



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

PRESS RELEASE

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Benguela - "100,000 children under five years old, die of Malaria in Angola and 1500 pregnant women succumb to the same disease each year", Dr. Paolo Balladelli, WHO Representative, announced on Africa Malaria Day, 25 April.

The Roll Back Malaria Initiative (RBM) has estimated that an amount of One Billion USD per annum is needed globally to stop the disease. However, only 200 million is available each year to prevent and cure Malaria.

Dr. Van Dunem, Vice Minister of Health, pointed out that, according to the "Abuja Declaration target for the year 2010, Angola aimed at meeting an overall goal of 60% to deliver timely treatments. He stressed that 60% of pregnant women should have access to impregnated mosquito nets, that 60% of women should have prophylaxis available during pregnancy and that 60% of the Malaria epidemic had to be timeously accessed and addressed.

Angola shows steady improvement with its adopted strategies to control mortality of the disease. 165,000 per year would be the number of children dying because of malaria if the current strategies for prevention and treatment would not have been implemented by the country and partners. The Rally for Life carried out by MoH and WHO targeted 300,000 people of the vulnerable population in six provinces (Malanje, Huambo, Kwanza Norte, Moxico, Bie and Benguela). Six wheel drive vehicles have been delivered to the health directorates and six medical staff appointed for the targeted provinces.

WHO and other health partners, with special mention of UNICEF and USAID, successfully continue to upgrade its RBM programme at provincial level. Luanda, Malanje and Huambo are the provinces where a five years project to fight malaria in the country is carried out by MoH and WHO through the USAID cooperation.

Priority has been placed in the prevention and treatment of Malaria in a country currently undergoing transition and rapid development. Drastic reduction in child mortality at birth has been given special focus.

The WHO Representative commented that random studies have shown a 17% reduction in child mortality due to good coverage and distribution of impregnated mosquito nets.

Included in its strategy to fight Malaria, the country has explored ways to reduce poverty, thereby assisting to break the existing cycle between illness and poverty. Currently an average of 30% is allocated to morbidity and mortality caused by Malaria.

Government and partners; Agencies and NGO's would need to increase their financial and technical commitment towards Malaria. This in effect would be an investment in increased life expectancy and better productivity. According to WHO, scientific evidence has proven that poorer sectors of a population have a mortality rate of 39% higher compared to populations living under better conditions.

A MoH delegation headed by the Vice-Minister of Health, including the Representatives of WHO, UNICEF, ESSO and EU, celebrated The Africa Malaria Day in Benguela. After the Provincial Hospital, an orphanage consisting of 88 children run by the Church and the WHO antennae were visited by the delegation.

The Provincial Government organized an exhibition of impregnated mosquito nets which were sold to the population in the town center in a further attempt to reduce mortality caused by Malaria.

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