

**Embargo until Monday 17 Oct. 2011**  
**12h Seattle PST**  
**20h London BST**  
**21h Geneva CET**

## Nearly a third of all malaria affected countries on course for elimination over the next decade

*Roll Back Malaria report launched at Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Forum, Seattle*

**Seattle, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2011** – A new report released by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) just prior to the opening of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Malaria Forum in Seattle, reveals that an increasing number of countries are setting their sights on eliminating malaria, with three countries already certified as malaria-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the last 4 years.

Authored by the WHO's Global Malaria Program, with data collected from all geographical regions, the latest report in the RBM Progress & Impact series, *Eliminating Malaria, Learning from the Past, Looking Ahead*, identifies the current trend towards ending malaria, with 7 countries having recently eliminated malaria and working to prevent re-introduction, and another 10 countries are currently monitoring transmission to arrive at zero malaria cases. The report further describes nine countries - out of a total of 108 malaria endemic countries and territories - which are preparing to move towards nationwide elimination of malaria.

Addressing a media roundtable at the Gates Malaria Forum, Dr Robert Newman, Director of the Global Malaria Program of WHO stated, "the world has made remarkable progress with malaria control. Better diagnostic testing and surveillance has provided a clearer picture of where we are on the ground - and has shown that there are countries eliminating malaria in all endemic regions of the world. WHO continually monitors this progress and ensures that these countries are fully supported in their efforts to be malaria-free."

Malaria elimination - the deliberate interruption of mosquito-borne malaria transmission resulting in zero incidence of infection in a defined geographical area - was first attempted at large scale during the Global Malaria Eradication Program from 1955 to 1972. During this 17-year period, twenty countries were certified by WHO as malaria-free. However, this number fell to only 4 countries in the 30 years which followed, due to a massive reduction in efforts to control the disease.

Today there are still an estimated 781 000 deaths annually from malaria, a disease which is entirely preventable and treatable. Malaria affects 40% of the world's population and hinders social and economic development among the poorest communities. Over the last decade, the rapid scale-up of a variety of malaria control interventions has saved an estimated 1.1 million lives in Africa alone, and reduced deaths from malaria by 38%. This momentum and the results achieved, have encouraged many countries to consider the next steps towards malaria elimination.

"The extraordinary commitment, the concomitant financing, and the coordination of efforts to realize malaria targets over the last ten years have resulted in a situation today where we could see 10 more countries reaching a malaria-free status in a relatively short time. This will save many many more lives," said Professor Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Executive Director of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership.

Revising its objectives upwards in the lead up to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership has identified eliminating malaria in 8 to 10 new countries, including all countries in the WHO European Region, as one of its new, ambitious targets. By continuing the push for universal coverage with malaria control tools, including insecticide treated nets, indoor residual spraying, diagnostic testing, and effective malaria treatments - countries will be able to reduce malaria transmission dramatically.

"Eliminating malaria requires strong national leadership, commitment to quality programming, and highly effective surveillance systems that can rapidly detect and contain transmission" stated Dr Richard Steketee, Science Director of the Malaria Control and Evaluation Partnership in Africa (MACEPA) at PATH. "The global community must commit to sustained and predictable support to help move those ready countries across the elimination threshold."

This week RBM Partners are gathering at the second Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Malaria Forum to share ideas and strategies around the goal of malaria elimination - and eventual eradication.

"In 2011, with the highly effective interventions we have available, no one should die from malaria" continued Dr Robert Newman. "If we can achieve universal access to and utilization of these measures, while making the required investments in people and health systems, as well as in the research required to develop tomorrow's transformative tools, then the country and regional goals of malaria elimination, and the global goal of eradicating this ancient scourge, *will* become a reality."

---

**Media Contacts:**    **RBM Secretariat**  
Pru Smith - Geneva  
Mobile: +41 79 477 1744  
Direct: +41 22 791 4586  
Email: [smithp@who.int](mailto:smithp@who.int)

**PATH**  
Meg De Ronghe - Seattle  
Direct: +206-724-8235  
Email: [mderonghe@path.org](mailto:mderonghe@path.org)

*The Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) is the global framework for coordinated action against malaria. Founded in 1998 by UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank and strengthened by the expertise, resources and commitment of more than 500 partner organizations, RBM is a public-private partnership that facilitates the incubation of new ideas, lends support to innovative approaches, promotes high-level political commitment and keeps malaria high on the global agenda by enabling, harmonizing and amplifying partner-driven advocacy initiatives. RBM secures policy guidance and financial and technical support for control efforts in countries and monitors progress towards universal goals. The RBM Secretariat is hosted at WHO in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, please visit: <http://www.rollbackmalaria.org>*

*The Malaria Control and Evaluation Partnership in Africa (MACEPA) a program at PATH, works with global partners to eliminate malaria in Africa. For more information, please visit: <http://www.path.org/projects/macepa.php>*

*The WHO Global Malaria Programme (GMP) coordinates WHO's global malaria efforts, convening experts to execute its core functions with regard to malaria prevention, control and elimination, which are to: 1) set, communicate and promote the adoption of evidence-based norms, standards, policies and guidelines; 2) keep independent score of global progress; 3) develop approaches for capacity-building, systems strengthening and surveillance; and 4) identify threats to malaria control and elimination as well as new opportunities for action. For more information, please visit: <http://www.who.int/malaria/en/index.html>*