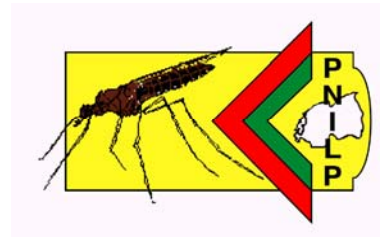




MINISTRE DE LA SANTE

PROGRAMME NATIONAL INTEGRE DE LUTTE CONTRE LE PALUDISME (PNILP)



PRESS RELEASE

Rwanda Hosts the 2007 Africa Malaria Day Regional Commemorative Event

KIGALI, Rwanda, 23 April, 2007 – Rwanda is to host Africa Malaria Day (AMD) 2007, a regional commemorative event on 25 April, with support from national and international Roll Back Malaria (RBM) partners. The Rwandan Ministry of Health is spearheading activities to mark AMD. This year's focus is "Leadership and Partnership for Results," and the theme is "Free Africa from Malaria Now!"

Representatives from neighbouring states, international and national NGOs, the diplomatic community, RBM Secretariat and UN organizations have been invited to Rwanda for this high level event. Senior government officials in the country and outside will participate in the official ceremony.

Rwanda was selected as host since it has strengthened its fight against malaria and demonstrates the potential to achieve the 2000 Abuja targets with the rapid scale up of insecticide treated nets (ITNs) and artemisinin combination therapy (ACTs) in the public sector, and by introducing new home-based management of malaria (HMM) activities using ACTs at the community level and also be a way to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Several activities are planned, culminating with the launch of AMD on 25 April 2007. A week-long malaria awareness campaign will take place in all provinces from 19 – 25 April, reaching out to an estimated 360 villages in the target areas of 36 health centers nationwide with a combined media and information and education communication approach. During this high profile event, The Rwandan Ministry of Health will officially launch an integrated package of child survival interventions combining malaria prevention and prompt malaria treatment in the community.

A pre-packaged ACT, *Primo*, will be launched at the official ceremony on 25 April and Long Lasting nets will also be launched for free distribution during the routine measles vaccination .

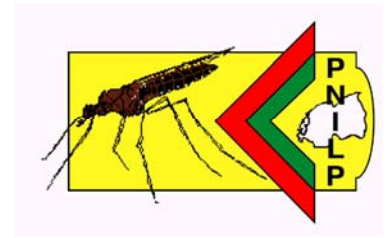
Rwanda's major successes and milestones in malaria control since the Declaration of the Abuja targets:

1. Malaria case fatality rate has decreased by half from 4.6 % in 2005 to 2 % in 2006.
2. Rwanda continues to witness increasing malaria support from the Global Fund, PMI, UN organizations.



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3. 1.4 million Long lasting insecticide-treated nets (LLINs) were distributed to the children of Rwanda during a one-week measles vaccination campaign, bringing the rate of coverage from 17.4 % in 2005 to 91 % in 2006 among children under 5.
4. ACTs were introduced for distribution through public, private and community level channels.
5. National intermittent presumptive treatment (IPT) coverage in pregnant women has increased to more than 63 % for the second dose.

Malaria is a global emergency that affects mostly poor women and children, one of whom dies of malaria every 30 seconds in Africa:

- Malaria is the leading cause of death for children under 5 in Africa;
- More than 1 million of the 350-500 million cases of malaria each year result in death;
- Pregnant women and their unborn children are at greatest risk of malaria;
- Malaria related illness and mortality costs Africa US \$12 billion per year.

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