

## Fighting Malaria on the “River of Life” An opportunity to join an historic, illuminating voyage



Under the political sponsorship of SADC, the RBM Zambezi Expedition – a voyage on the 2,500 km Zambezi River - will be a world's first to show the successes and the challenges faced by six malaria-endemic African countries – Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The journey will draw attention onto remote populations at the water's edge who are anxious to receive protective treated nets and malaria treatments. It will also help document the disease, highlight the success and challenges of meeting SADC countries' pledge to eradicate malaria and help make the case for this ambitious health goal.



- The Zambezi Expedition will showcase the successes in the fight against malaria and highlight the challenges to be tackled and overcome, such as education, access to effective treatment and drug resistance.
- The Zambezi expedition will highlight the plight of babies and young children, and the very high price they pay: 75% of all malaria-related deaths occur in pregnant women and children. There is no reason why so many pregnant women and children are dying of malaria, a preventable and treatable disease.
- The Zambezi Expedition illustrates the vital importance of regional cooperation and cross-border collaboration to the SADC region's long term goal of elimination. It demonstrates that success is within reach.
- The Zambezi Expedition demonstrates the need for partnerships to fight malaria. The Expedition would not have been possible without partnership.
- The Zambezi River has the potential to represent the 'River of Life' among the six countries and serve as a communications and development pathway. Instead, the high burden of malaria today creates a river environment of illness and suffering.

## Country Profile - Malaria control | ZAMBIA



Courtesy of World Factbook

### Zambia in Figures

#### General (2005)<sup>1</sup>

- Population: 11.5 million
- Life expectancy: 39.2 years
- Under-five mortality: 182 per 1,000
- Doctors/people: 12 per 100,000 people

#### Malaria (2007)<sup>2</sup>

Estimated cases - 4.3 million  
Reported deaths - 7,737  
Source: 1 UNDP, 2 Global Fund and HMIS

### Contact Information

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### Background

Malaria is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality nationwide, accounting for 45% (HMIS, 2004) of all outpatient attendances and 50% of cases among children under-five years of age, and responsible for nearly 4.3 million clinical cases and approximately 7,737 reported deaths per year, including up to 20% of maternal mortality and 40% of infant mortality rates. Malaria's economic impact in Zambia has not yet been quantified, but is likely substantial, with regional estimates suggesting a deficit of 1.5% GDP growth. It is a leading cause of school and workplace absenteeism and contributes to high household expenditures (about 25%).

### Key Targets and Interventions

The country's vision is 'a Malaria free Zambia,' the national strategy has two overall goals: 1) Obtain and maintain a 75% reduction in malaria incidence by 2012; 2) Obtain and maintain a 20% reduction in all-cause mortality in children under 5 years by 2012. Zambia deploys an integrated approach via:

- Spraying with insecticides (indoor residual spraying or IRS)
- Insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs)
- Lifesaving drugs - artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACTs)
- Treatment for pregnant women ("intermittent preventive treatment," or IPTp)
- Behavior Change Communication

### Results to Date

Three million long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) were distributed in Zambia in 2007. Any pregnant woman seeking prenatal care at a public health center now can obtain preventive medicines as well as LLINs for herself and any children under the age of five years living with her. Also, in 15 districts where indoor residual household spraying is targeted, the national goal of 85 percent coverage has already been exceeded. Solid advances in intervention coverage, coupled with significantly strengthened government capacity and infrastructure to plan and manage rapid malaria control scale-up, position Zambia for sustained success in tackling the disease<sup>1</sup>.

### Country partners and financing

The Government of the Republic of Zambia works closely with a number of partners. The key financing and implementation support partners include: the Ministry of Health; the Global Fund; the World Bank Malaria Booster Program; US Government through USAID and U.S. President's Malaria Initiative; MACEPA (with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation); JICA; the "SWAps partners"; Churches Health Association of Zambia (CHAZ); Zambia Malaria Foundation (ZMF) and their many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); the Malaria Consortium; RAPIDS (a consortium of NGOs); and others. The effective collaboration between partners is evidenced by the fact that all work is done within the context of the National Malaria Strategic Plan<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.path.org/files/MACEPA\\_zambia\\_prog\\_fs.pdf](http://www.path.org/files/MACEPA_zambia_prog_fs.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.path.org/files/MACEPA\\_zambia\\_prog\\_fs.pdf](http://www.path.org/files/MACEPA_zambia_prog_fs.pdf)