

Foreword to the Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the pilot phase of the Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) programme was carried out between December 2009 and February 2010. We sincerely thank all of our MeTA colleagues for their contribution to the evaluation process, which has produced a comprehensive and insightful report.

We welcome the report's assessment that the MeTA approach is beginning to show signs of real impact. Multi-stakeholder groups are engaged in constructive dialogue, critical information on the pharmaceutical sector is being collected, public-awareness campaigns launched and policy reforms initiated.

The evaluation also provides some valuable guidance on how the MeTA model could be strengthened.

The report highlights how DFID, the World Health Organisation and the World Bank could align more closely in working with pilot countries.

We now know how better to use the different tools available to analyse the pharmaceutical sector, how to sequence activities in the MeTA process more effectively and how to allow sufficient time in the planning process for establishing the multi-stakeholder groups.

The report suggests that MeTA's governance structure should have been more defined with a clear separation between governance, management and advisory functions. The lack of clarity in the pilot phase resulted in misunderstandings over the role of the International Advisory Group as a purely advisory body. The expertise of the IAG members and their willingness to contribute to MeTA, have been underutilised as a result.

As noted in the evaluation, MeTA is a new, complex and ambitious approach that has presented significant implementation challenges. We thank the International Secretariat and the seven participating countries for their hard work to overcome these challenges and applaud the progress made to date.

MeTA has fulfilled its mandate as a pilot programme. It has tested new approaches and innovative new tools while generating valuable lessons on how increased transparency and accountability can improve the access of the poor to essential medicines.

DFID new Ministers will use the evidence from the evaluation, and of progress made since it was completed, to make a decision, in consultation with MeTA colleagues, on the future of the MeTA programme after the completion of the pilot this autumn.

We thank all our colleagues for their commitment to the MeTA programme.

