



# Media engagement in diabetes prevention

WDF 14-858 (Popularizing advocacy to  
diabetes prevention)

**Dingaan Mithi**

# Introduction

- Journalists Association Against AIDS (JournAIDS) are implementing a diabetes prevention project in Malawi.
- The media is one the key target groups taking into serious consideration the role it plays in raising awareness

# Introduction...

- ❑ The media landscape in Malawi is dominated by the radio, while newspapers command wide readership in the elite circles.
- ❑ Reporters and editors in the newsrooms of radio stations, television and newspapers are now recognizing the need to give increased coverage on diabetes and other NCDs.
- ❑ The 2014 World Diabetes Day commemoration was hugely covered in the media.

# Summary

- ❑ Although Malawi is seeing a boom in private radio and TV stations the print media is still not developing due factors of financial sustainability.
- ❑ Coverage on diabetes across media houses has improved greatly starting from 2011 up to the present time when JournAIDS entered into a project partnership agreement (PPA) with World Diabetes Foundation.

# Summary...

- ❑ The organization commissioned a media baseline survey on NCDs and diabetes coverage in June, 2014.
- ❑ At least 65 reporters and editors have been reached with survey results in Lilongwe and Blantyre.
- ❑ Survey clearly highlights an improvement in diabetes reporting pegged at 19%, only surpassed by cancer.

# Summary...

- ❑ The media in the country reported in the survey to face challenges such as unwillingness by government (MOH) to share information.
- ❑ Bureaucracy in government due to lack of the Access to Information Act makes it difficult for policy makers and controlling officers to release information to the media especially health related.

# Summary...

- JournAIDS alongside College of Medicine and Diabetes Association of Malawi have are strengthening awareness raising.
- IEC materials in form of posters and stickers have been printed and continue to be disseminated widely to stakeholders.
- The IEC materials are on a high demand
- At least over 60 journalists have been trained

# Policy dialogue in the media

- ❑ The media is a platform for policy dialogue
- ❑ JournAIDS has previously published policy briefs which have been utilized by the media to highlight plight of care and delivery of services in the diabetes response.
- ❑ In the next policy brief to appear in March, 2015, JournAIDS will highlight the need for political commitment to tackle diabetes



# Policy dialogue in the media

- ❑ JournAIDS in collaboration with College of Medicine have initiated a column on NCDs which appear in the Sunday Times.
- ❑ The column will be highlighting critical policy issues related to diabetes and other NCDs and offers a platform for feedback country wide.
- ❑ Editors at Blantyre Newspapers Limited (BNL) have committed themselves to give space to NCDs for the column which is a big achievement.

# Unleashing power of social media

- ❑ JournAIDS continues to highlight its work such as case studies, policy briefs, photos from World Diabetes Day commemorates on Facebook.
- ❑ The Global Ambassadors Diabetes Walk Facebook page is a good platform
- ❑ At a recent media training workshop, the media proposed that JournAIDS create a Facebook page so that journalists interact on the site to showcase work in the project. JournAIDS is in the process to create the Facebook page.

# Linking patients to the media

- The project WDF 14-858 has embarked on an innovative strategy.
- It plans to link radio, newspaper and TV reporters to give coverage on the plight of diabetic patients in their clubs.
- The plan is now in place, this will give a human face to challenges among patients with a rights based approach to appear in the media to influence policy advocacy.

# Conclusion

- ❑ Diabetes is a serious chronic disease burden that needs a lot of media coverage in the country.
- ❑ It is important that editors and reporters continue to give coverage as policy makers, donors and development partners hear on the need to act urgently through the media.
- ❑ The support by World Diabetes Foundation to the project is very important, taking into account the need to strengthen diabetes prevention interventions as cost-effective means to tackle the burden.

# **Conclusion**

**Thank You!**

**Zikomo!**

**Merci!**