New US$14.2 million Global Fund Grant Awarded to Elimination B

WINDELS, NAMIBIA

The Elimination B Initiative has been awarded a new three-year grant for US$14.2 million from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in further efforts to eliminate malaria across southern Africa by 2030. Renewed funding will allow the eight-country initiative to build on already established strategies, accelerating country efforts and addressing shared challenges.

Since 2009, the Elimination B Initiative has brought malaria-endemic countries together to collaborate across national borders to fight malaria and track progress towards elimination. It has become an important regional hub for fostering knowledge sharing, accountability, collective strategies and action, and efficiency through scale. The B Initiative is a regional platform for addressing malaria, which is often influenced by factors outside national borders, and is a strategic tool for countries to contribute to regional and continental efforts.

In the coming years, essential strategies and actions will include: increased surveillance and malaria diagnostics; strengthening health workforce capacity; enhancing health system infrastructure, including health centers and laboratories; and improved access to diagnostics and treatment.

The announcement of renewed funding follows several years of robust progress, including the launch and operation of 51 border health clinics to test and treat malaria, as well as strengthened access to primary health care across the shared border line. Thirteen surveillance units were also established in the eight target countries, ramping up country efforts to conduct active case detection and investigation. Support from the Global Fund has been instrumental in the success of the B Initiative, beginning with awarding the first regional malaria elimination grant of US$17.6 million towards elimination activities from 2015 – 2016.

The signing ceremony for the new Global Fund grant was held in Harare, Zimbabwe on 21 March 2019, and was attended by Mark Edington, Head of the Global Fund’s Grant Management Division, Dr. Nchito Richard Kazembe, Elimination B Director, and Dr. Ndabanigarai Moyo, Zimbabwe’s Minister of Health and Child Care and Chair of the Elimination B Initiative. The E B Initiative is a great example of collaboration and the type that the Global Fund is proud to support,” said Mark Edington. “This grant we are signing today will allow the initiative to continue its work in 2019 and until 2021. To address shared challenges across the countries like malaria parasite movement, access to health services in border areas, quality assurance for diagnostics, and alignment of investment priorities.”

Guided by the E B Regional Acceleration Plan 2016 – 2020, the E B is now on an even more aggressive path towards achieving malaria elimination, and will allocate the new funding of US$14.2 million towards seven key target areas which will be implemented in coordination with national malaria programs: Elimination Malaria Workforce, Community Malaria Surveillance, Cross-border Region Strategic Priority Areas, Regional Surveillance, Entomological Surveillance, Support to Prevention and Response, and Advocacy.

Nkhoti Dr Moyo: “The focus of the new grant activities is catastrophic, regional in nature, and structured to give us high impact, including the continuation of health posts, epidemiological preparedness and response capacity building through maintaining The Situation Room platform, vector control capacity building, supporting Angola with indoor residual spraying and supply of bed nets, and conducting of regional coordination meetings. Renewed funding allows us to intensify efforts towards our ultimate goal of a malaria-free southern Africa.”

Attendees during the grant signing ceremony, Harare, Zimbabwe

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