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Swaziland Celebrates World Malaria Day with King Mswati III 49th Birthday

Namibia and Angola Ministers commemorate World Malaria Day in Angola, and then in Namibia

Zam-Zim MOU Signing, Enhancing Cross-Border Collaboration

E8 clinic launch in Mozambique, Commemorating World Malaria Day

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Malaria Vaccine Break-Through
As the Chair of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance, His Majesty, King Mswati III of Swaziland celebrated his 49th birthday jointly with World Malaria Day commemorations in the Kingdom. This event was graced by various diplomats, heads of state, ALMA Executive Secretary Joy Phumaphi, and Elimination8 Ambassador, Dr. Richard Kamwi.

In his key note address to the nation, King Mswati III highlighted that “it is important to us as a nation to put an end to malaria, and if we succeed in putting an end to malaria, Africa will follow suit in ending malaria... and in doing so follow the theme for this year of End Malaria for Good. This should encourage us to continue to push for the end of malaria”.

He further acknowledged the support of various stakeholders in the fight against malaria, committing Swaziland to eliminating malaria, and to serving as a model for other African countries.
Two of the E8 member states - Zambia and Zimbabwe - have agreed to strengthen cross border collaboration and coordination in the implementation of malaria elimination interventions along their shared borders. The two countries’ Ministers of Health both committed to the elimination of malaria by 2030 during the signing ceremony for the Zambia – Zimbabwe Cross Border Malaria Initiative Agreement held on 27th April 2017 at Kingdom Hotel in Victoria Falls Town in Zimbabwe. The framework agreement and activities signed to in the memorandum build on E8 strategies for cross-border collaboration, enhancing partnership at the bilateral level.

Zimbabwean Minister of Health and Child Care, Dr. David Parirenyatwa in his address to the gathering stressed the need for the two countries to synchronize activities through joint implementation of malaria control and elimination interventions.

Zambia’s Minister of Health Dr. Chitalu Chilufya, representing the Government of the Republic of Zambia noted that the Zambian Government recognizes the primacy of partnering with its respective border communities as this was critical to the success in eliminating malaria.
The Ministers of Namibia and Angola, who have been engaging to enhance their cross-border collaboration in malaria control commemorated World Malaria Day in 2 countries. The commemorations began in Santa Clara, Angola, and then proceeded to Omafo, Namibia. Both ministers reminisced on the historical cross-border collaboration of the two countries that dates back to pre-independence days, evoking the same collaboration in fighting malaria. They committed to policy harmonization, including in vector control along their bordering districts, with the aim of accelerating Namibia’s progress to elimination, and the subsequent transition to pre-elimination in Angola, beginning in the south.

Angola simultaneously launched an unprecedented universal distribution of long-lasting insecticide treated nets (LLINs), which will cover the entire population, with the Government of Angola committing 10million nets to the exercise, with additional support from other funding partners.
Moamba, Mozambique, is a transit point for mobile and migrant populations, who cross the country’s borders in search of economic and other opportunities. Access to care for migrant populations is a key strategy for reducing cross-border malaria transmission, and advancing progress towards a SADC free of malaria.

Dr. Richard Kamwi, E8 Ambassador, officiated the opening of one of the E8 malaria posts in Moamba, which has been deployed in this strategic area to provide early access to testing and treatment, not just for people on the move, but for residents of this community as well. The post provides malaria services, along with a package of primary health care services.

Community leaders, government officials and community members praised this initiative, sighting how it will transform many lives, and most importantly prevent further loss of lives, especially amongst young children and pregnant women.
With over 200 million new cases of malaria and 429,000 deaths reported annually globally, the announcement of a potential malaria vaccine has been highly welcomed. Through a collaborative effort between GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNITAID, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and GSK, the roll out of this pilot vaccine in 3 African countries, Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, could see the number of cases and deaths decline dramatically.

The World Health Organization has tasked itself with rolling out the vaccine across the 3 countries, and “combined with existing malaria interventions, such a vaccine would have the potential to save tens of thousands of lives in Africa”, says Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. The program is scheduled to begin in 2018, with each country designing its own roll-out plan.

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