

PFIZER Launches Five Year, Three Country Initiative for Malaria Treatment and Education - Mobilize Against Malaria

Pfizer Announces Key Partnerships with Leading International and Local Organizations to Benefit Patients in Kenya, Ghana and Senegal

NAIROBI - To help address critical gaps in malaria treatment and education, Pfizer today announced the launch of *Mobilize Against Malaria*. This three-country initiative comprising Kenya, Ghana and Senegal will be implemented over the course of five years (2007-2011). Pfizer has selected key international and local health experts to develop and implement public health interventions that engage and educate treatment providers and patients in high-risk areas for the effective treatment and management of malaria.

Through *Mobilize Against Malaria*, the company will provide grants, evaluation support and the technical expertise of Pfizer colleagues through the Pfizer Global Health Fellows (GHF) program to support the country initiatives.

Malaria is the leading cause of under-five mortality and constitutes 10% of the continent's overall disease burden. Each of Pfizer's programs in Kenya, Ghana and Senegal aims to reduce the rate of malaria morbidity and mortality by improving malaria symptom recognition, treatment, and referral through targeted training activities and complementary community mobilization campaigns to improve the quality of treatment and strengthen the demand for care. In each country, local partners have been selected to oversee program and evaluation efforts.

"Our partners are leaders in the malaria community and we are pleased to support their outstanding work," said Karl Lintel, Pfizer's Regional Director for Africa. "Pfizer is committed to sharing best practices and deploying its assets; research and development, medicines, funds, and its people to advance malaria control efforts and help save lives on the continent."

Country Interventions

Ghana - Strengthening the Informal Sector

In Ghana, the informal sector of Licensed Chemical Sellers (LCSs) includes over 7,000 retail outlets that are found in almost every community throughout the country. In rural areas with limited pharmacies and public health facilities, LCSs have become a major source of basic medicines for most Ghanaians. In partnership with Family Health International and Ghana Social Marketing Foundation, LCSs in selected districts will be comprehensively trained to promote effective malaria symptom recognition, proper treatment and referral of acute cases. The program will be evaluated by Health Partners Ghana.

Senegal - Building the Capacity of Community Health Workers

In Senegal, Intrahealth will train community health workers and nurses serving in Tambacounda Region and document the benefits of malaria treatment messaging in the health system. Additionally, a complementary patient messaging program will teach caretakers to recognize early symptoms of malaria, danger signs and the need to seek appropriate treatment within 24 hours.

Kenya - Investing in Antenatal Clinics

Population Services International (PSI) has been selected to promote symptom recognition and treatment-seeking behaviors at the household

level, with an emphasis on pregnant women and children under five, using antenatal clinics in western and coastal provinces as an entry point to these target groups. The program will advocate for a range of services through antenatal care clinics that are simple and are easy to incorporate within the existing health-care system. Great Lakes University will play an integral role in the training efforts. The program will be evaluated by KEMRI/Wellcome Trust led by preeminent malaria researcher, Dr. Robert Snow.

"Kenya is making tremendous strides in the war against malaria with an estimated 44% reduction in child mortality," said Dr. Willis Akhwale, head of malaria control at the Ministry of Health. "Despite our success, there remain challenges with reaching pregnant women. We are pleased with Pfizer's investment in antenatal clinics and their focus on increasing the number of health care providers trained in malaria case management and working together to ensure pregnant women seek prompt and effective treatment."

To lead the overall strategic effort and coordinate global monitoring and evaluation of the programs, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine will work in partnership with Pfizer and with local evaluation and implementation partners to share lessons learned and best practices with other organizations addressing the malaria epidemic.

"We appreciate Pfizer's emphasis on evaluation by promoting evidence-based approaches and supporting innovative, scalable programs" said Jayne Webster, Lecturer, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). "LSHTM is excited to be an evaluation partner for such an important program."

Pfizer's Malaria Platform

Pfizer's *Mobilize Against Malaria* initiative, highlighted at the 2006 Clinton Global Initiative, is just one aspect of Pfizer's overarching commitment to combat malaria. With its 25-year history in malaria, Pfizer's investment is threefold: the research and development of new therapies, making Pfizer's portfolio of medicines available through innovative commercial partnerships, and supporting efforts to increase patient awareness of and access to effective use of antimalarials in Ghana, Kenya and Senegal.

Pfizer is also collaborating with the World Health Organization and the Special Programme for Research in Tropical Diseases (WHO/TDR) to target malaria and other neglected diseases by giving TDR access to Pfizer's library of medicinal compounds and also bringing scientists from developing countries into Pfizer's labs for training in drug discovery techniques. While this is early-stage research, with effective new treatments still years downstream, it certainly improves the chances of identifying compounds that may lead to new drugs. It is this kind of public-private research collaboration that is vital to tracking health challenges in developing countries.