



developments

Winter 2002

USAID Helps to Roll Back Malaria

By Mary Ettling

Over 300 million people worldwide suffer from acute malaria each year, the equivalent of the populations of the United States, Ireland, Portugal, and Switzerland combined. Up to 2.7 million of these people die from it annually. Nine out of ten cases occur in sub-Saharan Africa, and parasite resistance to chloroquine, the foundation of treatment for the last 50 years, is spreading.

The effects of this immense health problem ripple across African societies. A malaria-stricken family in Africa can spend up to one-quarter of its income on malaria treatment. A Harvard University study estimates that Africa's gross domestic product today would be up to 32 percent greater if malaria had been eliminated 35 years ago. And repeated malaria infections impede the education and development of Africa's children.

The Roll Back Malaria Initiative (RBM) is a massive effort by partners to halve the world's malaria burden by 2010. Started in 1998 by the World Health Organization (WHO), the RBM partnership includes United Nations organizations, the World Bank, governments, development agencies from 12 countries including USAID, professional associations, civil society, research groups, and the media, all building on previous experience and existing malaria-control efforts. The program emphasizes consensus-building and timely sharing of knowledge and lessons learned between partners to increase effectiveness.

The RBM movement in Africa grew out of efforts by the WHO Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) and its development partners, including crucial support from AFR/SD in early days. This partnership garnered the solid political commitment of governments and provided RBM with a comprehensive framework for mobilizing resources at its inception.

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Africa's children are vulnerable to malaria.

L.Lartigue/USAID-Guinea

Expanding Information Technology in Africa

By Lane Smith

When USAID's 5-year, \$15 million Leland Initiative was launched in June 1996 with the goal of full Internet access to 20 or more target countries in Africa, only a handful of countries on the continent had the Internet, usually slow and expensive e-mail service limited to the capital city. USAID offered to help these countries adopt modern, Internet-friendly policies for reaching out to the private sector rather than to state monopolies, establish affordable yet profitable tariffs, and permit the free-flow of information. For those countries willing to pursue these policy approaches—and only those countries—Leland also offered to provide the equipment necessary to establish their national Internet infrastructure, and the training on how to use it.

Only four years later, in November 2000, Leland Initiative experts established the national Internet gateway in Eritrea, the ninth country brought directly on line by the Leland Initiative, and the final African country to get Internet access. Over five years, 17 Leland countries have made substantial policy reforms, more than 100 indigenous African firms have gone into business as Internet service providers (ISPs), and over 500,000 Africans in Leland countries are now connecting to the Internet on a regular basis.

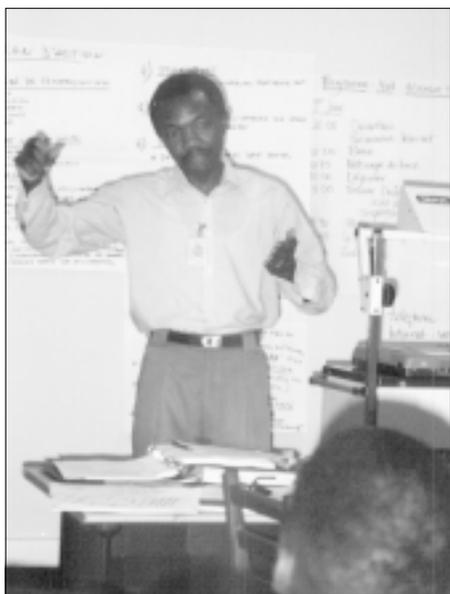
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Working with an American ISP already doing business in Africa, the Leland Initiative helped national phone company officials view the private sector as a partner, rather than as an opponent to be controlled. Leland staff brokered meetings among the stakeholders, helping them hammer out transparent—and minimal—licensing procedures. Several companies in each Leland country stepped forward in response to these offers ready to invest an average of \$40,000 each to get into this dynamic new business.

When these policies were in place, USAID turned to the U.S. technology sector to design modern satellite-based Inter-



A Leland trainer in Guinea-Bissau.

net gateways to bring efficient high speed Internet to capital and secondary cities. As a result, the number of Internet users is growing rapidly in all Leland countries. For example, there are more than 8,000 subscribers each in Madagascar and Mozambique, 5,000 in Rwanda, 15,000 in Senegal, and 40,000 in Kenya. While these numbers seem small in comparison with the industrial economies, the people are voting with their pocketbooks, paying \$30 to \$40 a month for use of this tool.

Recognizing that it is not just access to the Internet that is important, but also the uses that can be made of it, USAID embarked on a major effort to increase the capacity of African institutions—govern-

ment, business associations, NGOs, and universities—to use the Internet. Initiative staff devised an approach that focused on the strategic use of information, rather than the technology, and trained more than 1,500 institutions in Africa in its use. They also instructed dozens of local trainers in the methodology, who continue to use it across the continent.

USAID implemented a series of pilot projects to demonstrate new, Internet-based approaches to doing business in all sectors. For example, to address the development challenge of increasing household income for the rural poor, the Agency created an e-commerce activity with Ugandan small businesses, using information technology to improve competitiveness and trade. Within six months of receiving equipment and training, all companies had increased revenue streams (one by 60 percent), half the companies were able to find inputs through the Internet, reducing their operating expenses and increasing their competitiveness, and nearly all had made business contracts outside Uganda.

As another example, Leland Initiative experts in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, helped the Black Farmers Union to set up Internet Information Centers, through which more than 1,200 farmers now access banking services online, saving themselves an 80 mile roundtrip. They also now get information on the price and availability of key agriculture inputs such as fertilizer in real time, rather than having to work through costly and inefficient middlemen.

Lessons Learned

There have been three important lessons learned from the Leland Initiative. First, policy reform has a high leverage value. In Kenya, for instance, Leland pricing reforms sent wholesale costs tumbling, saving Kenyan consumers more than \$20 million per year in Internet access charges. By waiting to provide assistance on national Internet infrastructure until countries were willing to embark on policy change, Leland was able to win adoption of major reforms, thereby attracting private sector investment, expertise, and energy.

Second, good policies unleash the private sector in Africa, just as they do in the

United States. The private sector is using its own resources and expertise to bring the Internet to rural Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Guinea, and elsewhere, based on policy assistance and market development provided by the Leland Initiative. Cybercafes are springing up throughout the Leland countries in response to cheaper and more reliable wholesale Internet access. Entrepreneurs have paid almost \$1 billion for national cellular licenses in Nigeria, and are now investing \$500 million to build the infrastructure.

Third, the Internet is an effective way to attract nontraditional partners to the development challenges in Africa. For example, a Leland Initiative partnership with Cisco Systems has established a program in nine Leland countries that will train hundreds of computer networking specialists each year.

The Challenges Ahead

The partner countries of the Leland Initiative have shown that dramatic changes can occur when policymakers and private sector work together to introduce new ways of empowering people and doing business. In the next few years, the key policy challenge will arise in the regulatory arena, as technologies change and converge. More than 30 African governments are establishing telecommunications regulatory bodies, and most of them are asking for help to establish a pro-competitive regulatory environment, maintain a level playing field among all the private sector actors, and get services to where the market does not reach. An estimated 3,000 regulatory officials in Africa will need to be trained in order to take on this challenge.

A second key challenge will be to build capacity within the major institutional users to employ the Internet and its tools for economic and social development. Distance education, tele-medicine, e-government, and e-commerce hold great promise for African and American interests alike. However, all of them require major increases in institutional capacity to adopt sound information strategies and then find the right technologies to make them

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Stories Out of School



This special focus on basic education, sponsored by the Africa Bureau's SD Education Team, is a regular feature in SD Developments. USAID missions and others interested in sharing thoughts and experiences are welcome to contribute material for future columns.

Encouraging Leadership for Girls' Education in Guinea

By John Engels

In 1999, less than half of Guinean girls attended primary school. In rural areas, more than 20 percent of those girls who did enroll initially did not continue to sixth grade. To combat this problem, the Girls' Education Project, a joint effort of USAID/Guinea and the Global Bureau's Office of Women in Development is encouraging a multisectoral approach in promoting girls' education. The project mobilizes local alliances of stakeholders—such as civic, religious, and business leaders, and parents—who traditionally had not been considered education advocates. Since 1999, the Girls' Education Project and others have mobilized people from these sectors to become forces for positive change, fostering dialogue and mobilizing constituencies to increase enrollments for all Guinean children, especially girls.

As part of its work to disseminate the benefits of girls' education, the Girls' Education Project sponsors the work of a Media Task Force, an informal voluntary organization of print, television, and radio journalists, to produce compelling materials explaining the benefits of girls' contributions. This year, the Media Task Force published a 2002 calendar containing stories and photos of 12 Guinean women, all members of local girls' education alliances. These women either overcame obstacles to achieve their professional dreams, or, despite their lack of education, promote the need to send girls to school. The role models profiled in the calendar include a literacy trainer, a doctor, a pilot, a midwife, a market vendor, an ex-minister, and a head of an NGO.

In addition to its dramatic stories and colorful and engaging design, the calendar has been adapted by a curriculum expert for classroom use. Each role-model profile is accompanied by questions designed to promote reflection, discussion, or activities related to overcoming the obstacles to girls' education in Guinea. A teacher's guide helps teachers integrate the calendar into their lesson planning.

Mrs. Sory Binta Sow is one of the women profiled in the calendar. The 35-year-old is the head of Rural Community Development, a women's group in the village of Brouwal Sounki, and a mother of four. Well known for her work promoting girls' education, she is also a member of Brouwal Sounki's local alliance.

Binta was forced by early marriage to interrupt her schooling after eighth grade. At that time, it was frowned upon for a girl to enter puberty while in school because parents thought this could drive the girl to immoral behavior or, even worse, early pregnancy. Thus, Binta withdrew from school to join the household of a husband whom she barely knew. Despite this setback, the very intelligent young girl—who never had to repeat a grade—longed to continue her studies.

Recognizing this desire, Binta's husband sent her for on-the-job nursing training at the nearby hospital. She has now worked at the Brouwal Health Center for nine years. Still, Binta feels that she has sacrificed much. "Every day I regret not having been able to continue my studies." For example, she has never been promoted at the health center, despite her seniority and the quality of her work. Younger staff members give her orders. Binta has often thought that if she had been able to continue her studies, she might now be the head nurse or even a doctor at the health center.



Binta as pictured in the Media Task Force calendar.

All of this pushed Binta to join her local alliance for girls' education. There she educates parents on the benefits of girls' education, encouraging them to enroll their girls in school and keep them there. Binta says, "Today, whoever hasn't studied isn't respected. But when children study, especially girls, they will help both their parents and their future families."

Besides participating in her local alliance, Binta convinced the 22 members of her women's group to invest in girls' education. Each month, members contribute 500 francs (about 35 cents) into a fund used to purchase food for reselling during the dry season. The group donates the profits to pay for literacy courses, apprenticeships, and school materials for girls.

With other members of the local alliance, Binta advises mothers how to encourage girls to succeed in their studies. For example, Binta treats all her children equitably, even in household chores: the boys gather the firewood while the girls help in the kitchen. All of her children leave together for school in the mornings. This is an example that Binta asks all mothers to follow. Thanks to efforts of people like Binta, 30 of the 50 new students who enrolled in the nearby primary school this year were girls.

John Engels was the editor for the *Strategies for Advancing Girls' Education (SAGE)* activity. The *Guinea Girls' Education Project* is managed by the Academy for Educational Development through SAGE. For more information about the calendar or the *Girls' Education Project*, contact Dr. Aly Badara Doukouré at sageguinee@afribone.net.gn, or May Rihani at mrihani@aed.org or 202-884-8292.

work. Democracy-related networks need to be expanded, to bring new countries into existing networks and facilitate networks of new types of stakeholders.

Information and communication technology can transform processes and institutions, often creating opportunities that were not even imaginable a decade ago. In addition to government, new opportunities can be found in education, enterprises of all sizes, disease surveillance, and disaster assistance. Based on the success of the Leland Initiative and similarly effective programs, USAID revised its Strategic Plan 2000 to establish information technologies (IT) as an Agency cross-cutting theme, noting that: "Enabling more widespread participation and empowerment in the global information society is an important development result in its own right."

USAID has established a number of technical assistance programs supporting new opportunities that transform processes important for development and create new institutional capacity. For example, DOT-COM—the Digital Opportunity through Technology and Communication Partnership—is a set of three linked cooperative agreements (dot-GOV, dot-ORG, and dot-EDU) that will undertake telecommunications policy and regulatory reform; provide training to prepare key workers for participation in the global information society; extend IT services and applications to the under-served, particularly with regard to education; and achieve gender equity throughout these IT activities and applications. Another program, ITT or Information Technology Transfer, helps USAID staff and partners address the information technology components of their broader programs, such as an online resource for HIV/AIDS tracking and treatment.

Lane Smith is the coordinator of the Leland Initiative. This article was excerpted from his testimony before the House International Relations African Subcommittee on May 16, 2001. For more information on the Leland Initiative or DOT-COM Partnership, visit www.usaid.gov/info_technology, or contact Mr. Smith at lasmith@usaid.gov or 202-712-0826.

This African commitment was further strengthened at the African Summit on Roll Back Malaria held in Abuja, Nigeria, in April 2000. At the summit, 39 African heads of state pledged that their governments would initiate actions to meet what have come to be the recognized goals of RBM in Africa:

- ◆ That 60 percent of those suffering from malaria have prompt access to and are able to use correct, affordable, and appropriate treatment within 24 hours of the onset of symptoms;
- ◆ That 60 percent of those at risk of malaria, particularly pregnant women and children under five years of age, benefit from personal and community protective measures such as insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs); and
- ◆ That 60 percent of all pregnant women who are at risk of malaria have access to intermittent preventive treatment.

RBM's strategy in Africa is geared toward these goals. The program also promotes maintenance of maximum vigilance to prevent and respond to malaria epidemics and outbreaks. USAID missions in Africa and AFR/SD are part of the RBM partnership, implementing these pillars of malaria control.

Malaria in Africa primarily affects children under five years old. Early recognition of illness and prompt treatment with an effective drug can reduce the morbidity and mortality related to infection. Education and empowerment of caretakers, coupled with the provision of accessible and affordable drugs as close to home as possible are strategies to improve treatment outcomes. These strategies will necessitate real engagement of the commercial sector and NGOs. The challenges of the increased cost of more effective antimalarial drugs and inadequate drug quality remain. AFR/SD and the RBM partners are working with country programs to review and revise treatment policies and develop innovative local delivery strategies.

Pregnant women are four times more vulnerable to malaria infection than other, nonpregnant adults. Women who are pregnant for the first time are especially vul-

nerable. Even though they may remain asymptomatic, the infection promotes anemia, and infection of the placenta means that their children are more likely to be born prematurely or of low birth weight, the single greatest risk factor for death during the first month of life.

AFR/SD has played a significant role in the development of the RBM framework for reducing the effects of malaria in pregnancy. In partnership with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), WHO/AFRO, and the USAID Maternal and Neonatal Health project, AFR/SD has outlined a two-pronged approach: intermittent preventive treatment with sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (IPT) as part of routine antenatal care, and protection of the pregnant woman by an ITN. Research by the CDC has shown that regular use of ITNs can reduce premature births and low birth weight by 25 percent and reduce maternal anemia significantly. Similarly, delivery of antenatal IPT has been shown to reduce maternal anemia and increase birthweight.

ITNs have been clearly demonstrated in studies throughout Africa to reduce overall child mortality by an average of 15-20 percent. The benefit to the youngest children, those under a year, is even more striking. Recent AFR/SD-supported research in Western Kenya estimates reductions in infant mortality of over 20 percent and reductions in severe anemia as high as 40 percent.

UNICEF, USAID's NetMark Project, NGOs, missions, and other African partners are working together under the RBM umbrella to increase the demand for and sustainable supply of nets and insecticides. Targeted and carefully crafted subsidies are being devised to make ITNs accessible to the most vulnerable groups.

By encouraging and supporting programs like these, AFR/SD and RBM are determined to bring this devastating disease under control.

Mary Ettling is AFR/SD's malaria technical advisor. For more information, visit RBM's website, www.rbm.who.int, or contact Dr. Ettling at mettling@afro-afro.org or 202-219-0486.

Program Offers Tools for Conflict Settings

By Bill Lyerly

Now in its second year of operation, the Linking Complex Emergency Response and Transition Initiative (CERTI), an ongoing interagency program managed by AFR/SD, is available to provide tools and services to field missions for specific application in conflict, crisis, and transition settings. CERTI has been developing a framework for addressing the programmatic challenges of working with both relief and development organizations and agencies in pre- and post-crisis or transition environments to achieve human security. CERTI is managed by Tulane University's Payson Center for Technology Transfer and International Development, and has been merged with the similar USAID Conflict and Conflict Prevention program, also managed by Tulane.

The two major objectives of CERTI are to establish broad-based international consensus on best practices during and following complex emergencies, and to strengthen the capacity of various implementing organizations (including NGOs) that provide health and human security interventions in crisis and post-crisis contexts. The program attempts to link achievements from both humanitarian relief and sustainable development approaches.

The goal of the program is to provide technical assistance to field missions for planning and implementation of crosscut-

ting approaches to crisis/conflict/complex emergency management. CERTI has developed a conceptual framework for strategic planning in crisis and transition settings, best practices related to improved conflict-health linkages, conflict/crisis vulnerability assessment methods, and approaches to addressing the psychosocial effects of complex emergencies.

Specific tools that have been developed or will be available soon include:

- ◆ Strategic planning using human security as a unifying framework in crisis and transition settings;
- ◆ Guidelines for incorporating HIV management into disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and reconciliation programs;
- ◆ Guidelines for health as a bridge to peace programming;
- ◆ Field manual for conflict vulnerability assessment;
- ◆ Toolkit for assessment of the psychosocial effects of complex emergencies;
- ◆ Field manual for planning and analysis of surveys in post conflict settings;
- ◆ Training kit for HIV prevention in conflict settings designed for African military populations; and
- ◆ Monitoring and evaluation toolkit for implementing agencies working in complex emergency and transition settings.

The CERTI program maintains a website (www.certi.org) in support of the

“CERTI Toolkit.” This toolkit includes all policy studies and tools developed through the program, emergent best practices, relevant electronic libraries and bibliographies, data products, links to key websites, bulletin boards, and list serves, and multimedia conference proceedings of workshops and meetings supported by CERTI. People from inside and outside USAID have used the website as a comprehensive resource for conflict-related material.

While the program emphasized tools development in its first year, it is now ready to support field missions. CERTI can help enhance and assist with cross-sectoral programming for integrated strategic plan development and strategic planning; performance monitoring plan formulation; program/project design; conflict vulnerability analysis; and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and reconciliation strategy development and implementation. Priority will be given to regional initiatives and to innovative pilot strategies/programs that may have regional significance or may serve as promising approaches to the Africa Bureau.

Bill Lyerly is the senior advisor for AFR/SD's crisis mitigation, transition, and recovery team. For more information, check CERTI's website www.certi.org, or contact Mr. Lyerly at wlyerly@afdr-sd.org or 202-219-0458.

African Environmental Journalists Create Network

A new organization to promote sustainable development and environmental advocacy in Africa was created during a course for journalists in Cape Town, South Africa, last June. Called the African Network for Environmental Communicators (ANEC), the mission of the newly established network will be to foster the exchange of information on sustainable development among journalists and other writers, and to raise awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues in Africa through better environmental reporting and advocacy.

ANEC activities will focus on preparation for the September 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (also known as RIO +10). Membership in the network is open to all African journalists and communications specialists who have an interest in environment and sustainable development issues.

The course where the network was formed was designed for journalists, editors, and reporters in Southern Africa to build awareness of environmental issues. Its focus was on United Nations multilateral environmental agreements, the issues

at stake, and the implications for developing countries. It was organized by the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), and funded by AFR/SD, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations Environment Program.

NESDA and its partners will fund the network and coordinate ANEC activities until it has its own facilities.

For more information, contact Fatou Ndoye at f.ndoye@afdb.org or +225-20-205-831, or Abou Bamba at a.bamba@afdb.org or +225-20-204-088.

Increasing Commercial Options for Native Teas

In the tiny town of Haarlem in South Africa's beautiful Western Cape province, a new crop is growing strong. After years of planning and working with the local community, the South African team of USAID's A-SNAPP program (Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products) began the first South African plantation dedicated to cultivation of honeybush (*Cyclophia* species), a plant that occurs naturally only in South Africa. Honeybush and another South African bush tea, rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*), have potent antioxidant properties, but contain no caffeine and very low levels of tannins, the compounds that make tea astringent and contribute to its bitterness.

Honeybush has always been a popular tea in South Africa, and the plant has traditionally been collected from the wild. This pioneering plantation in Haarlem will help assure that the market can be expanded without endangering wild honeybush populations or depleting raw material resources. The farmers involved have already signed a contract with Cape Natural Tea Prod-

ucts, a South African company that has agreed to purchase the first crop.

The first seedlings of this traditionally wild-harvested honeybush are growing on a 10-hectare (25-acre) plot tended by 10 local farmers. In November 2000, A-SNAPP officially unveiled the plantation with AFR/SD's Jerry Brown. AFR/SD sponsors the A-SNAPP project, which is a collaborative venture including a South African team, Stellenbosch University, and Rutgers University.

Led by horticulturalist Elton Jethas, A-SNAPP's South African team researched honeybush propagation, conducted cultivation trials, and investigated post-harvest processing methods. Working with several communities, they helped collectors organize themselves into growers' groups, creating new agribusiness entrepreneurs. The team was assisted in its efforts by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Research Council.

The Haarlem plantation is truly a community-based enterprise. Local farmers donated their labor to prepare the land and



A Wupperthal tea grower and his crop.

plant 100,000 honeybush plants. The land was a gift of the local council, leased long-term at low cost to give the community a secure place to cultivate this valuable plant and protect wild honeybush as market demand increases. Cultivation of the plant will also help reduce variations in the quality of the source material, which is an issue with current wild-harvested sources.

AFR/SD and A-SNAPP are helping small farmers in Wupperthal, also in the Western Cape, with commercial cultivation of rooibos tea. Since people in this area have been making a living out of the rooibos trade since 1830, tea cultivation and processing has immense potential for small- and microenterprise development. Currently, about 300 tons of rooibos are harvested annually, of which 100 tons is processed locally. About 16 of the 80 farmers in Wupperthal are women.

AFR/SD and its partners have addressed production problems experienced by farmers, initiated trials on farmers' fields, established seed nurseries, and developed markets for rooibos tea. For the first time, A-SNAPP partners exported 20 tons of rooibos tea to the United Kingdom. Plans are underway to increase the scale of commercial production by expanding systematic farming, tea processing, and storage capacity.

For more information contact AFR/SD agribusiness advisor Jerry Brown at jbrown@ afr-sd.org or 202-219-0450 or Elton Jethas at ejethas@ maties.sun.ac.za.

—Christine Chumblor

New Video on AIDS Orphans Available

Over one million Zambian children have lost one or both parents, mostly to AIDS. Most of these children still live within their extended families and communities. Yet the scale of the AIDS pandemic—an estimated 20 percent of the adult population has the HIV virus—has placed an enormous strain on Zambia's traditional safety net. More and more orphaned children lack the basics such as food, shelter, and protection. Increasingly, these young people join other runaways to make up Zambia's mushrooming population of street children.

A new 13-minute video, *Forgotten Children: The Legacy of Poverty and AIDS in Africa*, chronicles a day in the lives of several boys surviving on the streets of Lusaka, Zambia's capital. Shot from the children's point of view, the film highlights the boys' natural dignity and resourcefulness. Their stories of dead parents and grandparents, abusive relatives,

and the difficulties of survival are told with no hint of self-pity.

USAID's Brad Strickland and Donna Woolf produced the video to share information that will raise awareness and mobilize resources to confront this crisis. The problems of street children create a staggering burden on families and communities. As the video shows, soup kitchens and other charitable handouts can help keep the street kids alive. But the real key to helping these children is to keep them from moving to the street in the first place—by helping them to find protection and care within their own communities.

For copies of the video, contact the Africa Bureau Information Center at abic@dis.cd.ie.org or 202-661-5827. For more information, contact Brad Strickland at bstrickland@ afr-sd.org or 202-219-0482.

SD at Your Service

In this issue, we continue the series of profiles to introduce the staff members of the Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development. Mary Ettling and Mary Harvey are both members of AFR/SD's Health Team.

Malaria in Africa is like an elephant in the doorway. At first it's all anyone can think of, but then it becomes commonplace," says Mary Ettling, AFR/SD's malaria advisor. The parasitic infection kills up to 2.7 million people worldwide every year, 90 percent of them in Africa. Another estimated 300-600 million become ill, a massive drain on public health systems and economies across the continent. One in five child deaths in sub-Saharan Africa can be laid directly at the feet of this disease. (see cover story)

Ettling's involvement in the fight against malaria began as a general interest in public health, arising from her first "real" job in epidemiology at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. After she served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand's malaria control program, she knew she had found what she wanted to do with her career. "I find malaria fascinating," she says. "It's a complex mixture of science,



politics, and human behavior." After a decade of work on Asian malaria, she began to focus on malaria in Africa in 1990, at a time of re-

kinkled global (and U.S.) attention to the disease. She has been the malaria advisor in AFR/SD since 1998.

As AFR/SD's malaria advisor, Ettling manages the Africa Bureau's malaria portfolio, which has four main thrusts: research, advocacy, African capacity building, and support to USAID missions. As congressional allocation of funds for malaria has steadily grown, her role has expanded. At present there are 18 missions in Africa with specific malaria programs. "While missions understand what works on the ground," Ettling explains, "we [AFR/SD]

can link them to Roll Back Malaria (RBM) technical and experiential resources, and provide up-to-date guidance on new interventions and strategies."

Ettling is proud of USAID's role since RBM's inception in 1998 in the formulation of the partnership and strategy. And she is particularly proud of her own efforts with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to get the prevention of malaria during pregnancy onto the RBM agenda. "It's exciting to make an impact," she says.

She admits that there are frustrations in her work. "It can get discouraging when we fail to do things better," she says, adding that "'we' includes African governments." But there are indications that the necessary interventions are reaching the people of Africa. The recent Demographic Health Survey in Malawi provides strong evidence of the benefits of good malaria policies; infant and child mortality rates continue to fall there, one of the few African countries to have fully implemented revised treatment guidelines for children and pregnant women. And Ettling has seen the culture of bednets spread, even to the most unlikely places. She remembers driving through rural Tanzania and seeing a young herder with his cattle in an open grassland. He had strung up a bednet between four sticks.

Mary Ettling can be reached at mettling@af-r-sd.org or 202-219-0486.

Many diseases nearly forgotten in the rest of the world are still deadly in sub-Saharan Africa. Measles, for example, was responsible for 8 percent of all infectious disease deaths in 1999. Mary Harvey, immunization and epidemic advisor in AFR/SD, works with USAID's African missions to address these often overwhelming needs. She explains that the public health systems of most African countries have had a difficult time keeping up with preventing these epidemics, even before the relatively new burden of HIV/AIDS. Availability of quality vaccination services on a regular basis, along with rapid identification and response to dis-

ease outbreaks, is vital. A strong public health surveillance system and response mechanisms can keep isolated cases from becoming full-blown outbreaks. But she says, "I'm concerned that surveillance is getting a short shrift."

Harvey is also concerned about polio, both immunization and surveillance. The disease has been nearly eradicated globally, requiring only a few more immunization campaigns (see Summer 2001 *SD Developments*), but surveillance is critical. "It's important to finish the job for polio," she says. "Otherwise investments of \$90 million would be lost. We all have a role in keeping that on the agenda and in building on this initiative for strengthening other routine immunization programs and surveillance."



Beginning with her two years as a Peace Corps community health volunteer in Senegal, Harvey's career has been dedicated to combating infectious disease. Her focus has remained on West Africa since then. She has worked on immunizations programs including polio eradication for several organizations including the World Health Organization's Africa Program (WHO/AFRO) and Rotary International. In 1992 she started her current job coordinating the Africa Bureau's efforts to control yellow fever and meningitis outbreaks, and managing the bureau's grants to WHO/AFRO. "My personal interests have become my work," she says.

Harvey says that a love of children and the commitment and hard work of African colleagues have sustained her spirit through what some might see as depressing work. "People in war torn and desperately poor situations doing what they can to protect children's health inspires me all the time," she says.

Mary Harvey can be reached at maharvey@usaid.gov or 202-712-5483.

—Christine Chumbler

A New Approach to HIV/AIDS Work

The AIDS pandemic is challenging USAID and its development partners to identify and quickly expand synergies between the symbiotic roles of people and government, as well as to strengthen communications links between communities, the NGO sector, and governments. Fifteen years into international funding for AIDS prevention in Africa, there is now a shift away from targeted, public health programs to multisectoral responses at community, regional, and national levels. Civil society organizations are helping with this process by building bridges between people and their government.

A new toolkit from PACT/AIDS Corps and USAID, *Survival is the First Freedom: Applying Democracy and Governance Approaches to HIV/AIDS Work*, is intended to assist with this process of collaboration with democracy and governance (DG) approaches. The document identifies some of the major obstacles to applying DG approaches to HIV/AIDS, such as

lack of participation, a weak enabling environment, inadequate resources, and lack of information, and offers practical ways to address and overcome them, in part by focusing on areas where HIV/AIDS and DG work naturally complement one another. It is organized around key DG concepts that have direct application to specific needs in HIV/AIDS programming: 1) democratic principles and practices; 2) rule of law; 3) increased citizens' participation; 4) increased capacity; and 5) enhanced flow of information. Specific tools for relating these DG focus areas to HIV/AIDS work are included at the end of each section.

Time and again, African communities have demonstrated their insight about priorities in coping with HIV/AIDS. Using DG approaches enables them to contribute these insights to current efforts to scale up effective responses to the pandemic.

The full text of Survival is the First Freedom is available online free of charge at www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACL456.pdf.

SD Developments is published by the Office of Sustainable Development, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development. It is designed to foster better understanding of SD's activities and facilitate dialogue with our African colleagues.

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SD Developments is produced by the Africa Bureau Information Center (ABIC), operated by the Academy for Educational Development, Inc. under contract to USAID. ABIC is part of the Development Information Services project of USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation.

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