



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monrovia, Liberia – April 18, 2008 – On Friday April 25th Liberians will join the rest of the world in commemorating WORLD MALARIA DAY. This year marks the first ever World Malaria Day where a day has been given to provide education and understanding of the devastating consequences of malaria that is both preventable and curable. The world event replaces “Africa Malaria Day” which was commemorated annually on the same day since 2001. April 25th will now annually be celebrated globally with men and women from both malaria burdened and malaria free countries coming together to show their support to the fight against this disease that affects 40% of the world’s population.

This year’s WORLD MALARIA DAY is being held under the theme “*Malaria – a disease without borders*”, aptly titled to show the need for global collaboration in the fight against malaria. This highlights to the need for cross-border strategies, documentation of best practices and the coordinated action at all levels of implementation – international, regional, national and local; and of all stakeholders – donors, researchers, NGOs, UN agencies, companies, and academics.

Liberians will mark this day with the first hand knowledge of the grave impact of malaria where it is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality and will remain so until effective malaria control is sufficiently scaled up to cover highly vulnerable communities. The disease is responsible for nearly 38% of all visits to the health facilities. Data from the nation-wide household malaria survey shows that at any given time 65% of children under five years have malaria parasites in their blood and at least 90% have clinical signs/symptoms of malaria.

The National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) and its partners in Liberia – The MENTOR Initiative, Medical Teams International, German Agro Action, Save the Children – UK, WHO, UNICEF and other partners will host a week long event with the communities in Monrovia. Cultural performances, music, quiz shows, prize giveaways, ITN use demonstrations, a week long media campaign, will take place in five communities to raise essential awareness on the importance of the use of Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets, intermittent preventative treatment for pregnant women and early treatment seeking behaviour.

ITINERARY OF EVENTS

Monday April 21 st	West Point	13h00-15h00	Opening Ceremony*
Tuesday April 22 nd	Rockspring Valley	13h00-15h00	
Wednesday April 23 rd	Soniwein	13h00-15h00	
Thursday April 24 th	New Kru Town	13h00-15h00	
Friday April 25 th	Samuel K. Doe	13h00-16h00	Closing Ceremonies*

* Speaking at the opening and closing ceremonies are Dr. Moses Pewu - Acting Deputy Minister/Chief Medical Officer/RL; Mr. Tolbert G. Nyenswah -Acting Program Manager NMCP; Dr. Fatoma Boley - WHO- Liberia; Sarah Hoibak – Acting Country Director, The MENTOR Initiative

If you would like more information about World Malaria Day in Liberia or to schedule an interview with partners involved in the events please contact: Daniel Somah, Media Focal Person, NMCP—Cell # 06518060; Sarah Hoibak – Acting Country Director, The MENTOR Initiative – sarahh@mentor-initiative.net