

## **U.S. President's Malaria Initiative Launched in Gaza**

On Wednesday, December 20, 2006, the U.S. Government through its Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative in Mozambique. This launching is in full cooperation with Mozambique's National Malaria Control Program.

The launch took place in Chibuto, Gaza province, with a mosquito net re-treatment campaign at the Administrative Post of Maleice (Coca Missava village). Attendees at the event include: Minister of Health Dr. Paulo Ivo Garrido; USAID/Mozambique Director Mr. Jay Knott; the Governor of Gaza Province Djalma Lourenço and the Chair of *Roll Back Malaria Mozambique*, Bishop Dom Dinis Sengulane.

The United States President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) is a five-year, \$1.2 billion plan to rapidly scale up malaria prevention and treatment intervention in high-burden countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The aim is to assist 175 million people in 15 countries by the year 2010. The initiative, which began just this past year, identified Mozambique as one of just seven countries to receive funding in these initial stages of the plan. The other countries benefiting from the PMI are Angola, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, and Senegal.

At least one million infants and children under five in Africa die of malaria every year – approximately one every 30 seconds. The goal of the PMI is to reduce malaria-related mortality by 50% after three years of implementation in each country. This will be achieved by reaching the most vulnerable groups -- children under five years of age and pregnant women -- with proven preventive and therapeutic interventions.

In support of the National Malaria Control Program and in coordination with other development partners, the PMI backs four intervention strategies to prevent and treat malaria:

1. Spraying with insecticides in homes ("Indoor residual spraying," or IRS);
2. Insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs);
3. Lifesaving drugs: Artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs); and
4. Prevention of malaria in pregnant women: "Intermittent preventive treatment" (IPT).

Activities at the launch included community performances and mosquito net re-treatments conducted by Population Services International, an American non-governmental organization.

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