

# SIAPS TECHNICAL BRIEF

*Margareth Ndomondo-Sigonda moderating a plenary session on accelerating access to medicines from the perspectives of industry, civil society, and patient organizations*

## SIAPS Showcases Key Approaches at Africa's Medicine Regulation Conference, Accra, Ghana



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The 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Scientific Conference on Medical Products Regulation in Africa (SCOMRA), which took place November 27–28, 2017, in Accra, Ghana, focused on “Sustaining the Momentum for Regulatory Harmonization in Africa.” Participants and presenters shared their experiences and lessons learned to contribute to the future of medical products regulation and harmonization in Africa. Staff from the USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program presented posters highlighting the program’s work and key findings.

Under the leadership of the African Union Commission and with coordination by New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), medicine regulators and interested partners have come together every other year since 2013 to discuss key issues on the progress of the African Medicines Regulation Harmonization (AMRH) initiative. The initiative was launched in 2009 within the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan of Action Framework to facilitate the creation of a regulatory environment for pharmaceutical-sector development in Africa through the harmonization of regulations by Member States and within Regional Economic Communities.

SIAPS Program Director Mr. Francis Aboagye-Nyame presented a poster on “Reflections on Implementing a Comprehensive Regulatory Systems Strengthening Approach in Low- and Middle-Income Countries,” while SIAPS Principal Technical

Advisor Kate Kikule presented on “Strategies to Promote the Sustainability of Electronic Management Information Systems for Medicines Registration: Examples from the Implementation of Pharmadex in Three African Countries.”



**SIAPS Program Director Francis Aboagye-Nyame dialogued with key heads of medicine regulatory authorities and institutions, including Hudu Mogtari, former head of Ghana’s FDA, and NEPADs Margareth Ndomondo-Sigonda (top photo)**



**Fred Siyoi, Registrar, Pharmacy and Poisons Board, Kenya, and Wiltshire Johnson, CEO, Pharmacy and Poisons Board, Sierra Leone (bottom photo)**

The third SIAPS poster focused on “Creating a Monitoring and Evaluation System for Mozambique’s Regulatory System.” The Ministry of Health, Mozambique, represented by Ms. Nazalia Macuvele, presented on “Strengthening the Medicine Regulatory System by Implementing an Electronic Medicine Registration Data Management System (Pharmadex) in Mozambique.”



**SIAPS Principal Technical Advisor Kate Kikule with delegates at the conference, including Agnes Kijo from the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority**



**Didier Mouliom International Pharmaceutical Federation, Gugu Mahlangu, Medicines Control Authority Zimbabwe, and Nazalia Macuvele, Ministry of Health, Mozambique**

SIAPS’s participation in the conference was critical for highlighting the support the program has offered countries to strengthen their medicine regulatory systems since 2011. It was also beneficial for networking and identifying key problems in medicine regulation and sharing strategies and solutions to overcome them.

According to Mr. Aboagye-Nyame, "Participating in SCOMRA 2017 emphasized the critical role that regulatory harmonization will play in the achievement of the SDGs in Africa. For the continent to be self-sufficient in providing quality pharmaceuticals to its population, all stakeholders—governments, WHO, donors, and technical assistance agencies—need to work together to ensure the success of this initiative."



**Nazalia Macuvele delivers a presentation on the work supported by SIAPS Mozambique.**

The conference provided a forum for SIAPS to share lessons learned while working to strengthen medicine regulatory systems in Africa. SIAPS leaders called for more research to study the impact of current approaches in medicine regulation on the quality of medicines in African countries. “Financial resources, human resource capacity, and good governance are critical factors in ensuring effective medicine regulation,” says Ms. Kikule.

Key recommendations from the conference were:

- National Medicine Regulatory Authorities (NMRAs) need to ensure that regulatory interventions are patient centered and respond to health system challenges and disease

burdens, both of which disproportionately affect the African continent.

- Partners working on medical products regulatory systems strengthening and harmonization in Africa need to align themselves on the AMRH Platform through the Global Coalition of Interested Partners to ensure a coordinated effort and collective impact.
- The African Union Commission and NEPAD should explore and advocate for NMRAs, regional harmonization, sustainable financing mechanisms/models, and human resource development.

Management Sciences for Health, which implements SIAPS, will continue to work with partners and African countries to support the agenda of medical products regulatory harmonization using a systems-based approach. Effective medicine regulation is critical to ensuring the use of quality assured medicines to achieve better health outcomes and reduce the disease burden on the African continent.

The Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) Program is a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Management Sciences for Health (MSH). The goal of SIAPS is to improve the availability of quality pharmaceutical products and effective pharmaceutical services through strengthening pharmaceutical systems.

**ABOUT SIAPS** | The Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program works to assure access to quality pharmaceutical products and effective pharmaceutical services through systems-strengthening approaches to achieve positive and lasting health outcomes. SIAPS is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and is implemented by Management Sciences for Health.

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