



MALARIA DAY IN THE AMERICAS 2011:

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*** ([CSP27.R11](#)).

Currently on its fifth 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 [Strategy and Plan of Action for Malaria in the Americas 2011 – 2015](#), recently approved by the 51st PAHO Directing Council (September 2011), highlights communications and advocacy as among the key components of malaria efforts in the Region. An important element of these efforts 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 fifth time on **6 November 2011** 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 2011*.

Theme for Malaria Day in the Americas 2011

The Path to Sustained Impact and Elimination

(Adapted from World Malaria Day 2011 Theme)

On the occasion of World Malaria Day 2011, and in keeping with this consolidated effort by the global malaria community to highlight the reported successes and the remaining challenges in malaria control today, and to maximize the impact of substantial investments for this preventable and treatable disease, Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partners have agreed to use the theme: “Achieving Progress and Impact”.

As adaptation to the specific situation and context in the Region, the theme for Malaria Day in the Americas 2011 is: **“The Path to Sustained Impact and Elimination”**

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”](#)

Key Messages for 2011

- The Region of the Americas is in an important period in its continuing battle against malaria; target reductions in malaria burden have been achieved but needs to be sustained towards potential elimination of local transmission
- Malaria can and will bite us back if we don't seize the opportunity to really stop it in areas where we can, when we can.
- Threats evolve much faster and more dynamic than we think (e.g. artemisinin resistance, insecticide resistance, weakened surveillance and programs due to decreased burden)
- Challenges in malaria prevention, control, and elimination are evolving and so must efforts and partnerships against the disease

- Development and implementation of programs depend on commitments that translate to actual resources that are invested in appropriate institutions, programs, and efforts

III. Key Figures

(Coverage and cost estimates are based on the Global Malaria Action Plan, 2008)

Success stories in the Americas (between 2000 and 2009), resulting from the implementation of best practices and collaboration include...

- 52% reduction of malaria cases in the region
- Approximately 69% reduction in malaria mortality
- 9 countries with >75% reduction in annual malaria cases which indicates achievement of malaria UN MDG for 2015
- 4 countries with 50% to <75% reduction in annual malaria cases which indicates achievement of RBM targets for 2010
- 5 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, 2009*)

Through the [Strategy and Plan of Action for Malaria in the Americas 2011 – 2015](#), the Region of the Americas affirms commitment to the following:

- Further reduction of malaria morbidity by 75%, as called for by WHA58.2 (2005).
- Further reduction of malaria-related deaths by 25%.
- Implementation of efforts to eliminate malaria in areas deemed feasible (particularly Mesoamerica and the Southern Cone).
- Reversal of the trend in countries that saw an increased number of malaria cases between 2000 and 2010
- Prevention of the reintroduction of malaria endemicity in countries that have been declared malaria-free

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

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 to 2010

In 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, simultaneous activities were held in various countries such as Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela which include various exhibits, contests, health promotion activities, discussion forums, recognition ceremonies, and intensive multi-media campaign.

During the past four years, important events were held in Washington DC to commemorate Malaria Day in the Americas. These include:

- (2007) Scientific session entitled “Combating Malaria: What Works?” held during the American Public Health Association Annual Conference where the experience of the Region on malaria in the Amazon was featured and discussed.
- (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.
- (2009) The awarding ceremony for the Malaria Champions of the Americas is a key event in the commemoration of the 2009 Malaria Day in the Americas at the PAHO headquarters in Washington DC, held alongside the “Malaria in the Americas Forum: Counting Malaria Out towards the 2010 Targets and the UN Millennium Development Goals”. Featured topics in the forum include updates on the status of malaria in the Region; malaria and mobile populations; and lessons learnt during the eradication era and their possible application to malaria elimination in the Americas
- (2010) Three new Malaria Champions of the Americas were honored during the commemoration of the 2010 Malaria Day in the Americas at the PAHO headquarters in Washington DC. Also held was the Malaria in the Americas Forum that featured the work of the Amazon Malaria Initiative / Amazon Network for the Surveillance of Anti-malarial Drug Resistance (AMI/RAVREDA)

Since November 6th falls on a Sunday this year, the Regional event in Washington DC will be held on November 8th, 2011 (Tuesday). The top finalists for the 2011 Malaria Champions of the Americas Award will be honored in a ceremony that celebrates people and organizations who contributed most this year to containing this disease that annually afflicts more than half a million people in the region and places the health of millions more are at risk. The 2011 Malaria in the Americas Forum will also feature discussions on two important topics:

- Integration of Malaria Programs in the Health Systems
- Malaria Elimination: Global Perspectives and Prospects in the Americas

Partners and stakeholders in the countries and communities are enjoined to hold similar events/efforts on Nov. 6, 2011 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 2011. 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 2011 Malaria Day in the Americas so that the information can be disseminated accordingly.

Specific country activities and events for Malaria Day in the Americas 2011 will be announced to the public in advance.

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