Johns Hopkins partners with CECAFA to kick-out Malaria

By Jack Kwemba in Kampala

Just like HIV (Aids) malaria kills and its victims cut across the human race with children being the most exposed.

Governments all over the world have pumped billions in helping eradicate malaria but the fight is still far from over since the disease has turned out to be deadlier than HIV which requires all methods to eradicate it.

As a way of helping kick malaria out of Africa, Johns Hopkins has partnered with regional soccer governing body CECAFA to kick-out malaria through United Against Malaria campaign which has proved to be effective.

Speaking at Nambole Stadium in Kampala during the ongoing CECAFA Tusker Cup, Kenneth Mulondo who is the Team Leader of Johns Hopkins in Uganda said unless the world unites against malaria the disease can wipe out mankind faster than HIV.

“A lot of resources have always been directed in fighting the HIV which is considered a deadly disease but what I can tell you is that malaria is deadlier than HIV since it targets both children and adults which requires that the world unites against it and uses all means to combat the disease,” said Mulondo.

He stated that since the campaign to unite against malaria started during 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa they have made tremendous progress and they are still appealing for more support to enable them fight the disease not only in Africa but the world over. He said they decided to use football as their main vehicle to reach out to a wider audience and their three major messages is to appeal to donor community to support the campaign, call upon African leaders to join in the campaign and the citizens of the African continent to utilize nets and use medicine in the fight against malaria.

“We are very grateful to CECAFA with whom we have worked for two years having started in Tanzania last year and the 12 members of the regional body have disseminated the message in uniting against malaria which is a very positive development for us,” he said. Apart from CECAFA whose President Leodgar Tenga of Tanzania and Secretary General Nicholas Musonye of Kenya have been the leading lights in the fight against malaria in the region, Mulondo said the fight against the dreaded disease has so far been successful because of several partners.

“I wish to thank MTN because they have been involved in the campaigns by way of sending out text messages, Rwenzori mineral water have also been supportive by branding their bottles with United Against Malaria while Stanchart Bank, Coca-Cola, schools and Stanbic Bank have also been in the forefront in the fight against malaria,” said Mulondo.

He pointed out that they have been distributing mosquito nets during tournaments as part of the campaigns and one of the challenges they are facing is that people don’t view malaria as a deadly disease yet it is deadlier than HIV and it requires the world to unite against it.

“Malaria is bigger than HIV and we must give it more focus and unite in fighting it since the world is under great threat from the disease and football being a universal language we are looking at partners like FIFA, CAF and CECAFA amongst others to partner with us in this war which we must strive to win at all costs,” said Mulondo.

CECAFA yet to pick 2013 hosts

By Jack Kwemba

Regional soccer governing body CECAFA has embarked on identifying the country which will host next year’s CECAFA Tusker Cup whose 2012 edition is currently underway at Nambole Stadium in Kampala.

Contrary to media reports attributed to a top official of Football Kenya Federation that Kenya has been picked to host the tournament next year, CECAFA has made it clear that they are yet to settle on a host country.

Putting the record straight while addressing journalists from the region on the sidelines on Day 3 matches at Nambole Stadium on Monday, CECAFA Secretary General Nicholas Musonye said the search for next year’s host is still in progress.

“Our attention has been drawn to media reports that Kenya will play host to next year’s edition of CECAFA Tusker Cup but that is far from it since the Congress never named next year’s host and we are still looking for a host country and any CECAFA member is free to place her bid to host the tournament,” Musonye said.

He revealed that so far Rwanda and Kenya has shown interest and if the race goes to the wire in that no other countries come forward to place their bids, CECAFA will decide who between Rwanda and Kenya will be awarded hosting rights. “Just like any other tournament organized by FIFA and CAF, we put a lot of things into consideration before awarding hosting rights among them preparedness in terms of infrastructure, security, facilities and financial ability on the part of a hosting country and this is where a host country must convince CECAFA that it has a sponsor for the tournament,” he said.

The CECAFA boss called on the media to report objectively and avoid situations where their stories create confusion and animosity between CECAFA and her member countries adding that much as they respect freedom of the press, the press should use that freedom to support CECAFA by observing journalistic ethics and reporting fairly.

Turning on the ongoing tournament, Musonye said he was so grateful to all those who have supported them and singled out title sponsors East Africa Breweries for their massive support.

“East African Breweries have always been there for us and I wish to point out that we are very grateful for their continued support and we shall continue working together with them in all our future tournaments,” Musonye said.

The regional soccer chief also thanked Johns Hopkins Bloomberg for their partnership through United Against Malaria which has helped create awareness in fighting the dreaded disease through football.