

**PROPOSAL FOR STRENGTHENING HEALTH SYSTEMS, HARMONISATION
AND ALIGNMENT IN ZAMBIA**

1.0. BACKGROUND

The Health Sector in Zambia have since 1994 been co-coordinating external resources from bilateral and multilateral co-operating partners. This was out of realization that aid to the health sector was given in a piece meal and fragmented manner. There was also concern that fragmentation in aid delivery contributed to considerable weakening of the health system resulting in:

- inefficiencies in service delivery;
- geographic inequalities arising from targeting of assistance to favoured areas and populations;
- confusion arising from conflicting and changing donor policies;
- Stress on the part of MoH staff as they had to cope with heterogeneous and incompatible aid administration requirements;
- Displaced local priorities as donors' preferences prevailed over national health priorities.

To address these problems, the Ministry of Health in Zambia developed a sector policy on aid harmonization in consultation with all the aid Co-operating Partners in the health sector in 1994. This policy was later dubbed the Sector Wide Approach to Health Programming or SWAPs. Implementation of this policy has contributed tremendously to aligning and coordinating most of the health sector co-operating partners' external assistance towards supporting the implementation of government led National Health Strategic Plans. This has been achieved primarily due to the following systems, processes and structures which have been put in place within the health sector:

- A Memorandum of Understanding of 1999 and 2006 between the Ministry of Health and its co-operating partners which provides the framework for jointly agreed terms and procedures for support to the National Health Strategic Plan and serves as a tool for coordinating donor efforts in the health sector.
- One sector strategic plan NHSP 2006-2010 which every Co-operating Partner buys into and uses as an entry point for providing support to the health sector

In order to cut down on transaction costs ministry of health developed mechanisms for joint sector reviews as opposed to each Cooperating Partner undertaking separate reviews. A core set of indicators was agreed on to be used for joint assessment of the sector.

2.0 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

While these systems and procedures have improved tremendously the overall management of the sector and from a sectoral investment point of view have contributed to improving the coordination of external resources from Cooperating Partners, the health sector is still faced with many aid coordination challenges in which continue to undermine efforts to harmonize aid through SWAp.

It is still a requirement by many Cooperating Partners giving support to the sector to tackle the major public health diseases (HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria) that the Ministry of Health develops separate plans and budgets when in fact the ministry already have one sector strategic plan which clearly articulates the public health priorities.

Currently the health sector in Zambia has more than five separate plans and budgets for the major global partners contributing to the fight against, HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Child Health illnesses. This has exacerbated administrative inefficiencies as ministry of health staff devote excessive time to coping with developing plans instead of devoting their energies towards program implementation.

There are inequalities within the health system due to the major global partners giving conditionality that their aid must go to a few selected and targeted interventions instead of contributing to the overall health system wide strengthening. For a country such as Zambia that is faced with a critical human resources shortage, inadequate and dilapidated infrastructure for health delivery and insufficient logistics to support the delivery of health services such as good transport, such conditionalities are counterproductive to our efforts to attain our health related millennium development goals because investment in health system wide strengthening is key to the attainment of our millennium development goals.

Given these challenges relating aid architecture in Zambia, it is important for the Ministry of Health to further engage in dialogue and a process with its Co-operating Partners to remove all outstanding problems on aid delivery to make aid more effective.

The IHP therefore presents an opportunity to the health sector in Zambia to accelerate attainment of a full SWAp because it focuses on the core fundamental principles that are cardinal to making aid delivery effective and results oriented (Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals)

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The development of the Compact/ MoU in Zambia will be build on and strengthen existing arrangements in country for supporting implementation of the governments strategic health sector plan, in particular the existing Memorandum of Understanding between Cooperating Partners and Government. An analysis of past experiences and views about the MoU and Compact has already been undertaken within country. For the purposes of this work the terms *Compact* and *Memorandum of Understanding* will be inter-changeable, as only one instrument is envisaged and this should build on what has already been achieved with the existing MoU.

The mid term review of the NHSP, and the review itself was undertaken in October 2008 by the existing in-country health sector team, led by government. During this period validation the costing of national health strategic plan 2006-2010 and assessment of the Memorandum of Understanding" was done.

The following priority activities are proposed:

- To strengthen the Ministry's Capacity to implement IHP including co-ordination of Partners.
- Provide Support to development of the 2009 MoH Action Plan, NHSP, JASZ, JAR, SAG, ACM, M& E ,monthly policy meetings, and other technical working group meetings
- Provide support to prepare CP Workplan.
- To support the strengthening of the health information system to adequately address Health systems bottlenecks.
- To strengthen community involvement, civil society and NGO participation in health care dialogue.
- Support the government in preparing for a high level event required to get the necessary political support for the revised MoU /compact.

4.0 GOAL

To strengthen the health sector team in Zambia with a high level capacity to effectively and efficiently implement the principle of harmonisation and alignment.

5.0 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

A relatively complete and unanimously agreed on MoU/Compact signed and operationalised by end of 2009 to guide the implementation of the country health sector plans and budgets.

6.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Update planning assumptions and scenarios for achieving the health MDGs and prepare costing using the agreed inter-agency approach.

Update the existing Memorandum of Understanding between government and cooperating partners so that it builds on existing experience and accommodates new collaborative arrangements proposed in the IHP.

Improve the NHSP results focus by strengthening the common national monitoring and evaluation framework in line with resolutions agreed on by partners.

Revisit external support to provide predictable financing and support for the sector in line with the revised budget.

Consider options for changing donor behaviours and procedures in line with in country agreements.

7.0 BUDGET

Proposed budget for Zambia for the period 2008 to 2009 is **US\$835,000**:

No.	Activities	Period	Budget(USD)
1	To strengthen the Ministry's Capacity to implement IHP including co-ordination of Partners	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	95,000
2	Provide support to development of the 2009 MoH Action Plan, NHSP, JASZ, JAR, SAG, ACM, M& E, monthly policy meetings, and other technical working group meetings	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	250,000
3	Provide support to prepare CP Workplan.	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	65,000
4	To support the strengthening of the health information system to adequately address Health systems Bottlenecks	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	150,000
5	Strengthening partnerships with, Civil Society, NGO and the Private Sector.	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	130,000
6	Assist the government in preparing for a high level event required to get the necessary political support for the revised MoU /compact	Dec 2008-Dec 2009	150,000
	Total		840,000

8.0 JUSTIFICATION OF THE BUDGET

TO STRENGTHEN THE MINISTRY'S CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT IHP INCLUDING CO-ORDINATION OF PARTNERS

Funds will be used for the provision of in-country Technical Assistance (TA).

PROVIDE SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2009 MOH ACTION PLAN, NHSP, JASZ, JAR, SAG, ACM, M& E, MONTHLY POLICY MEETINGS, AND OTHER TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

Funds will support a workshop for ministry of health to develop and finalise the 2009 action plan; support the Joint Annual Review (JAR) field visits, documentary analysis, hire of consultant for the JAR and printing including distribution costs for the JAR report.

Funds will also used to support hosting of CP/MoH monthly policy preparatory meetings, CP /MoH preparatory meetings for SAG; and Annual Consultative meetings

through provision of stationery, printing of discussion documents, refreshments and communication.

PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PREPARE CP WORKPLAN

Funds will be used to support workshops costs to finalize the CP Workplan; as well as printing, including distribution costs of essential documents. Workshop costs will include hire of venue and cost of meals.

TO SUPPORT THE STRENGTHENING OF THE HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM TO ADEQUATELY ADDRESS HEALTH SYSTEMS BOTTLENECKS

Funds will be used to support training and strengthening capacity of health staff at district and provincial health level to collect; analyse and interpret MDG related indicators/data

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, NGO AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

Funds to be used for strengthening participation of health NGO and CSO including the private sector in health sector dialogue. This will be done through capacity building workshops and stakeholder consultative meetings arranged by the ministry of health.

ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT IN PREPARING FOR A HIGH LEVEL EVENT REQUIRED TO GET THE NECESSARY POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE REVISED MOU /COMPACT

Funds to be used for communication, hiring of venue, preparation and printing of materials for use during the high level forum

9.0 DISBURSEMENT

The Overall implementation responsibility will be coordinated under the Directorate of Planning and Development in the Ministry of health. WCO will be responsible to administer the fund disbursement. Savings made from one budget item will be channeled to other activities within the proposed budget.