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Drug companies boost quality of herbal medicine

The expansion of the pharmaceutical companies into Kenya's business has given users fresh hopes of accessing quality and safe products. Lack of a regulatory mechanism puts at risk over 80 percent of Kenyans using herbal products.

Mr. Godfrey Omondi, a pharmaceutical analyst at the National Quality Control Laboratory (NQCL) told Business Daily pharmaceuticals companies had the capacity to provide products of the required standards. In the recent past, there has been an increased use of the herbal drugs and products due to the side effects associated with the conventional products, Omondi said. "The authorities that regulate the use of the herbal products globally have in the recent past encouraged their use, with is the other factor that can explain the wide use of the herbal products", Mr. Omondi said.

Ms. Alice Mwalimo, group product manager at Beta Healthcare International Ltd, said the price was the other factor that has increased the growth of the use of herbal products. "Some people prefer to use herbal products because the whole world is going green," she added.

Traditionally known for over the counter medication such as Mara Moja, Betasil, Action, Salimia and Good Morning, the company has since last year ventured into herbal products.

"We decided to move into lifestyle herbal products that would broaden our portfolio and serve a different, unique yet required niche market," said Mwalimo, adding that herbal products from reputable pharmaceutical companies such as Beta Healthcare which undergoes intense research and development has received unexpected welcome in the market.

Since last year, the company has launched several lifestyle products such as Slimtrim for weight loss and Joint care, a Herb mineral formulation that relieves joint pain. Other products include the Lady Zoom, targeting women for energy and vitality and Livlife, which protects liver from impacts of toxic substance. Lady Zoom specifically targeting women for energy and vitality.

The other lifestyle herbal products includes Memcap Toto, Memcap tablets, Salimia Cream and Today Calcium, which is a mixture of fruit, chewable tablet that contains calcium carbonate for stronger bones. All these products are imported. "As we invest in our new factory, we will definitely at a future date look into manufacturing these products locally," she said.