

## Notes from the field

# South-south collaboration to sustain improved diagnostic capacity in Ethiopia

Maintaining high-quality malaria diagnostic capacity is a major priority for the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI). EPHI is developing a National Archive of Malaria Slides (NAMS) to be used for national accreditation of malaria microscopy and routine training of laboratory microscopists. The goal is to help microscopists in health facilities and laboratories across the country perform accurate and timely diagnosis of malaria and other infectious diseases. To support the EPHI in these efforts, MalariaCare has facilitated new south-south partnerships between the EPHI in Ethiopia and the Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) in Senegal.

As one microscopist helping to facilitate the partnership explains, “There are many synergies between EPHI and UCAD, as they are both in the process of building slide archives for routine training and quality assurance and have strong research interests in malaria pathogenesis, mapping, and drug resistance tracking. Different departments at EPHI can benefit from this collaboration. The goal is to facilitate linkages between leading regional institutions as they are best placed to ensure sustainable solutions for the African continent in years to come.”

EPHI is especially interested in cross-training in molecular biology techniques and tissue culture, so EPHI staff were trained by UCAD in molecular techniques and the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay to determine *Plasmodium* species. As Professor Daouda Ndiaye, Chief Parasitologist at UCAD, explains, “I strongly support south to south collaboration. I believe that for sustainability improvement and impact, we should reinforce and spread such collaboration. And the good thing is that almost everything needed in terms of facilities, platform, and expertise are now available in Africa—from very conventional procedures to the highest technologies and strategies.”

MalariaCare also is helping EPHI make it easier to access slides and to generate slides for training purposes. For example, the collaboration between EPHI and UCAD has helped EPHI develop new sample collection and characterization procedures, validate donor samples using PCR technology, and provide regional training exchanges to help staff develop their skills in molecular characterization. As one technical advisor on the project explains, “MalariaCare is really excited about supporting the EPHI by providing training opportunities for laboratory staff and developing protocols on how to use the NAMS to assess laboratory staff ability to read slides correctly. We see EPHI as a future training center for laboratory personnel throughout Africa and are supporting them to achieve this.”

For more information or to request program or technical assistance:

### CONTACT MALARIACARE

**Phone:** 202.822.0033

**Email:** [MalariaCare@path.org](mailto:MalariaCare@path.org)