

Backgrounder

4th MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference & 5th Forum of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership

An unprecedented global gathering in Africa

As malaria deaths remain at alarming levels —with a child succumbing every 30 seconds and the devastating disease a root cause of the continent’s pervasive poverty - an unprecedented gathering will convene in Yaoundé, Cameroon to highlight the urgent malaria research and implementation challenges facing Africa today.

The *Fourth MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference* and *Forum V* of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership will be held in the week of 13-19 November bringing together scientists, policymakers, African ministers, health care workers, community members, and other experts on the disease. They will review efforts to build Africa’s research capacity, empower afflicted communities, battle complacency and address the many barriers that are keeping effective malaria prevention and treatment from reaching the most vulnerable.

The week’s deliberations will culminate in a comprehensive overview of the global malaria response and chart the course of action required over the next 10 years towards cutting malaria deaths dramatically.

The Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM)

The Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM - www.mim.su.se), launched in Dakar, Senegal in 1997, is an international alliance of organizations and individuals seeking to maximize the impact of scientific research against malaria in Africa to ensure that research findings yield practical health benefits. It is hosted in Stockholm, Sweden by the Karolinska Institute and Stockholm University.

The Roll Back Malaria Partnership

To provide coordinated international approach to fighting malaria, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM - www.rollbackmalaria.org) 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 to rapidly scale-up implementation of malaria control and halve the global burden of malaria by 2010.

Fourth MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference (13-18 November)

The MIM Pan-African Malaria Conferences are the largest meetings worldwide solely focusing on malaria. They are held every two years and provide a unique opportunity for malaria scientists and experts from all disciplines to meet, discuss and form new partnerships. This year's meeting will draw some 1,500 participants.

Why is this conference important?

The most successful malaria control programs over the past 100 years, in the Americas and Europe, and now in Africa and Asia, have been linked to strong research activities. New antimalarial drugs, insecticides, bed nets, and other methods to control malaria have come from field research in the swamps and other mosquito breeding areas, and the laboratories, clinics and hospitals of the United States, Caribbean, and southern Europe. A growing number of scientists from Africa, the area suffering the greatest toll from malaria, are playing an increasingly active role in combating this scourge. Contributions of scientists worldwide have been critical to understanding the socio-cultural dimensions of the burden of malaria. These contributions are vital to the development of effective interventions and improving understanding of how to ensure access to those interventions. The MIM Conferences are at the core of encouraging this international exchange of ideas.

Who will attend?

- African and Western malaria researchers
- Representatives of control agencies and national malaria control programs in malaria endemic countries
- Pharmaceutical industry representatives
- International funding agencies

Key Objectives

- Communicating scientific findings
- Fostering exchange between malaria research and control programs
- Strengthening African research capabilities
- Promoting inter-regional and pan-African science and health partnerships
- Reporting back on the progress of MIM-related activities
- Raising awareness of the global burden of malaria

Key Outcomes

- Provide a unique forum to share research results and their applications and to refine research agendas for the future
- The formation of new research networks and partnerships, both at the national, regional and global level
- Build capacity by involving junior researchers in scientific and poster presentations and by providing competitively awarded travel grants
- Increased support for malaria research



Roll Back Malaria Partnership - FORUM V (18-19 November)

The year 2005 is a milestone year for the Roll Back Malaria Partnership. In April 2000 at the Abuja Summit, African heads of state committed themselves, and their governments, to reach the RBM objective of halving the burden of malaria by 2010. They set interim targets to assess progress by 2005. In Africa, some countries have been able to reach at least some of the targets set in Abuja. It is clear, however, that there is much more work to be done to remove the obstacles that continue to hamper progress.

Roll Back Malaria Partnership

The launch of the RBM initiative in 1998 was a catalyst for renewed global commitment to tackle the disease that affects 3.2 billion people and has devastating effects on health and development. Seven years ago, there was no money, no coordination of global efforts and no timeline to roll back malaria. In 2002, funds became available, a new coordinating structure was put into place and the Roll Back Malaria partners began the process of building consensus to constitute a global strategic plan to roll back malaria in a sustainable way. These efforts are now beginning to bear fruit and there are many reasons to believe that during the second half of this decade we can stop and reverse the forward march of malaria.

Forum V

The RBM Partnership's operating framework identifies the Forum as an assembly of all constituencies of RBM partners and the ultimate coordinating body of the Partnership. It meets to debate, endorse, and adopt the RBM long-term vision and goals, and to appraise progress.

Forum V is the first Forum to take place since the new coordinating structure was put in place, in October 2002. The programme of this event has been designed to encourage dynamic interaction and experience sharing among participants through plenary roundtables and parallel working sessions addressing relevant topics.

Forum V participants will have the opportunity to interact with a diverse set of key stakeholders representing all RBM Partnership constituencies: malaria-endemic countries, multilateral development partners, OECD donor countries, private sector, NGOs and community-based organizations, foundations, research and academic institutions, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

Key Objectives

Forum V will assess overall progress of the RBM Partnership to date and will identify areas where the global malaria response (i.e. prevention, control, research and program implementation) can be improved to fully support and respond to the needs of at-risk-populations, especially children, pregnant women, people living in emergency situations, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Forum V will:

- Identify priorities for implementing the RBM Partnership Global Strategic Plan 2005-2015 (GSP) in support of the malaria-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- Focus on the barriers and bottlenecks which are undermining current efforts to roll back malaria;
- Acknowledge the imperative for all constituencies to coordinate and harmonize their efforts to ensure sustained delivery and use of the most effective malaria prevention and treatment;

ROLL BACK MALARIA PARTNERSHIP SECRETARIAT

20, Avenue Appia • CH-1211 Geneva 27 • Switzerland

Tel : +41 (0)22 791 3920 • Fax : +41 (0)22 791 1587 • inforbm@who.int • <http://www.rollbackmalaria.org>



- Make a global commitment to implement the Global Strategic Plan : The *Yaoundé Call to Action*.

Key Outcomes

The key recommendations of Forum V will be synthesized in the *Yaoundé Call to Action*, a document to which all partners and stakeholders will commit to ensure coordinated activities and progress over the next ten years.

For more information contact:

Roll Back Malaria Partnership Secretariat

Pru Smith
+41 22 791 4586
smithp@who.int

Stéphanie Durivage
+41 22 791 1656
durivages@who.int

Websites:

Fourth MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference (www.mim.su.se)
Roll Back Malaria Partnership's Forum V (www.rollbackmalaria.org/forumV)