



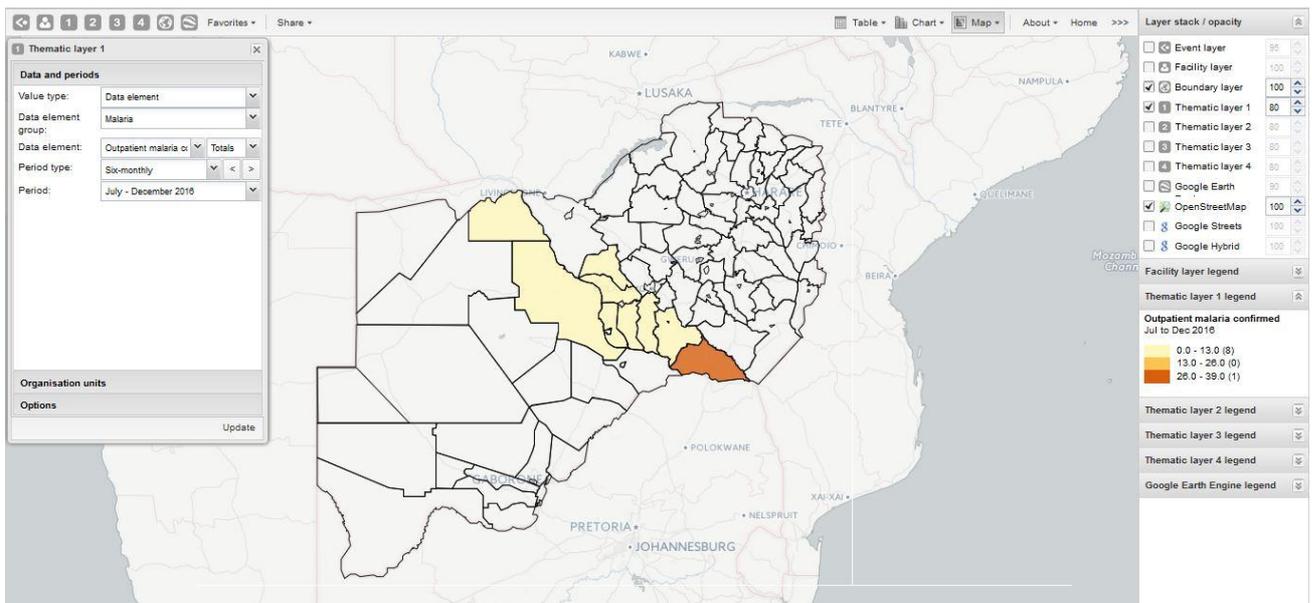
## ELIMINATION 8

ANGOLA • BOTSWANA • MOZAMBIQUE • NAMIBIA  
SOUTH AFRICA • SWAZILAND • ZAMBIA • ZIMBABWE

### E8 November e-Newsletter

In this last newsletter for 2016, we focus on a few key events, one of which marks a year's worth of efforts by the E8 Technical Committee towards a regional surveillance platform. We round up the year with an update on the November E8 Ministerial and Technical Committees, and the decision points which set the year for the regional malaria elimination efforts in 2017.

#### 1. Go Live! Phase 1 of the E8 Regional Surveillance Database System Launched:



On the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2016, the E8 Regional Surveillance Database was officially launched during the Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group Meeting, in Ezulwini Swaziland. This launch marked a key milestone towards developing a more comprehensive understanding of regional malaria transmission patterns, particularly along the borders of the E8 countries. The platform provides national malaria programs with timely data to monitor trends across their own borders, . Increasing the proportion of reports that are timeously detected and communicated to neighbouring control programmes across borders will enable a more rigorous approach to early warning, and rapid response.

Currently, data exchange is occurring with five of the E8 countries (Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe), while the remaining three will be connected in Phase 2 of the project in early 2017. Efforts are ongoing to continuously improve user's experience and utility of the database, ensuring that the most value is derived by member country malaria programmes, and inform in-country malaria strategies.

## 2. Technical Committee Meeting, October 31 – November 02, 2016



The bi-annual Technical Committee Meeting and Technical Working Group Meetings, were held in Ezulwini, Swaziland, from the 31<sup>st</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016. The committee as a collective tackled a number of complex issues that are integral to the E8's strategic direction, in an effort to better position the region to achieve greater impact. Some highlights from that meeting are as follows:

- The Diagnosis and Surveillance Technical Working Group discussed the terms of reference for institutions to support regional diagnosis. The terms of reference will be shared with country programmes for input, prior to the identification of suitable partners. Key components of the regional diagnosis programme comprise training of laboratory personnel including experts in malaria microscopy, strengthening quality assurance of malaria diagnosis and supporting countries to build capacity for specialised testing. Different models were presented and discussed for providing external quality assurance including proficiency testing of labs and personnel, and the establishment and running of a regional reference slide bank of malaria species.

- A research sub-committee of the Technical Committee will be commissioned, to develop potential collaborations and projects that investigate technical and operational issues. The research sub-committee will leverage on research institutions and professionals in the member states, and will lead work related to sentinel surveillance, as well as evaluation of the impact of the testing, treatment, and tracking interventions for migrant populations.
- The Secretariat was mandated to develop monthly monitoring and feedback bulletins, distilling key cross-border trends, and feeding the information back to the relevant country programmes. The bulletins will provide an analysis of the cross-border interface of frontline and second line countries, which the NMCPs will use in turn to develop appropriate response and collaboration with their neighbours.
- E8 will establish a technical working group (TWG) for Community Engagement and Sensitization, coordinating a regional response to community awareness and mobilization, particularly in border or migrant communities, in support of the malaria elimination goals.

### 3. Second SADC Ministers of Health Meeting

The second annual SADC Ministers of Health Meeting, held November 09, 2016, was this year hosted by the Kingdom of Swaziland (as the current Chair). The meeting was attended by Ministers or ministerial representatives from across the E8 member states.

The E8 2016 Annual Report was reviewed and endorsed. The report highlights the key milestones achieved in 2016, including the launching of the E8 surveillance database, and the roll out of the regional diagnosis strengthening programme, starting with WHO-supported training and certification of expert microscopists to support quality-assured diagnosis.

The Ministers also endorsed a new set of E8 Secretariat Board Members, who will provide oversight to the business processes of the E8 Secretariat, while also providing strategic guidance for resource mobilization, and organizational development. The new Board Members, who will assume their duties in February 2017 are listed below:

- Mr. Neville Isdell – Former Chairperson and CEO of Coca-Cola
- Ms. Margaret Zamzu – Financial and Strategic Risk Management Specialist
- Dr. Charles Paluku – Senior Malaria Technical Advisor, ALMA
- Professor Rajendra Maharaj – Director at Office of Malaria Research Council at the South Africa Medical Research Council
- Advocate Thabang Phatela – Advocate in Namibia
- Brig. Gen. Dr Kaka Mudambo – Regional Coordinator for EARN and SARN – RBM
- Mr. Simon Kunene (*ex-officio*) – Chair, E8 Technical Committee and Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health Swaziland
- Ms. Kudzai Makomva (*ex-officio*) – Director, E8 Secretariat

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### The Passing of Our Colleague, Mr Pedro Muianga

Shortly after returning from the meetings held in Swaziland, news arrived of the unfortunate passing of our dear colleague, Mr Pedro Muianga.

Pedro joined the E8 Secretariat in June 2016 as the Country Focal Person for Mozambique, working closely with the Mozambique National Malaria Control Program (NMCP). Pedro coordinated the regional and cross-border activities and responsibilities of Mozambique, and was actively working towards the establishment of the first malaria posts for testing and treatment of mobile and migrant populations along the MOSASWA border.

Pedro began his career in 2006 after completing studies in Microbiology. He worked for the ministry of health in various capacities, after which he joined the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI), where he coordinated provincial malaria interventions.

Pedro will be remembered by his family and community for his active participation in uplifting the lives of those in his community and encouraging and supporting those from less fortunate circumstances. His colleagues will equally remember him for his positive contribution to the team, and his bubbly, ever smiling personality.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

