

Health service provision poor in the country - IHI

By Correspondent David Kisanga

A NEW report released by Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) has showed that the qualities of health services and the capacity of health care providers to offer services in the country is low and poor as they lack essential facilities such as medical equipment and drugs.

The report showed that the general health preparedness in the country is only 42 percent and essentials like medicines, amenities, medical equipment and diagnostic capacity of health facilities in the country are still problematic.

It also revealed that only 2.5 percent of health facilities were stocked with essential medicines while 41 percent had an average of 6 out of the 14 essential drugs.

The 2012 report was released over the weekend, titled 'Services Availability and Readiness Assessment (SARA)'.

SARA is a health facility assessment tool designed to assess and monitor service availability and readiness of the health sector

and to generate evidence to support planning and management of health system.

Stakeholders who participated in the meeting urged researchers and the ministry to set targets for the next SARA study instead of putting the 'unrealistic' 100 percent as an indicator of good services or availability of services.

They also suggested that the next dissemination meeting should include more Regional Medical Officers (RMOs) and District Medical Officers (DMOs) because the results are even more relevant to them.

Some stakeholders proposed that more districts be involved in the next SARA as in the first one only 27 districts were involved.

Contributing on the report, World Health Organization (WHO) Country Representative, Dr Rufaro Chatora said SARA is an advanced survey compared to the previous ones.

"The tool (SARA) should go hand in hand with other tools that provide information. It shouldn't be considered the standard tool," he said. He argued that once problems are identified, they should be fixed immediately.