

19th April 2010, New York - With the end of the “Decade to Roll Back Malaria” in sight, 2010 is a milestone year for malaria control. There are now just over 257 days left to meet the challenge of the UN Secretary General to ensure universal coverage with all anti-malarial interventions. An update on malaria progress in Africa reveals that some countries have already begun to “count malaria out”, while others continue concerted efforts to reach the 2010 coverage targets and reduce malaria deaths by half.

The World Malaria Day 2010: Africa Update, is being launched today in New York by UNICEF and the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership. The second in a series of RBM Progress & Impact reports, the update highlights that progress in Africa is on an upward and accelerated trajectory – with the period from 2004 to 2009 showing a 10-fold increase in global malaria funding from external sources to nearly \$1.8 billion in 2009, a five-fold increase in global production of insecticide-treated nets to 150 million, and over a 30-fold increase in ACT procurement to 160 million.

There is growing evidence that this increase in coverage is leading to substantial reductions in malaria burden in a number of countries in Africa.

"Investment in malaria control is saving lives and reaping far-reaching benefits for countries. But without sustained and predictable funding, the significant contribution of malaria control towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals could be reversed," said Dr. Coll Seck, Executive Director, RBM Partnership. "Today, with approximately one third of the global investment needed, country programmes are saving a child's life every three minutes. This is very positive. We cannot afford to relax our efforts. "

Data presented in the report confirms that of the nearly 350 million insecticides treated nets needed to achieve universal coverage, nearly 200 million were received in African countries between 2007 and 2009, and countries have adopted more effective, but also more expensive, treatment strategies. However, the proportion of African children receiving an ACT is still very low and data on the use of diagnostics is still largely unavailable.

"With strong collaboration, great progress has been made in the battle against malaria," said Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director. "But more remains to be done as children and pregnant women are still dying of this preventable and treatable disease, especially in Africa."

Two thirds of all malaria control financing is generated by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, with the US Presidents Malaria Initiative (PMI), the World Bank and other bilateral donors making up the balance of external funding. Most of this funding is directed at Africa, where 90 percent of global malaria deaths occur. The report highlights that while total annual global funding reached approximately US\$2 billion by the end of 2009 malaria funding still falls short of the estimated US\$6 billion required annually by the Global Malaria Action Plan (GMAP) to ensure universal coverage of malaria control interventions.

Many countries are implementing large-scale efforts to further increase access to malaria

interventions by the end of the year. Nigeria plans to distribute 60 million nets by the end of 2010 and Tanzania is piloting an innovative public-private initiative to eliminate anti-malarial stock-outs. Progress made in malaria prevention and control is fragile and donors will make crucial decisions as to whether the health-related MDGs can be met at the MDG Summit in New York in September 2010.

ABOUT RBM

The Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership is the global framework for coordinated action against malaria. It provides a neutral platform for consensus-building and developing solutions to challenges in the implementation of malaria control interventions and strategies. RBM is a public-private partnership that also facilitates the incubation of new ideas and lends support to innovative approaches.

The Partnership promotes high-level political commitment and keeps malaria high on the global agenda by enabling, harmonizing and amplifying partner-driven advocacy initiatives. Founded by UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank and UNDP and strengthened by the expertise, resources and commitment of more than 500 Partner organizations, the Partnership secures policy guidance and financial and technical support for control efforts in countries and monitors progress towards universal goals.

Source: [Unicef](#)