

Press -Release

RBM PARTNERSHIP APPLAUDS US MALARIA INITIATIVE AND URGES HARMONIZATION OF GLOBAL EFFORTS

Geneva, 1 July 2005 - The Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership today welcomed the United States announcement pledging significant additional resources to the fight against malaria. "Currently there is a huge gap in funding for malaria control - this new initiative will add nearly US\$1.2 billion and could leverage up to another US\$4 billion over the next five years", stated Dr. Eyitayo Lambo, Chairman of the RBM Partnership Board and Minister of Health, Nigeria. "This is extremely encouraging news for the Partnership and especially for Africa."

The United States, which is represented on the RBM Partnership Board, announced its new initiative just prior to the G8 which meets in Gleneagles, Scotland, next week. Africa, which tops this year's G8 agenda, suffers severely from the impact of malaria. Malaria kills nearly 3000 children every day and causes the loss of an estimated US\$12 billion each year to the continent's economy. "If other G8 countries respond to this call and increase their commitment by mobilizing the additional funds requested, it will be a significant gain for the fight against malaria in Africa," added Dr. Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Executive Secretary of the RBM Partnership.

The new initiative will focus on three countries in its first year - Tanzania, Uganda and Angola - and expand to other countries with an aim of protecting 170 million Africans. The initiative aims to provide 85% coverage of prevention, treatment and malaria in pregnancy interventions. Tanzania and Uganda have already received grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. The Global Fund is the largest financier of countries for malaria control today, having committed nearly US\$1 billion to countries for malaria over the last two years.

"The Global Fund has been highly successful in building countries' confidence by helping them to buy essential malaria commodities. We hope the new U.S. contributions are additional to existing multilateral and bilateral donations and that the Global Fund will continue to be sufficiently funded to meet and maintain countries' grant requests," emphasized Dr. Coll-Seck.

Tanzania and Uganda are both included in the East Africa Regional Network, a coordinating mechanism in which RBM partners' malaria control activities are monitored, bottlenecks resolved and technical support provided to scale up their malaria control plans and harmonize the efforts of all partners without overburdening countries.

"Lack of coordination of malaria control results in fragmentation and duplication of effort," said James Banda, Country Support Co-ordinator in the RBM Partnership Secretariat. "Bilateral approaches have a tendency to work directly with beneficiaries, thus increasing transaction costs for countries. The role of the Roll Back Malaria Secretariat is to facilitate greater coordination among the myriad of partners, including endemic countries, working in malaria control. The RBM Secretariat will work with the U.S. State Department to ensure that impact of this U.S. initiative is maximized."



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.

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