



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

PRESS RELEASE

MALARIA AND HEALTH IN THE CABINDA PROVINCE: Boosting provision of qualitative health services

19TH April 2003

Cabinda – A Ministerial Delegation visited Cabinda last week to launch the Malaria Week in Angola. The Minister of Health, Dr. Albertina Hamukwaya and the Vice Minister of Health, Dr. Jose Van Dúnem accompanied by Representatives of WHO, UNICEF and EU acknowledged the devastating impact of the Malaria disease on children and pregnant women in the hyper endemic province of Cabinda.

In the provincial hospital, 55 per cent of children hospitalized die because of complications of Malaria. Mortality for malaria considering all ages is around 40 percent. In the pediatric ward, a high percentage of children visited by the WHO Representative, showed low values of hemoglobine, related mainly to malnutrition and malaria. The provincial Hospital of Cabinda is overwhelmed by the number of patients requesting health treatment. Overall, in the year 2002, 25,744 patients have been hospitalized in the 264 beds available, with an average stay of 4,4 days per patient. During the Ministerial visit, many beds both in the pediatric and in the maternity wards had to receive two patients.

In the year 2002, 35 deliveries per day with a total exceeding 8000 births have been registered. “It is evident, – stressed the WHO Representative during his public speech, – “that the only way to address this worrying situation of overcrowded hospitals, would be to restore health services in the periphery as soon as possible. Services near the community, both at municipal and village level would require increased coverage in the areas with high demography. Qualitative primary health services would shift case-management from hospital to community care. Cost-effectiveness of primary health care interventions has shown to be more achievable when services are run in the community, because access to care is increased. In addition, the patient is seen when the disease can easily be treated and where complications are not yet present.”

Integration of health programmes, including polio and measles vaccination, malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy and HIV among others, represent the key strategy to enable an impact in health and break the existing vicious circle between bad health and poverty.

The Minister reiterated the urgency to cover health posts with trained health personnel and advocated for partners, namely WHO, UNICEF, EU, WB, Business, community and NGOs among others, to come together and explore all opportunities given by the new peace context of Angola to boost quality health services in Cabinda and in the country.

“Special attention – she pointed out – is to be given to the fight against HIV, since in the Provincial Hospital this disease comes as the second cause of death after malaria”.

In the launching of the malaria week, mosquito nets treated with insecticides were delivered to pregnant women, bio-larvicide was dropped in stagnant water, intra and outdoor spray was implemented.

The Malaria Control Programme Manager, Dr. Filomeno Fortes assured that the Lab network would be extended in order to appropriately assess patients at the municipal level and effect timely treatment to the malaria patients.

Since having encountered resistance to chloroquine higher than 45 per cent of samples observed, Angola is currently defining a new national policy and new protocols for malaria treatment.

Issued by WHO/Angola. Luanda, Angola, phone (244-2) 33 23 98 - Fax (244-2) 33 23 14 ou (1) 321 956 38 82 Cell phone b. (244-9) 20 18 08 - - E-Mail: whoang@ebonet.net
