders, successfully incorporated the accreditation of drug stores into the new Medicines and Allied Substances Act of 2013. Section 30 (1) of the Act states that “ The Authority may, upon application by a person, issue a Health Shop permit to the person to handle a prescribed list of medicines and allied substances in designated areas under the control and management of such persons as the Authority may authorize.” Now that the law has been promulgated and the regulations are to be published soon, the government has developed a strategic framework on how Health Shops initiative shall be implemented.

This meeting was designed to inform key stakeholders and to let them, review and contribute to the health shops strategy. At the end of the meeting the participants should appreciate the MoH efforts in facilitating this public health policy intent to increase access to essential medicines through a community-based private and public sector partnership platform for public health interventions. Together they can champion a well-regulated retail pharmaceutical sector that provides access to essential medicines—particularly for those who live in priority rural areas populace, which is the majority of Zambia’s population. The Health Shops will provide a platform for preventive and curative services that could have a tremendous impact on public health concerns such as malaria, HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, and non-communicable diseases, thus contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, the success of Health Shops will depend on stable and progressive leadership, governance, human resources, training infrastructure, and most importantly on the availability of sufficient resources to establish and maintain the program.

**Presentations:**

***ADDOS the Tanzania Experience:*** The meeting brings in the Tanzania ADDOS experience as an evidence-based result, implemented in a similar setting as Zambia and proved successful. This is a typical south to south technology transfer to problem solving and one of the solutions to perennial limitation to access to essential medicines.

***ZAAI Pilot Experience:*** The ZAAI presentation describes how practice influenced policy formulation and enactment of an Act to provide for a public health strategy. The positive outcome of the study evidently showed improved access to ACTs and reduction of ineffective antimalarials, improved diagnostic capacity and public health awareness identified an alternative yet complementary avenue for increased access to essential medicines at primary health care level.

***Building Consensus and Regulations on Health Shops:*** Building Consensus and Regulations on Health Shops was a challenging undertaking. The pharmacy profession maligned the initiative as a direct attack on the profession and an intrusion into an area traditionally reserved for the pharmacist only. The Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority could not take full leadership in the ZAAI project because the activities of the pilot were not provided in the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Act. Lessons will be learnt from ZAMRA on how it played a pivotal role and learnt lessons from the ZAAI pilot, incorporated the lessons in the Medicines and Allied Substances Act and built consensus and developing regulations on health shops

***The Health Shops Implementation Strategy:*** The Health Shops Implementation Strategy presentation builds on a five structured approach where the problem identification and exploration was already done. The health shops strategy was selected as an intervention which is due for implementation to be followed by an evaluation process. The presentation focuses on the developmental steps intrinsically built in systems strengthening approach to manage the roll out of the strategy. In addition, the five part presentation will also discuss the objective for the Health Shops and how it is going to be governed. The presentation focuses on building governance structures – lead implementer, national health shops steering committee, supply chain management, curricula, health shop owner, dispensers, standards, and community involvement. Monitoring and evaluation will provide information on outcome of the strategy.

**Way Forward**

At the end of the meeting, the participants will appreciate and contribute to the intent of the health shops implementation strategy, culminating into involvement in developing and implementing key caveats of the health shops strategy. This shall include the following:

* Curricula development and training
* Standards development and inspection
* National Health Shops Steering Committee
* Community Awareness Sensitization strategy
* Business entrepreneurship and program resource mobilization strategy
* Supply chain management strategy
* Monitoring and Evaluation

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| **#** | **Name** | **Institution** |
| 1 | Esnat Mwape | Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority |
| 2 | Chikuta Mbewe | Ministry of Health - Pharmacy |
| 3 | Dr. Leah Namonje | * Mother and Child Health, |
| 4 | Dr. Kamuliwo | * National Malaria Control Program |
|  |  | * HIV and AIDS Program |
|  |  | * NTBP |
|  |  | * Nutrition |
|  |  | * Health Promotion |
|  |  | * Laboratory |
| 5 | Boniface Fundafunda | Medical Stores Limited |
| 6 | Liyoka Liyoka | Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia |
| 7 |  | Ministry of Commerce and Industry |
| 8 |  | Ministry of Local Government |
| 9 | Bwalya | Zambia Health Professions Council |
| 10 |  | UNICEF |
| 11 |  | UNDP |
| 12 | Billy Mweetwa | WHO |
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| 15 | Oliver Hazemba | MSH |
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| 17 | Irvin Chibanda | SANDOZ |
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