

Strengthening democracy, experience during a session with HIV parliamentary committee July 19th 2008.

Through AIDS Forum, HDT worked with other organizations (CONCERN and VSO) to undertake an analysis of the progress of HIV infection and trend of funding in the country and held a seminar with the parliamentary committee responsible on HIV in Dodoma on Saturday 19th 2009.

A presentation on the HIV prevalence was done comparing the results of 2003/4 and that of 2007/8. The number of orphans was also compared in addition to the results of community based survey on the access of care and treatment services among PLHIV. In the presentation, overarching issues included the followings:

1. There has been a decrease in prevalence of HIV, at the same time there has been increase in number of orphans during the same time. This may be interpreted as there could have been more death than new people becoming infected in population
2. The quality of services under care and treatment has remained weak despite huge investment. Access to treatment of opportunistic infection, home based care services has remained weak.
3. The funds for HIV/AIDS have been increasing over years, most of which (60-70%) allocated for care and treatment. About 80% of AIDS money is off budget and tracking of which remains difficult. Despite the investment, evidence indicated that the program don't know the number of PLHIV on treatment after a year of starting treatment (UNGASS report 08) and anecdotal evidence indicate that probably only half of those started on ARVs are still on treatment.
4. Prevention receives little allocation (15%) and funds directly to district council accounts for 5% only and most of which not reaching there.

Chairperson for the committee Hon. Lediana Mngongo and Hon. Kabuzi Rwilomba made recommendations that the session was very useful, but it would have been very useful if it was done when the budget cycle starts. Hon. Dr. Luka Siyame vice chair for the committee and Former minister responsible for HIV and disaster echoed the voice on the need to track resources pledged by donors to avoid phantom aid and indicated that it was a commitment in the MoU between Government and donors in NMSF.



The committee also underscored a need to organize a meeting bringing together TACAIDS, donors and CSO to discuss how best to prioritize national interest. Committee members also agreed on the need to follow up on the funds given to their councils to ensure proper use, and underscored the need of HIV constituency fund. The finally they advised CSO to undertake top down expenditure tracking and assess the value of money and advice accordingly.