



# **Fight Against Falsified medicines**

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# Introduction

- Counterfeit pharmaceuticals pose a major threat to National health. The problem is pervasive and impacts every segment of society in East Africa. Resistance building, therapeutic failure, and exposure to toxic ingredients harm millions of people each year; all are direct results of counterfeit drug use.
- Fake medicines for malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis are prevalent throughout East Africa just as in much of Sub-Saharan Africa, with some estimates placing the incidence of fake products at around 30% of the total pharmaceutical supply.

# Introduction cont'd...

The situation is made worse by the;

- low levels of awareness on dangers of counterfeit medicine and inefficient existing legal system to crack down and prosecute counterfeiters
- Chaotic nature of most pharmaceutical markets in Africa
- Leaky supply chain systems
- Scarcity and/ or erratic medicines supply
- High cost of medicines
- Weak laws and lack of enforcement of existing laws
- under-funded regulatory authorities
- High level of corruption
- Low literacy rates and low health literacy
- A lack of coordinated response from key stakeholders such as the health professionals to this illicit crime

# WHAT HAS CHAIN DONE?

- Community Health & Information Network(CHAIN) promotes the empowerment of people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS and NCDs. Promotes health literacy, patient centered health care and patient safety.
- CHAIN has used different approaches to raise awareness about fake medicines at community, national, regional and international level.

# Approaches

- Workshops and dialogues at community, national, regional and international level
- Partnerships /collaboration with WHO, MoH, NDA, Universities, Healthcare professionals, industry
- Innovative approaches such as SMS media, music dance and drama and through sports
- Public hearings
- Community and school outreaches

# Working in Partnership



# Engaging with WHO country office

Dr. Joachim Saweka , the former WHO Country representative in Uganda gave a key note speech at the workshop on substandard and counterfeit medicines organised by CHAN.



Dr. Kaggwa –Mugagga ,WHO officiated at the health literacy public dialogue organised by CHAIN



# Awareness through SMS Media





# Awareness through National Health Debates

- Worked in partnership with Medical Face International to organise **National health debates for primary schools**. These debates are aimed at imparting research skills and knowledge on health issues at a young age. This will enable a generation which is health literate and able to make informed healthcare decisions.
  - These debates are held once a year
  - Primary Health care notice boards are awarded to winners



# Awareness through school outreaches

- **School outreaches** in schools in Kampala, Wakiso and Kiboga on patient safety issues including safe medicines and hand hygiene



# Community engagement





EDDAGALA  
ETINGIRIRE  
LITTA

COUNTERFEIT  
MEDICINE  
KILLS

ONLY SAFE DRUGS  
IN RIGHT DOSAGE  
SAVE LIVES

HealthAid  
Establishing long-term relationships  
and partnerships in southeast Africa  
www.healthaid.org

UWANDA  
UGANDA YOUNG POSITIVES

**Safe use of medicine is integrated into CHAIN projects e.g. the orphans project**



# Awareness through sports



**CHAIN Football team giving out information on the dangers of self medication**

Work in collaboration with key stakeholders such as National Drug Authority (NDA), to raise public awareness on fake medicines

**Vicky Nambasa from National Drug Authority speaking about counterfeit and falsified medicines and the role of NDA.**



# Training Community Safe Medicines Advocates(CSMAs)





# Achievements

- CHAIN **Raised awareness:** SMS messages, public hearings, media campaigns, sports, music, dance and drama community events and school debates. Over 500,000 people reached
- Partnerships established with key stakeholders- MoH, WHO, IDI, Nottingham Trent University, Medical Associations, Health facilities etc
- Networks of Patient leaders and community safe medicines established to raise awareness of safe medicines.

**Patients should be empowered because  
when things go wrong ,  
they are the ones who suffer the harm**



# Key message

- It is everyone responsibility to join the fight against fake medicines.
- Fake drugs kill!



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