



*Office of Inspector General*

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Six Arrested and Held in Zambia for Illicit Sale of HIV and Antimalarial Products** *Investigation by USAID Inspector General Leads to Joint Law Enforcement Action*

Washington, D.C.—Last week, authorities in Zambia arrested and held six individuals, including two pharmacy owners, involved in the illicit sale of HIV and malaria test kits in Lusaka, the country's capital. The arrests took place using evidence gathered during a 5 month-long investigation by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Inspector General (OIG).

In the weeks prior to the arrests, OIG carried out joint investigative work with the Zambia National Task Force (ZNTF). The task force consists of the Zambia Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC), Zambia Medical Regulatory Authority (ZAMRA), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Zambia police.

“We coordinate closely with international partners to thwart the work of criminals who prey upon the U.S. Government-supported global health supply chain,” said Jonathan Schofield, OIG’s Special Agent in Charge overseeing global health investigations. “Our recent work with partners in the U.S. Embassy in Zambia and ZNTF has stopped several offenders who exploited international aid for personal gain. We continue to obtain additional information on ways the supply chain was compromised, allowing it to be repaired, strengthened, and better positioned to serve the people of Zambia in the future.”

The U.S. Government provides HIV and malaria test kits, along with other health commodities, under the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President’s Malaria Initiative, and through contributions to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. The commodities, provided in Zambia and around the world, are intended to be distributed to beneficiaries without charge.

Last week’s arrests stem from a proactive initiative that OIG began in Lusaka in June 2017. OIG visited pharmacies across the city to determine if U.S. Government-funded products were being sold for profit. During these visits, OIG quickly identified individuals involved in the illegal sale of stolen HIV and malaria test kits, which were later confirmed to have been provided through U.S. Government and The Global Fund

programs. OIG shared evidence from its investigation with members of the ZNTF, triggering joint investigative efforts that led the ZNTF, assisted by OIG, to detain 13 individuals involved in illegally selling the test kits.

Following the arrests, six individuals are considered the main targets of the investigation and remain in jail. Zambian authorities released an additional seven individuals after they secured bail on the condition that they return for further questioning.

OIG conducts independent investigations and audits to make U.S. foreign assistance programs more efficient, effective, and accountable. Promoting integrity in the global health supply chain stands among OIG's top investigative priorities and OIG operates worldwide to investigate complaints of fraud and misconduct in global health programs. This work includes its "Make A Difference" (MAD) campaign and hotline to protect the integrity of antimalarial programs overseas. The campaign operates in Malawi, Benin, and Nigeria and publicly calls for citizens to oppose theft and counterfeiting of antimalarial commodities and to recognize the dangers they present.

More information can be found on OIG's [web site](#), which also provides instructions for using the office's hotlines to report fraud, waste, and abuse.

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