



PRESS RELEASE

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NAIROBI, 12 June 2007 -- Roll Back Malaria, the global partnership to fight malaria, completed today the second of three steps in a campaign to improve the quality of proposals from sub-Saharan African countries to the Global Fund by holding a "mock Technical Review" of over 24 country proposals. Over 120 participants were present, including representatives from 24 African countries and 20 experts from various organizations, including CDC, MACEPA, the Earth Institute, UNICEF, USAID, the World Bank and WHO.

In 2006, just over one-quarter of all malaria control proposals submitted to the Global Fund from sub-Saharan African countries were considered worthy of financing by the Technical Review Panel (TRP), an independent expert panel assembled to assess the proposals. The newly formed RBM Harmonization Working Group, chaired by the World Bank and UNICEF and consisting of representatives from UN agencies, donors, civil society, foundations, and African countries, is leading the campaign, which began with training workshops in Nairobi, Kenya and Douala, Cameroon to help applicant countries with the proposal writing process.

This second step consisted of a two-day workshop of intensive review and feedback on the draft proposals and was structured as a "mock" Technical Review Panel. Draft proposals were reviewed and evaluated - both by experts and peers--for soundness of approach, feasibility, and potential for sustainability, much as they will at the real TRP in September. The campaign will conclude with follow-up support to countries to help respond to questions raised during the "Mock Review" and a final concluding review just prior to submission. The submission deadline is 4 July 2007 and a target of greater than 60% success for proposals that have undergone this process has been set by the Harmonization Working Group - - more than double the percentage from previous years.

The Harmonization Working Group was formed to focus exclusively on coordinating, supporting and accelerating malaria control implementation at the country level. It is supported by the technical capacity of various partners including UNICEF, the World Bank, the US President's Malaria Initiative (US-PMI), MACEPA and WHO. The group focuses on facilitating and mobilizing support to countries to ensure the efficient use of available resources; increasing access to additional resources where needed; and monitoring results obtained.

In addition to the campaign to improve Global Fund application success, the Working Group is developing an early warning system to alert the malaria community when countries face challenges implementing their malaria control scale-up as well as developing an Implementation Support Team to provide on-demand support to countries to overcome bottlenecks.

Over 90% of the world's malaria deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa, where a child dies every 30 seconds of the mosquito-borne disease. With little over 3 years remaining to meet ambitious malaria control targets, an unprecedented number of African countries have embarked on aggressive implementation programs to bring this preventable and treatable disease under control.

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The Roll Back Malaria Partnership

To provide a coordinated international approach to fighting malaria, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) was launched in 1998 by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank.

The Partnership now brings together governments of countries affected by malaria, their bilateral and multilateral development partners, the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions around the common goal of halving the global burden of malaria by 2010