



PRESS RELEASE - JUNE 20th, 2013

Shortage Of Alu In Health Facilities Still Prevailing

A total of 920 out of 5079, equivalent to 18.1% of public health facilities are running out of Alu and Quinine stocks. The current data from *the SMS for life* website, the Ministry's monitoring tool that gives actual information on the status of ALu and quinine in the public health facilities across Tanzania mainland, reveals.

The information contradicts the recent statement by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare that, there are sufficient anti-malarial drugs "ALu" in the health facilities across the country, contrary to the reality on the ground, where most of the public health facilities have reported stock out of such medicine.

The statement was issued by the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Seif Rashid, on the 15th June, 2013 and published on the Daily news (local newspaper) disputing facts from an earlier statement made by Sikika about the shortage of ALu in the health facilities across the country.

The Deputy Minister's statement is also contradicting with the statement provided by the Minister of Health and Social Welfare Dr. Husein Mwinyi on 16 Februari 2013 and published by the media, admitting that the country is facing shortage of Alu. "*The government accepts there is a shortage of medicines to treat malaria (ALu), due to the delay in arrival after they were ordered.*" Said the Minister's statement. Dr. Mwinyi assured the public that the government is working hard to distribute the medicines in the health facilities that were reported to have stock outs.

Dispite the Ministry's efforts to dispute the facts outlined by Sikika, the situation is still pathetic as the *SMS for life* website on 19/06/2013 indicated that there is still a shortages of ALu, where some of the facilities have been reported with zero stock.

While our expectation was to currently witness a zero stock out of ALu, there is still an acute shortage in the same areas which had been frequently reported by Sikika. The districts with zero stocks of ALu includes; Geita (70%) Ukerewe (66.%) in Mwanza region, Mbinga (55%), Songea (31%) in Ruvuma region, Nzega (61%), Urambo (32%) in Tabora region and Bunda (59%), Rorya (52%) in Mara region.

According to the Global Fund -Tanzania Grant Performance Report 2013, Tanzania has had access to ample funds from the Global Fund (GF) for the fight against Malaria. Approved funds for Malaria from GF alone have been to the tune of USD 350,320,838/ for 2012/13 FY and thus far USD 307,675,487/- has been disbursed and spent.

Specifically, according to the Global Fund -Tanzania grant portfolio, in 2013, about USD 60,657,059/- was approved to buy Artemisinin- based Combination Therapy (ACTs) and USD 44,869,885/- equivalent to 74% has already been disbursed. Despite this sufficient funding, stock outs of ALu are perennial.

It is not our intention to continue arguing on undisputed facts, but rather Sikika is calling upon the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to be accountable to citizens. The Ministry should urgently start ordering and distributing these medicines on time so as to reduce unnecessary deaths caused by Malaria in the said districts.



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