



MALARIA DAY IN THE AMERICAS 2009:

Guidelines for Commemoration, Communications, and Advocacy

I. Background

In September 2005, the 46th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) adopted Resolution [CD46.R13](#) which highlighted, among other things, the need to establish policies and operational plans to achieve a reduction of the malaria burden by at least 50% by 2010 and 75% by 2015; and to designate a Malaria Control Day in the Americas on a selected annual date, to recognize past and current efforts to prevent and control malaria, promote awareness, and monitor progress. Similarly, in May 2007, the 60th World Health Assembly passed resolution [WHA60.18](#): “Malaria, including a proposal for establishment of *World Malaria Day*” which provides, among other things, that: “*World Malaria Day* shall be commemorated annually on 25 April or on such other day or days as individual members may decide ...” Guyana, which has been commemorating a *National Malaria Day* since 2003, proposed the date for the Americas to be 6 November, which coincides with the day when the presence of malaria parasites in the blood of patients with febrile symptoms was first observed by Charles Louis Alphonse Lavéran in 1880. With these precedents, the 27th Pan American Sanitary Conference held in Washington DC from 1–5 October 2007 resolved that **November 6** will henceforth be observed annually as ***Malaria Day in the Americas***. (*Full text of CSP27.R11 is available through <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/csp/csp27.r11-e.pdf>*)

Currently on its third year of commemoration, Malaria Day in the Americas is regarded as an important opportunity and mechanism for countries of the Region to engage various stakeholders in aggressively fighting malaria. In June 2008, the PAHO Executive Committee emphasized the need to build upon the momentum of Malaria Day in the Americas and for peoples of the Region to become strong and involved advocates against the disease.

II. Malaria Day in the Americas: Concept and Objectives

The Regional Strategic Plan for Malaria in the Americas 2006–2010 highlights communications and advocacy as among the key issues in malaria that needed increased emphasis in the Region. As PAHO implements the strategic plan, the Media Communications, Publications and Advocacy Plan for Malaria in the

Americas was developed and consolidated in May 2006. An important element of the plan is the commemoration of *Malaria Day* in the countries of the Americas which campaigns for increased advocacy and commitment among stakeholders and draws communities and the general population into concrete actions that contribute to the achievement of goals and targets in all levels – global, regional, country, and community.

Malaria Day in the Americas which will be observed for the third time on **6 November 2009** is envisioned to be the platform upon which countries of the Region can engage in a year-round aggressive campaign against the disease. Specifically, *Malaria Day in the Americas* seeks to attain the following objectives:

- Improve the communication process and extension of advocacy work to all stakeholders and target audiences.
- Enhance visibility/interest on Malaria in the Region of Americas and the global scourge that the disease brings to peoples of the world.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the key issues among target audience/population.
- Catalyze change of attitudes and modification of behaviors.
- Generate advocacy/support from the public, policy makers, clients and strategic partners.
- Encourage increased and enduring support to efforts against malaria, including the elimination of local transmission in areas where such is feasible.

Partners and malaria stakeholders in the Region are encouraged to consider this concept and objectives in the commemoration of *Malaria Day in the Americas 2009*.

Theme for Malaria Day in the Americas 2009
Counting Malaria Out towards the 2010 Targets and the UN Millennium Development Goals
(Adapted from World Malaria Day 2009 Messages consolidated by the Roll Back Malaria Initiative)

On the occasion of World Malaria Day 2009, Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partners have agreed to use the following key messages in the joint effort to keep malaria high on the international development agenda. Under the theme of "Counting malaria out", the Partnership launches a two-year campaign to intensify global efforts to:

- Implement the Global Malaria Action Plan (GMAP)
- Reach the first important malaria milestone by 2010
- Strengthen health systems in endemic countries for the long-term goals of sustained control and disease elimination.

In addition, the Region of the Americas continues to pursue its commitment to global targets beyond 2010, including the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), towards the long term objective of stopping local malaria transmission in

areas where such is deemed possible. Malaria is among the diseases identified as feasible to be eliminated in a number of countries in the Region by the Pan American Health Organization in “CD49/9: Elimination of Neglected Diseases and other Poverty-Related Infections” (*Full text of CD49/9 is available through: http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1640&Itemid=1425&lang=en*)

III. Key Figures

(Coverage and cost estimates are based on the Global Malaria Action Plan)

To achieve universal coverage by 2010, the GMAP requires the following interventions:

- More than 700 million insecticide-treated bed nets – half of those in Africa
- More than 200 million of doses of effective treatment
- Indoor spraying for around 200 million homes annually
- Approximately 1.5 billion diagnostic tests annually

To reach universal coverage with appropriate interventions by 2010 in the Americas:

- 17 million LLINs need to be in place in 2010;
- 5 million of households need to be sprayed with insecticides;
- 40 million parasitological diagnostics are needed to confirm suspected malaria fever cases; and
- 2.7 million first-line treatments with chloroquine / primaquine and ACTs are needed.

By 2010, through targeting universal coverage:

- Global malaria cases are reduced by 50% of the 2000 levels: 175-250 million cases annually and less than 500,000 deaths annually from malaria.
- Global malaria deaths are reduced by 50% from 2000 levels.

In the Americas, achievement of the target for 2010 and the malaria-specific UN MDG for 2015 means:

- Decreasing annual malaria cases from approximately 1.15 million in the year 2000 to 575,000 by 2010 (50% reduction) and to 287,000 by 2015 (additional 25% reduction)
- Reducing malaria deaths from 348 in the year 2000 to less than 174 (50% reduction) and to less than 87 (additional 25% reduction)

Globally and in the Americas,

- Effective, long-term malaria control is inextricably linked to the strength of health systems. Strong health systems can deliver effective safe, high-quality interventions when and where they are needed and assure access to reliable health information and effective disease surveillance. At the same time, integrating malaria treatment, prevention and surveillance into existing health programs and activities in endemic countries will ensure that funding earmarked for malaria control contributes to the development, expansion and continuous improvement of national health systems.

- The international community has recognized the importance of health systems strengthening in combating the major poverty-related diseases in the poorest countries of the world.

Success stories in the Americas (between 2000 and 2008) include...

- 50.4% reduction of malaria cases in the region
- Approximately 77% reduction in malaria mortality
- 7 countries with >75% reduction in annual malaria cases which indicates achievement of malaria UN MDG for 2015
- 5 countries with 50% to <75% reduction in annual malaria cases which indicates achievement of RBM targets for 2010
- 6 countries with <50% decrease in annual malaria cases indicating stronger malaria control status
- At least 4 countries are currently on pre-elimination status and an additional 5 other countries are working towards malaria elimination

(Source: *Malaria Country Reports to PAHO/WHO-AMRO for 2008*)

Investment needed worldwide to achieve these global goals:

- \$5.3 billion USD in 2009
- \$6.2 billion USD in 2010
- \$5 billion USD annually from 2011 to 2020 to sustain progress
- \$1 billion USD annually for research and development of new prevention and treatment tools

In the Americas, the investment needed for malaria control and elimination are:

- \$227 million USD in 2009
- \$261 million USD in 2010
- \$219 to 226 million USD annually from 2011 to 2020 to sustain progress
- \$120 million USD annually by 2025 if current trends are sustained

IV. Regional and National Events for Malaria Day in the Americas: Examples from 2007 and 2008

In 2007 and 2008, simultaneous activities were held in various countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela which include various exhibits, contests, health promotion activities, discussion forums, recognition ceremonies, and intensive multi-media campaign.

In Washington DC, a scientific session entitled “Combating Malaria: What Works?” was held during the 2007 American Public Health Association Annual Conference where the experience of the Region on malaria in the Amazon was featured and discussed. In 2008, PAHO coordinated the “Malaria in the Americas Forum: Overcoming the Challenges of a Borderless Disease”, participated in by representatives from various global, regional, and national stakeholders in malaria, focusing on key issues that include climate change and malaria; borders and health diplomacy; and lessons learned and future needs.

During the malaria day activities in 2008, PAHO launched the search for the Malaria Champions of the Americas, to identify, celebrate, and provide avenues to emulate best practices and success stories in malaria prevention and control. The awarding ceremony is a key event in the commemoration of the 2009 Malaria Day in the Americas at the PAHO headquarters in Washington DC.

Partners and stakeholders in the countries and communities are enjoined to hold similar events/efforts on 6 November 2009 or any time during the year. It is emphasized that while the commemoration is set annually on the 6th of November, advocacy efforts will be carried out throughout the year.

The Region envisions having stronger and more consolidated set of events for the annual commemoration in 2009. It is hoped that partners and stakeholders in all levels of work will also have increased and stronger participation in planning and commemorating *Malaria Day in the Americas* in the coming years. While a region-wide theme and activities are advocated, countries are encouraged to use the annual commemoration as platform to share a message and engage in activities that directly address national realities and specificities. Partners are enjoined to inform the PAHO Regional Malaria Program of specific activities scheduled in the countries for the 2009 Malaria Day in the Americas so that the information can be disseminated accordingly.

Specific country activities and events for Malaria Day in the Americas 2009 will be announced to the public in advance.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Keith H. Carter
Regional Advisor on Malaria
Prevention and Control of Communicable
Diseases
Health Surveillance and Disease
Prevention and Control
Pan American Health Organization
525 23rd St. NW Washington DC 20037-
2895
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3843
Fax +1 (202) 974-3331
E-mail: carterke@paho.org

Mrs. Lourdes Barrios
Program Officer
Prevention and Control of Communicable
Diseases
Health Surveillance and Disease
Prevention and Control
Pan American Health Organization
525 23rd St. NW Washington DC 20037-
2895
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3875
Fax +1 (202) 974-3331
E-mail: barriosl@paho.org

Dr. Rainier P. Escalada
Technical Officer
Prevention and Control of Communicable
Diseases
Health Surveillance and Disease
Prevention and Control
Pan American Health Organization
525 23rd St. NW Washington DC 20037-
2895
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3532
Fax +1 (202) 974-3331
E-mail: escaladr@paho.org

Ms. Maria Claire
Administrative Assistant
Prevention and Control of Communicable
Diseases
Health Surveillance and Disease
Prevention and Control
Pan American Health Organization
525 23rd St. NW Washington DC 20037-
2895
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3381
Fax +1 (202) 974-3331
E-mail: clairema@paho.org