

CEPA IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS ENGAGE THREE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES TO ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED PMTCT SERVICES

The Tanzania AIDS Forum secretariat with other key implementing partners of the Campaign to End Paediatric Aids, Human Development Trust and Association of Journalists Against AIDS in Tanzania, had a presentation to the three Parliamentary standing Committees in Dodoma (on 24th June 2010) namely;

- (i) Finance and Economic Affairs,
- (ii) HIV & AIDS Affairs,
- (iii) Social Services.

The main objectives were;

- (i) To explain to the concerned parliamentary committees more about the Campaign to End Paediatric AIDS.
- (ii) To illustrate the magnitude of the problem and the situation of the PMTCT services in the country.
- (iii) To demand the existence of PMTCT budget line and increase it accordingly as well as advocating for improved PMTCT services in the country as they have that mandate and social capital.

After the presentation, MPs provided some recommendations, including;

- (i) Empower citizens and produce local facilitators who will assist in disseminating information and creating awareness on CEPA even at lower levels. Also it will be relevant to share this issue at the Annual Joint Sector Review meeting. The team noted this and processes are under way to develop a proposal to address the demand side of CEPA.
- (ii) Encourage participation of men in this campaign by involving them in leadership i.e. alternate leadership between men and women, consider having a patron who will alternate with the matron. The team noted and agreed with the MPs that it's very important to involve men in this campaign for changes rather than isolating them, including appointing a patron; currently the matron is Prof. Esther Mwaikambo.
- (iii) The government has already started working on PMTCT issues, it has created a favourable environment for World Health Organization to operate in Morogoro rural and they are doing a good job. It will be a good idea to go and learn from them as they are performing well at grassroots levels.
- (iv) Collaborate with special seat MPs in this campaign, through them the campaign can reach a wider audience.



The CEPA team presented the Campaign to the three committees considering their task within their mandate in their parliament;

Finance and Economic Affairs

- (i) Demand the government to increase health sector budget to reach 15% as per Abuja Declaration.
- (ii) Advocate for full funding for PMTCT.
- (iii) Timely disbursement of funds in health sector for effective implementation.

HIV and AIDS Affairs

- (i) Lobbying the Government to ensure that PMTCT services are readily available at every health center.
- (ii) Ensure PMTCT services are made part of the National 2010 election manifestos.

Social Services

- (i) Lobby the Government to ensure that health facilities are easily accessible.
- (ii) Ensure that all health centers offer PMTCT services (VTC, CTC services etc.).