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Press Release  
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## **Anti-malaria medicine sold above government recommended prices** **Despite subsidy program, research in Dar es Salaam shows that citizens are still paying too much**

**9 October 2013:** A number of pharmacies in Dar es Salaam continue to sell anti-malaria medication at the wrong price for both children's and adults' doses.

These findings were released in a brief entitled *The price of treating malaria: can government, donors, the private sector and citizens together make medication more affordable?* The results are based on a random survey of 58 pharmacies from each district of Dar es Salaam conducted by Youth Initiatives Tanzania (YITA). YITA field workers went into pharmacies and asked for a child's or adult's dose of Artemether-lumefantrine (Alu), the World Health Organization recommended frontline treatment for malaria.

Alu was chosen because the Affordable Medicines for Malaria (AMFm) pilot program, hosted by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, supports private and public sector importers to order subsidized supplies of Alu. Tanzania is one of seven African countries in which AMFm is being piloted so that the price of an adult dose of Alu is TZS 1000 and a child's dose is TZS 500. This price has been widely promoted through television and radio public service announcements, through a Ministry of Health and Social Welfare press release and, since July and August 2011, printed materials promoting Alu contained the recommended price.

The study found

- Out of the 55 pharmacies that would sell a child's dose of Alu, almost all of them asked for TZS 1000 or more. Only one pharmacy sold the medicine at the recommended price for a child's dose.
- In the case of an adult dose, almost one out of two pharmacies (48%) sold Alu for more than TZS 1000. Almost one quarter (23%) sold Alu for TZS 2000 or more.
- There is also variation between districts – wealthier districts are more likely to sell Alu for higher prices. Almost half of the pharmacies in Kinondoni (47%) sold Alu for TZS 2000 or more while in Temeke over three-quarters (79%) of pharmacies sold Alu at the recommended price of TZS 1000.

The subsidy program is fairly successful: an unsubsidized dose of Alu costs between USD 10 and 15. However, despite the concerted effort of government, donors and the private sector, the medicine is still sold for a higher price.

Abner Okello, Executive Director of YITA said *“Ultimately this gap between recommended and actual pricing presents a threat to efforts to combat malaria and needs to be addressed. The Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority are responsible for regulating the price of medicine but may face challenges in monitoring the price across the country. They could consider an SMS system whereby citizens could report the price at which they buy Alu, to supplement current efforts.”*

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**For more information:**

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**Notes to editors**

- Youth Initiatives Tanzania (YITA) supports youth groups in the age of 15-30 mainly in Manzese. With YITA's support, the groups work towards sustainable income generating activities. The organization facilitates a three year training program in entrepreneurship and provides equipment boosts.
- You can follow YITA's work: [yitanzania.wordpress.com](http://yitanzania.wordpress.com)
- Twaweza is a ten year citizen-centered initiative, focusing on large-scale change in East Africa. Twaweza believes that lasting change requires bottom-up action, and seeks to foster conditions and expand opportunities through which millions of people can get information and make change happen in their own communities directly and by holding government to account.
- You can follow Twaweza's work

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