

MalariaCare—universal diagnosis and treatment to improve maternal and child health

The MalariaCare partnership, a five-year effort funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) under the US President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI), aims to scale up high-quality diagnosis and treatment services for malaria and other life-threatening, febrile illnesses. The project works in PMI focus countries and other countries in Africa and the Mekong Region to reduce the burden of serious disease and promote healthy communities and families.



Malaria screening using rapid diagnostic tests in Zambia.

OUR PARTNERS

MalariaCare is led by PATH and supported by three other organizations: Medical Care Development International, Population Services International, and Save the Children. Each partner has extensive experience in designing and implementing malaria control programs in high-burden countries.

The MalariaCare team’s expertise includes laboratory strengthening, malaria diagnosis and treatment, program

evaluation and research, and community-based management of disease in both the public and private sectors.

OUR SERVICES

MalariaCare offers comprehensive technical support to USAID Mission and national government programs to expand high-quality diagnosis and treatment for malaria and other febrile illnesses. Our services include technical assistance on case management, monitoring and evaluation, and program management. We also work with governments on health policy and guidelines development for the management of malaria and other febrile illnesses. On the global level, the project assists the World Health Organization in developing guidelines for malaria control, including participation in case management (diagnostics and treatment) and drug resistance working groups. In addition, we strive to share lessons learned and best practices gleaned during the project.

OUR APPROACH

MalariaCare is focused on rapidly achieving high nationwide coverage of diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Our approach includes:

Expanding use of high-quality diagnostics. MalariaCare seeks to improve and promote accurate diagnosis of malaria in priority countries by facilitating expansion of parasitological testing—through quality assured and quality controlled malaria rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) and malaria microscopy. We do this not only by assisting governments and private organizations in scaling up testing capacity, but also by assuring the quality of results through development of a quality assurance framework. Together, this approach increases testing coverage and promotes confidence in test results throughout the health care system.

PRESIDENT’S MALARIA INITIATIVE



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Fostering appropriate treatment of febrile illness.

Through the use of appropriate diagnostics, the project also works to improve clinical treatment and outcomes. We work with governments and private organizations to develop clinician support systems—from tertiary reference centers to community-level interventions—helping physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and community health workers to use malaria testing to better manage patients presenting with fever. This strategy improves management of malaria and other diseases characterized by fever, and focuses on appropriate use of effective malaria drugs. Patient care is improved through more appropriate treatment based on correct diagnosis, and health care resources are saved through a more focused use of expensive antimalarial medications and antibiotics.

Facilitating partnerships with private-sector

organizations. MalariaCare recognizes the important role that the private sector plays in health systems, and seeks to improve diagnosis and treatment from private-sector providers—both for-profit and not-for-profit—including private clinics and hospitals, pharmacies, retail outlets, and community networks. The project aims to ensure that private providers receive support and supervision, and that they contribute to tracking and monitoring of malaria diagnosis and treatment. In addition, where appropriate to improve patient care, MalariaCare seeks to strengthen cooperative mechanisms between the public and private sectors, and promote improved regulation of the private sector as part of a country's health sector.

MALARIACARE OFFERS:

- **Needs assessments and strategic planning.** The partnership works with USAID Missions and country partners to identify current needs and create strategic plans conducive to achieving national malaria control goals.
- **Policy development.** Working at global, regional, and national levels, the partnership develops, updates, and advocates for policies, guidance, and tools based on current evidence and strategies for managing patients with fever in malaria-endemic areas.
- **Implementation support.** Our support includes strengthening staff training and supervision, assisting in data collection and analysis, and planning scale-up for impact.
- **Systems strengthening.** The partnership strengthens country capacity to leverage human, financial, and systems resources required to ensure success in achieving maximum diagnostics and treatment coverage with high quality.
- **Public-private partnerships.** MalariaCare engages with the private sector and promotes public-private partnerships to facilitate national improvements in malaria diagnosis and treatment.
- **Monitoring and evaluation.** Our work includes improving data collection systems to facilitate tracking and reporting on progress, along with training to use the data for effective, informed decision-making.
- **Sharing best practices.** MalariaCare applies country-based evidence and experience to inform best practices at global, regional, and country levels.

MALARIACARE 2013-2014

MalariaCare was awarded in late 2012 as a Cooperative Agreement. Much of the work of MalariaCare will be supported through “buy-ins” from USAID Missions.

In 2013, MalariaCare worked with eight countries:

- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Liberia
- Malawi
- Nigeria
- Zambia

Planning is in process for MalariaCare work in the following additional countries in 2014:

- Madagascar
- Mozambique
- South Sudan
- Tanzania

The scope of work and level of effort is different for each country, depending on specific needs and situations.

Following are examples of MalariaCare work in selected countries:

- In **Ghana**, MalariaCare operates similarly to a large bilateral project—functioning as an implementing partner to the Ghana USAID Mission on a national scale. Program components include strengthening case management within the public sector at every service delivery level, providing onsite supportive supervision to laboratories and clinical treatment sites throughout the country, and strengthening routine systems for malaria case management monitoring and evaluation.
- In **Malawi** and **Zambia**, MalariaCare strengthens laboratory and clinical capacity through expansion of outreach training and supportive supervision (OTSS) to new sites and works to improve the accuracy of diagnostics through expanded quality assurance/quality control activities. In regions where there already is high RDT use, MalariaCare renews focus on maintaining an appropriate level of microscopy capacity—a necessary technique for evaluating drug resistance and monitoring treatment response in severe malaria.

- In **Liberia**, the project collaborated with the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) Diagnostic Unit to conduct a rapid gap analysis for case management using health management information systems. Findings from the exercise assisted the NMCP, the USAID Mission, and MalariaCare in setting priorities for malaria interventions.
- MalariaCare will collaborate on a pilot in **Nigeria** that aims to investigate whether training and support for “proprietary patent medicine vendors” (drug sellers) on malaria RDTs and case management of febrile illness will result in significant improvements in care-seeking and more appropriate care of children with fever.
- The **Democratic Republic of the Congo** is a relatively new PMI country. MalariaCare interventions there focus on strengthening malaria case management capacity through developing central- and provincial-level expertise in diagnosis and treatment, training of OTSS supervisors, and provision of regular onsite OTSS at the central and provincial levels.
- Activities in **Ethiopia** center on development of a National Archive of Malaria Slides.

CONTACT MALARIACARE

For more information or to request program or technical assistance, please email or call:

MalariaCare@path.org
202.822.0033

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