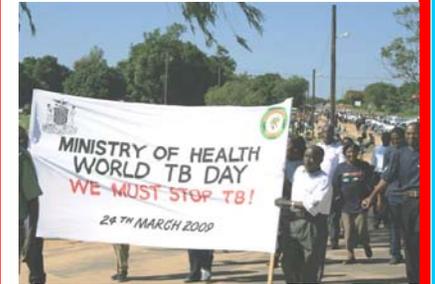
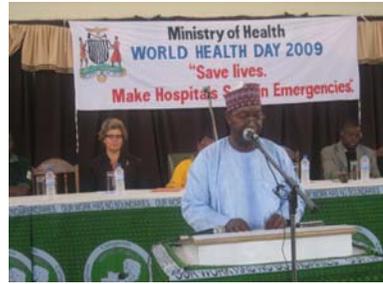


WHO Country Office, UN Annex Building Plot 4609, Corner of Beit/Andrew Mwenya Rhodespark, P.O. Box 32346, Lusaka, Zambia. Tel: (260-211) 255322/255336,255398 Fax: 260-211- 252863 E-mail:registry@zm.afro.who.int

JAN - APRIL 2009

ZAMBIA COMMEMORATES WORLD HEALTH DAY ON 7th APRIL

**THEME: "SAVE LIVES.
MAKE HOSPITALS SAFE
IN EMERGENCIES"**



CONTENTS

World Health Day
2009p1

Medicines
Transparency
Alliance (MeTA)
launched in
Zambia.....p2

TB Day in
Zambia.....p4

Medicines Register
launched in
Zambia.....p5

Dissemination seminar
on cervical cancer
screening
project.....p5

WHO Donates to
MOH.....p7

WHO Staff
Retreat.....p8

Epilepsy
Conference.....p8

Tobacco
News.....p9

Highlights of the World Health Day 2009 Commemoration in Zambia

Zambia joined the international community in celebrating the World Health Day on 7th April under the theme "Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies". The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the World Health Organization Country Office took the lead in forging a partnership with various partners and stakeholders to organize various events to raise public awareness about the theme. The theme was welcomed at country level because Zambia has been affected by emergencies including natural disasters such as floods, droughts and disease outbreaks especially cholera and has experienced an increase in the number of road traffic accidents. The country is currently experiencing floods which have displaced a number of people especially in the Western Province, threatening their health as most infrastructure including healthcare facilities are affected by the water levels, reducing their accessibility.

When health facilities are destroyed or their services are disrupted during emergencies, health care is either absent or rendered inadequate, leading to increased suffering, disabilities and loss of lives. The World Health Day was therefore used to advocate for action by all stakeholders to ensure the safety of health facilities and emergency preparedness in order to make them functional during and after an emergency so as to save life.



Minister of Health, Hon. Kapembwa Simbao giving a statement at the WHD ceremony in Lusaka.



Minister of Health, Hon. Kapembwa Simbao, WHO Representative Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi and UNICEF Representative, Lotta Sylwander view the exhibitions.

In a statement delivered at the World Health Day ceremony held in Lusaka on 7th April, the Minister of Health, Hon. Kapembwa Simbao stated that the Zambian government was continuously increasing its investment in health infrastructure that can withstand disasters. He said that disasters like droughts, floods, disease outbreaks and road traffic accidents had in the recent past been one of the greatest challenges to the government and increased the disease burden, thereby making it more difficult for the country's health system to cope. In order to meet the demands, he said the government was updating and installing technology and medical equipment in the health sector and conducting training for health workers in emergency preparedness.

In a statement read on behalf of the Regional Director of the WHO African Region Dr. Luis Gomes Sambo, The WHO Representative Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi said more than 90% of the Member States in the African Region were affected by emergencies in 2008 and that the impact on health facilities and their functions had been huge. The Regional Director called upon countries to establish a "safe hospitals" programme focusing on the safety of utilities such as power and water supply, waste management, logistics and supplies including equipment, drugs, reagents, transport and communication. He said that WHO was committed to supporting Member States to develop and implement national policies and programmes and to train health workers.

The World Health Day commemoration attracted participants from various organisations including government ministries and departments, Disaster Management units, UN agencies, hospitals and clinics, emergency services, defence forces, NGOs, Community Based Organisations, the general public and the media. The commemoration was characterised by drama, emergency situation demonstrations by the army officers, exhibition of products by various partners and distribution of information materials. Key messages were disseminated using various channels including radio and television.



A demonstration of an emergency operation following a Road Traffic Accident by the Zambia Airforce at the WHD Ceremony.



For many organizations World Health Day was an opportunity to show their contribution to uplifting the standard of health of Zambians.

Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) launched in Zambia

The Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) was officially launched in Zambia on 31st March 2009. MeTA is an alliance of partners working to improve access to medicines through transparency and accountability in the healthcare marketplace. It is driven by the need to improve health, the use of comprehensive approaches, transparency and accountability and multisectoral approaches. MeTA is meant to compliment existing efforts by countries in improving transparency and accountability in the drug supply and management procedures. The Alliance is sponsored by the UK department for International Development (DFID). The other partners include governments, global and national civil society organisations, pharmaceutical and other business interests, the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

The Ministry of Health welcomed the introduction of MeTA because Zambia has a Zero Tolerance position on corruption. In a statement read on behalf of the Minister of Health, Dr. James Simpungwe stated that the initiative was in line with the Government's vision of providing equity of access to good quality, efficacious and affordable medicines as close to the family as possible. *(Continued on p3)*

He also emphasised the fact that the government was committed to improving the access to quality drugs for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and that it had mapped out the consumption patterns of essential drugs in all districts. The Ministry of Health hosted the MeTA secretariate at the inception stage before it was moved to Transparency International Zambia.

The World Health Organization welcomed the MeTA initiative. In a statement delivered at the launch ceremony, the WHO Representative Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi stated that MeTA was in line with the WHO Good Governance for Medicines programme which was targeted at curbing corruption in the pharmaceutical sector through the application of transparent and accountable administrative procedures and the promotion of ethical practices among health professionals. He said that drugs including vaccines save lives and prevent diseases and epidemics, but only if they are available, accessible and affordable and also if they are safe, efficacious, of good quality and are rationally used.

Various partners and stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector were present at the launch and welcomed the MeTA. A representative of the Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia Mr. Kasama Bonaventure emphasized the need for management and supply chains to be pharmaceutically compliant to standards, ethical and legal. The Zambia Pharmaceuticals Business Forum also welcomed the MeTA initiative and expressed their commitment to providing the necessary advice and support relating to developments within the business sector. The Director for Transparency International Zambia Mr. Lee Habasonda, called for improved access to essential drugs countrywide and accountability in their supply and use. He also called for the involvement of stakeholders in policy development, training and information sharing.

Mr. Brian Elliot the Representative from the MeTA secretariate in London stated that MeTA was at a pilot stage in 7 countries which include Peru, Ghana, Pakistan, Phillipines, Jordan, Uganda and Zambia. He said the focus of the pilot project was on development of partnership between government, private sector and civil society.

MeTA is also focused on improving access to information on quality, availability, process and promotion aspects. The pilot will be evaluated through sharing of experiences by countries in 2010 in order to pave way for scale up to other countries. MeTA Zambia developed a Workplan which would be implemented from April 2009.



Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi reading a statement at the launch of MeTA.



Dr. James Simpungwe, Director for clinical services at the Ministry of Health delivered the statement on behalf of the Minister of Health.

ZAMBIA COMMEMORATES TB DAY, 24th MARCH THEME: "I AM STOPPING TB"



Various organisations joined the march on TB day in Mongu town.



Dr. Mwendaweli Maboshe, TB country Advisor read the statement of the WHO Regional Director on behalf of Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi, WHO Country Representative.



The Deputy Minister of Health, Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa launched the STOP TB campaign in Mongu.

On 24th March 2009 Zambia joined the international community in commemorating the world TB Day. The Ministry of Health took the lead in mobilizing all the partners and stakeholders in the campaign against TB. The slogan "*I am stopping TB*" was used to raise awareness about the magnitude of the problem, its impact on society and the need for action by government, communities and individuals. World TB day activities were conducted at provincial, district and community levels in the country. The national commemoration was conducted in Mongu in the Western Province of the country. The Deputy Minister of Health Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa officially launched the TB campaign in Mongu.

Zambia has a high burden of TB with 500 cases per 100,000 population, representing a fivefold increase from 100 cases per 100,000 population in 1984. The Government is committed to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal no 7 targeted at reversing the spread of major diseases like TB. Zambia achieved 85% treatment success rates for TB in 2007 in line with the World Health Organization Targets. The new Stop TB strategy is guiding the implementation of the National TB Strategic Plan for 2006-2011 within the framework of the National Health Strategic Plan for 2006-2011. In a statement read on behalf of the Minister of Health at the launch of TB Day in Mongu, Hon. Akakandelwa cited the following successes scored by the TB programme in Zambia:-

- The Directly Observed Treatment Short Course strategy has been scaled to all public health institutions in all the 72 districts.
- The laboratory network is under expansion and has been strengthened,
- TB/HIV collaborative activities are being implemented through a comprehensive package of care,
- Private/public sector partnerships are fostered at national level,
- Successful engagement of community based organizations,
- A plan has been put in place to assess the extent of drug Resistant TB situation in the country through a national survey.

The World Health Organization was represented at the national commemoration in Mongu. The TB Country Advisor Dr. Mwendaweli Maboshe read the statement by the WHO Regional Director for the African Region on behalf of the WHO Representative. The Regional Director bemoaned the fact that although the African Region had 10% of the world's population, it accounted for 30% of the Global TB burden and that out of the twenty two most affected countries world wide accounting for 80% of the global TB burden, nine were in the African Region. Since TB was declared an Emergency in the African region in 2005 by African Ministers of Health in Maputo in 2005, he called upon the countries to implement the STOP TB strategy with universal coverage. He called for awareness raising among communities, case detection through improved screening and diagnosis, improved treatment outcomes, preventing the emergence of multi-drug resistant TB and solid partnerships.

Various organizations including Government ministries, NGOs and faith based organizations joined in the campaign against TB. Various sections of the media including newspapers, radio and TV were part of the campaign to ensure that the messages reached the intended audiences.

PHARMACEUTICAL REGULATORY AUTHORITY LAUNCHES THE REGISTER OF LICENCED MEDICINES IN ZAMBIA

The Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority (PRA) launched the first ever publication of the register of licensed medicines in Zambia on 7th April 2009. The register was compiled with support from the World Health Organization through installation and implementation of product registration software called SIAMED. This is a computer-assisted medicines registration software developed by the WHO and in use in most member states to manage medicines registration data. The WHO also supported training of PRA staff in data entry and overall operationalisation of the SIAMED.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia is committed to the provision of equity of access for all Zambians to good quality, safe and efficacious medicines which are affordable and rationally used as close to the family as possible. This commitment is reflected in the National Drug Policy document of 1999. The Pharmaceutical Act (No. 14) of 2004 provides for effective regulation and control of the manufacture, importation, storage, distribution and supply of medicines, herbal medicines and allied substances. It also establishes the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority which has been charged with the responsibility of administration and enforcement to ensure that all medicines and herbal medicines conform to acceptable standards of quality, safety and efficacy. It also ensures that practices employed in the manufacture, importation, exportation, storage, distribution and supply and sale comply with the standards for promoting and protecting public health.

The Minister Deputy Minister of Health Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa officially launched the medicines register and underlined the government's commitment to the implementation of the Pharmaceuticals Act of 2004. He commended the WHO and the European Union for their continued support to the Government. In a statement read by Ms Loyce Lishimpi, the WHO Representative Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi stated that a study carried out by WHO in six African countries showed that more than 50% of medicine samples failed quality tests and that in some countries, the prevalence of counterfeit medicines is estimated at 60% of the medicines found on market places. He commended the government for launching the register as a sign of transparency and good governance, and as a critical step in assuring the quality, safety and efficacy of any medicine. He said that use of counterfeit and or substandard medicines may result in treatment failure, emergence of resistant disease strains and or death.



The Deputy Minister of Health, Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa officially launched the guidelines as Ms Esnart Mwape (far right), Director General at the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority and Ms Loyce Lishimpi (left), Essential Medicines Advisor at WHO look on .

INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING MASS CAMPAIGN PROGRAMME LAUNCHED IN ZAMBIA

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNICEF, WHO, USAID and other partners in maternal and child health launched the Infant and Young Child Feeding Mass campaign on 18th February 2009. The campaign is specifically targeted at fighting malnutrition among children under the age of five. The Zambia Demographic Health Survey (CSO,2007) shows that 45% of the children surveyed are stunted; 15% are underweight and 5% were wasted. Severe Acute Malnutrition prevalence in Zambia is estimated to be 2.2%. The major causes include inadequate and inappropriate information on infant and young child feeding, poor feeding practices such as early or late introduction of complementary foods and in some cases and the use of foods that are nutritionally inadequate. Breastfeeding is not practiced by more than 60% of mothers in Zambia and this is compounded by high poverty levels, food insecurity and HIV which poses a risk of transmission of HIV to the child through breastfeeding.

The campaign was officially launched by the Minister of Health Hon. Kapembwa Simbao. In his launch statement he stated that the country had in the recent past experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of malnutrition cases in under-five children especially in Lusaka District. He said that the campaign was meant to improve child health and survival and contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal no 4 targeted at reducing by two thirds the infant deaths by the year 2015.



Left to Right Dr. Velepi Mtonga, Permanent Secretary at MOH, Minister of Health, Hon. Kapembwa Simbao, WHO Representative, Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi and UNICEF Deputy Representative, Elspeth Erickson at the launch.

The Minister stated that the government was committed to ensuring that breastfeeding was protected, promoted and supported for the first six months of life even for women living with HIV.

The WHO Representative, Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi stated that malnutrition is responsible for 60% of the 10.9 million children who die annually and that two thirds of the children die as result of inappropriate feeding practices mostly during the first year of life. He called upon the government and all partners to ensure that the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding developed by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in 2003 was implemented. The UNICEF Zambia Deputy Representative Ms Elspeth Erickson emphasized the need to promote exclusive breastfeeding for six months and the use of appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age, the implementation of the existing legislation on the international code of marketing breast milk substitutes, the implementation of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative.

Although the Zambia Demographic Health Survey for 2007 shows a significant improvement in child health care over the period 2001 to 2007 with a reduction of Infant Mortality Rate from 95 per 1000 live births to 70 per 1000 live births and a reduction of the Under 5 Mortality Rate from 168 per 1000 live births to 119 per 1000 live births, malnutrition remains a significant threat to child health in the country. It is a major underlying cause to child morbidity and mortality as a result of malaria, respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malnutrition and anaemia and HIV/AIDS.

DISSEMINATION SEMINAR ON THE CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING PROJECT IN LUSAKA AND KAFUE DISTRICTS

The Ministry of Health conducted a one day seminar on 10th March 2009 to disseminate results of a project which was conducted to gather information on the feasibility of screening for cervical cancer with acetic acid and treatment of pre cancer lesions with cryotherapy in public health institutions. Cervical cancer screening strategies that involve the use of conventional cytology requiring multiple visits and high-tech laboratory personnel and equipment have been costly with limited reach in developing countries. Screening strategies that incorporate visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid (VIA) in one or two clinical visits are cost-effective in limited resource settings. VIA provides an opportunity for more women to be reached with a significant reduction of the risk of cancer at a reasonably low cost. The project was conducted in Lusaka and Kafue districts from 2006 to December 2008.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS.

	Number	Percentage
Screened women		
Nangongwe	603	40.28%
Railway	668	44.62%
Kafue Hospital	226	15.10
Total	1497	
Age distribution		
29	496	36.58
30-39	458	33.78
40-51	402	29.99
Total	1356	
SCJ		
seen	1276	94.6%
Not seen	66	4.9 %
VIA		
Negative	1000	74.29%
Positive	339	25.19%
Cryotherapy Total 270		
Done	246	91.11
Not done	24	8.9

Referred to the University Teaching Hospital

31 2.18%

(Extracted from : Final report on the WHO cervical cancer screening demonstration project in Zambia, by Dr. Gricelia Mkumba, principal investigator).

WHO DONATES TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The WHO Country Office donated a Land Cruiser valued at 32,000 USD to the Ministry of Health on 27th February 2009 to support the PMTCT programme. The donation was made by the WHO Representative Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi at the occasion when the Ministry of Health launched the second edition of the National Protocol Guidelines for the Integrated Prevention of Mother-To-Child Transmission of HIV for health care providers and district programme managers. When handing over the Toyota land cruiser to the Deputy Minister of Health, Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa, Dr. Babaniyi stated that Zambia was among the countries in the African Region that had made great strides in improving access to PMTCT services. He however said a lot still needed to be done to ensure quality and access to services.

The donation to the Ministry of Health was made possible through a grant of one million nine hundred thousand United States Dollars that WHO received from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). WHO has provided technical and financial assistance for scale up of PMTCT and paediatric HIV services in 10 high HIV prevalence districts in six provinces covering a total population of 3,970,822. The primary beneficiaries are 210,900 pregnant women and 52,725 HIV exposed children. It is estimated that 8036 paediatric infections will be averted in these districts through this programme in addition to on-going efforts by MOH and other partners. The Deputy Minister of Health, Honourable Mwendoi Akakandelwa when receiving the vehicle commended WHO for its continued support to the Government.

Zambia is heavily affected by HIV with a prevalence of 14.3% (DHS, 2007) for adults aged 15-49 years. The HIV prevalence among pregnant women is estimated to be 16.4%. With an estimated 500,000 deliveries every year, about 97,000 women living with HIV give birth annually. The Mother-to Child Transmission rate of HIV is approximately 30-40%, therefore, if no interventions were put in place about 28,000 babies are expected to be born with HIV each year. The PMTCT program in Zambia has been in place from 2003 and PMTCT is offered in all 72 districts in the 9 provinces of Zambia. The programme is currently meeting 39% of the need.



Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi, WHO Representative, handing over the keys of the land cruiser to Hon. Mwendoi Akakandelwa, Deputy Minister of Health.

(Continued from page 6)

Then the project received funding amounting to twenty thousand US Dollars (20,000) from the World Health Organization to cover personnel, equipment, supplies, ethical clearance, stationery, photocopying of forms, transport and communication. The project was piloted with support from WHO and the Centres for Infectious Diseases Research in Zambia (CIRDZ). Training of 13 nurses and one doctor was carried out in Kafue and Lusaka in October 2006. The major challenges reported include low nursing and medical staffing in all health institutions, data entry and analysis, lack of feedback from the collaborating centre in Nairobi on data quality, monitoring of quality and accuracy of findings, transportation of the cancer cases to hospital and for them to receive definitive treatment.

It was recommended that in order to scale up the screening programme there was need to train health workers to carry out cervical cancer screening as part of their RH activity, provide equipment and supplies and ensure monitoring and quality assurance. Since the Government has established a cancer hospital with a radiotherapy and chemotherapy unit the screening service is very important. Out of the 262 clients who were interviewed concerning satisfaction of the procedure 91% showed satisfaction

WHO COUNTRY OFFICE RETREAT

Through the leadership of the WHO Representative, Dr. Olusegun Babaniyi, The WHO Country Office organised a staff retreat for professional staff members. The retreat was held in Siavonga. The general objective of the retreat was to review the implementation of the biennial action plan for 2008-2009 and to find strategies on how to support the government better. The retreat was also used to review the recommendations of the Regional Planning Meeting (RPM) and the Director General's messages.

The major technical programmes in Zambia are Expanded Programme on Immunization, Essential Drugs, Health Systems, Health Promotion, HIV and AIDS, Malaria, Making Pregnancy Safer, Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI), Non-Communicable Diseases, Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) and Tuberculosis,

The review showed that the WCO has made good progress in the implementation of activities during 2008. However, there was need for improvement in a number of areas. The key areas identified include:-

- Team work and collaboration by various programmes,
- Improving the visibility of WHO as the lead agency in the health sector,
- The need to document the work of the WCO through technical reports, journal articles, newsletters, websites etc. in order to show the best practices and existing challenges, that is also a way of attracting more donor funding,
- Focus resources on implementation of priority activities.
- Reduce duty travel due to limited resources available.

The staff was also informed that the Zambian Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) had been approved by the Regional Director and were called upon to ensure that the country plans and activities were in line with the CCS. The success of the retreat was visible in the renewed interest of the staff to work as a team in achieving the objectives of the WCO.



WHO professional staff members at the Retreat in Siavonga.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Epilepsy Conference, Lusaka, Zambia (13 to 17 April 2009)

**Theme: EPILEPSY AND STIGMA:
How Do We Conquer It In Africa?**

The FIRST International Epilepsy Conference will be held in Zambia, from April 13th to 17th, 2009. The five-day event, organised by the Epilepsy Association of Zambia-Ministry of Health, University of Zambia School of Medicine and the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience, will present the latest information on :- A. Epidemiology, B. Neurological Aspects, C. Genetic and Environmental Factors, D. Treatment, and E. Psychosocial Aspects - i.e. stigma, giving participants a unique exposure to the entire spectrum of epilepsy and stigma in Africa. All conference activities will be held at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka, Zambia.

For more information, contact Mr. Anthony M. Zimba on +260-977-789042 / 955-789042 / 966-789042 or email; amzimba@yahoo.com / eazepilepsy01@yahoo.co.uk.

TOBACCO NEWS

The Ministry of Health conducted a one day consensus building workshop for the National Consortium on Tobacco Control on 9th April, in Lusaka. The meeting was called to endorse the action plan for the Africa Tobacco Situation Analysis (ATSA) project. Zambia is among the 10 countries benefiting from the project which is funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) in Canada. The Ministry of Health received a grant of one hundred and fifty thousand US Dollars for implementation of a project on Tobacco control in Lusaka.

The project will be implemented at four clinics and will be focused on public awareness in the communities and implementation of cessation programmes. The situation analysis on tobacco control activities in Zambia was conducted between June and October 2008. The project will be implemented by the project core team including the Ministry of Health, The Zambia Consumer Association, The Zambia Anti-Smoking Society, The Tobacco Free Association of Zambia (TOFAZA), The School of Medicine at the University of Zambia.

The Tobacco Control Consortium in Zambia includes all partners and stakeholders in tobacco control. The current membership is drawn from Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, Non Governmental Organisations, research institutions, the World Health Organization, law enforcement agencies, the University of Zambia and tobacco control associations and the Media. The consortium was formed in June 2008 in Lusaka to provide a forum for exchange of information and experiences in tobacco control at country level, to review tobacco control activities and as a platform for advocacy for tobacco control issues.



A presentation on the ATSA project activities at the Tobacco control workshop.



WORLD HEALTH DAY 2009 *"Save Lives. Make Hospitals Safe in Emergencies"*

For More information contact the Editor:
NORA MWEEMBA, Health Information and Promotion Officer.
WHO Country Office, UN ANNEX BUILDING
Plot 4609, Corner of Andrew Mwenya and Beit Roads,
Rhodes Park, P.O. Box 32346, Lusaka, Zambia.
E-mail: mweemban@zm.afro.who.int, GPN: 37609
Tel No: 00-260-1-255 398 / 255 336 / 255 322
Mobile 0977873976, Fax: 00-260-1-252863