

MACEPA Regional Learning Community Fact Sheet

Establishing an innovative network to tackle malaria

PATH received a grant of \$29 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to broaden its work in sub-Saharan Africa. The new grant will allow the Malaria Control and Evaluation Partnership in Africa (MACEPA), a program at PATH, to provide technical assistance and partner with governments in as many as five central and southern African nations to rapidly scale up malaria prevention and control, resulting in a network called the Regional Learning Community (RLC).

MACEPA's innovative engagement of multiple countries will serve as a regional platform for shared learning and the delivery of critical technical resources in areas of planning, program management, monitoring and evaluation, and national advocacy. This effort will be based on the tools and methods MACEPA and Zambia have developed to support Zambia's ambitious effort to rapidly increase national malaria control programming. Leveraging that groundwork will enable countries to optimally apply their resources for malaria control and to collaborate to build programming approaches tailored for their national circumstances.

Quick answers to questions about the MACEPA and the RLC:

- ❖ **What is the focus of MACEPA's efforts in Zambia?** MACEPA is working in close collaboration with the government of Zambia and its other Roll Back Malaria partners to rapidly scale up access to proven malaria control interventions to prevent and treat the disease (insecticide-treated mosquito nets, insecticidal spraying in houses where nets are not used, and medicines). MACEPA is providing intensive technical, logistical, and financial support to apply, evaluate, and document the impact of Zambia's ambitious national plan.
- ❖ **What is the purpose of the RLC?** The RLC will leverage, apply, and adapt lessons learned in Zambia to other countries in the region, providing a forum for pioneering ideas, documenting and sharing challenges, and ultimately conveying national African success stories to countries, to the region, and to the world. MACEPA, through the RLC, will support each country as it contributes to the growing body of evidence surrounding the rapid scale-up of proven malaria control methods. The collective impact will be assessed in the context of lives saved, communities strengthened, and by African nations providing the lead edge in securing the resources necessary for sustained success.

- ❖ **How many countries will be in the RLC?** While it is anticipated that five countries will be invited to become RLC members, it is possible that more or fewer will be involved, depending upon each country's resource requirements.
- ❖ **How and when will countries be selected?** MACEPA is developing country selection criteria now; three countries will be selected in 2007 and two more will be selected in 2008. Countries will be selected in a way that will ensure that the RLC reflects a diverse range of country programming settings. Testing, applying, and adapting the scale-up methodology in various country settings will validate the development of a flexible and relevant scale-up model.
- ❖ **What will these countries gain from RLC involvement?** RLC countries will receive world-class technical expertise; access to and assistance using tools and methods tested in Zambia; and intensive assistance to governments focused on planning, implementing, and evaluating rapid scale-up strategies. Ultimately, RLC countries will have an established blueprint for achieving their ambitious goals and securing sustained impact and support.
- ❖ **What benefits does the RLC offer to countries not selected?** The RLC will generate collective knowledge about the impact that well-designed, implemented, evaluated, and documented scale-up efforts can have in a range of settings. Tools tested and validated in RLC countries will be made broadly available to other countries. Ultimately, the RLC will produce irrefutable evidence that scaling up malaria prevention and control measures saves lives, reduces illness, and increases educational and economic productivity—evidence upon which national, regional, and global audiences can make informed programmatic, policy, and investment decisions in support of the scale-up approach.

For more information contact:

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