



## RBM Strategic Communications Partner Committee Meeting Notes

Geneva, 6-7 February 2018

### Key Action Items/Outcomes:

- Reviewed and updated 2018 Year-at-a-Glance, highlighting key moments where RBM and RBM partners plan to be most engaged:
  - April – MIM Conference; RBM Board Meeting; Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM); World Malaria Day
  - May – World Health Assembly – RBM stakeholders’ briefing
  - July – AU Summit – RBM to launch “Zero Malaria Starts with Me” with AU; ALMA Forum; World Malaria Congress
  - October – RBM 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
  - Q3/4 – launch RTS’s vaccine
  - November – World Malaria Report launch
- World Malaria Day theme selected to coincide with CHOGM theme – “Ready to Beat Malaria” – RBM to prepare materials in multiple languages; see materials to be created and timeline for delivery here
- Workstreams announced – see list of workstream lead contact info here
  - Branding
  - Champions/Leadership (joint SCPC/ARMPC)
  - Digital
  - Global Events
  - Media – global and country/regional
  - Messaging/Data
  - Success stories/content
- Discussion on how to evolve messaging to address changing malaria story
- Recommendations shared for how RBM can add value around media, partner engagement, thought leadership
- RBM 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary plans – recommendation to minimise the amount of resources spent and focus on partners as the primary audience; identify “low key” ways to celebrate
- SCPC members encouraged to be brand ambassadors and use RBM Partnership to End Malaria new branding (logo and materials)

## Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February

### **Steering Committee discussion points and actions:**

- Representation on the Steering Committee (SC) – Assessed composition and discussed sector gaps, such as R&D, and regional gaps, such as representatives of Asia Pacific and Latin America regions. Desire for WHO representation also raised
- Engagement of SC members – Need to introduce/ improve accountability and confirm terms of engagement
- Need for increased effort in Africa -- Concern raised around not enough being done to change behaviour in Africa and what more can be done to build on partner efforts to engage media in Africa and whether there is a need for an Africa specific strategy
- Workstreams – Evaluated the current workstreams considering there is a functioning RBM Secretariat and PR agency on board, and identified new workstreams.
- Partner committee collaboration – Discussed the need to collaborate effectively with the other RBM Partner Committees and working groups

### **Workstreams – Key points made in workstreams discussion:**

- Need for partners to do more to amplify and disseminate social media messages – from RBM and other partners
- Need to package up success stories more effectively and how to define and identify the stories to highlight milestones and successes
- Opportunity for workstreams on success stories, content, messaging and online presence to work more closely together
- Discussion around benchmarking success – e.g. uptake of RBM messages by leaders, influencers and the media
- Discussion around whether there is a need for national/regional and global workstreams and to define roles between the Secretariat/PR agency and partners.

### **Further discussion points:**

- Clarification of processes such as approval processes for media materials – if, when and how SCPC partners have opportunity to input/consult/review and when to be informed in advance of RBM events and proactive media activity
- Need for RBM to develop photo and video libraries
- Potentially making better use of relevant data from partners and better connecting with those who produce those data
- Raised the success of outreach to and training of African journalists around the malaria vaccine clinical trials in Africa as a model to replicate
- RBM survey – discussed usefulness of this in terms of benchmarking partner engagement, however members did express concern over the 25 out of 400 partner uptake, however the core group consists of 140 individuals who registered as SCPC members.

### **Dr Pedro Alonso's presentation:**

- No progress has been made in the last 4-5 years from a global point of view (progress has been made in some countries)
- 91 malaria endemic countries
- Nigeria responsible for 27% of global burden, DRC 10% and India 6%
- Global funding has remained steady in the last 5-6 years – it hasn't increased
- Domestic funding is flat in many African countries despite growing economies – this means that per capita funding is actually decreasing
- Approximately half of malaria endemic countries are close to the elimination space – 44 countries have less than 10,000 cases, which means there is potential for good news in the coming years
  - The WHO Malaria Elimination Oversight Committee support countries in their efforts to eliminate malaria
  - Countries that should eliminate in 2018
    - Paraguay – 1<sup>st</sup> country since 1960s to eliminate malaria in Americas
    - Algeria on course to be declared malaria-free later this year
    - Egypt and Argentina also want to be certified in near future
- Surveillance systems are improving but still poor in some countries. This means the real picture could actually be worse – this is likely to be confirmed when we get better data and the true burden of malaria is revealed
- Urgent need for some African countries to take more responsibility for domestic funding
- Over-arching message – Millions of lives have been saved BUT We have stopped making progress
- Zambia is a good example of a country where there has been an increase in domestic funding, largely due to good political leadership
- Challenge for the malaria community – how do we better use and prioritise the funding and tools that we have

### **Presentation on MIM Conference**

### **Presentation on CHOGM / Global Moment on Malaria**

### **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February**

#### **World Malaria Day Planning:**

- Unanimous decision to use 'Ready to Beat Malaria' theme, to build off the momentum and be consistent with the theme at the Commonwealth Summit
  - Important to include a call-to-action to address the need for urgency and action

- Ready to Beat Malaria' lends itself to a number of different scenarios – e.g., public health/ frontline workers getting ready to treat people, people getting ready by protecting their homes, using nets, spray etc
- The audience and Call to Action needs to be clarified – what is the CTA for members of the public – is it to lobby their governments?
- There's a new WMD logo – discussed potentially still using the #EndMalaria, along with #ReadytoBeatMalaria

#### **Dr Kesete's presentation:**

- There has been some success in Africa but malaria needs to be higher on the agenda for many African governments
- Priorities for the year
  - Launching 'Zero Malaria Starts with Me' campaigns in partnership with the African Union this summer at the AU Summit in July
  - Launch a Sahel Initiative to accelerate elimination in the Sahel region of Africa – only possible if more interventions are scaled up and this can only be done with the right political leadership
  - Set up national End Malaria Councils to increase focus and prioritisation in countries
    - WHO 'ten plus one' strategy – focuses on countries accounting for 80% of global malaria burden
- Issue around complacency - people in endemic countries are less scared as they know they can get treatment
- Need to increase domestic funding in many African countries – discussed how, for example, a tax initiative in the Republic of Congo could be one solution
- The wider public in many endemic countries need to know where progress is being made and where it is stalling - there needs to be more citizen engagement and social activations
- Discussed funding gap and the need to increase bilateral funding from more western countries, such as France
- China is very important – increasing engagement with the region is a priority, to help increase awareness and funding

#### **Messaging**

- Discussion around how to develop effective messages in the current situation and looking more long term to 2020
- Need to get the messaging right, especially now with the malaria situation more challenging than ever before – the situation is complex and diverse:
  - The situation is getting worse – cases are going up, decrease in deaths has stalled

- At the same time, more countries than ever have less than 10,000 cases and could be poised to eliminate
- Key questions raised
  - How can we be impactful without sensationalising
  - When talking about huge numbers – e.g., funding needed - do some people just switch off, how do we avoid that?
  - Discussion around how much do we push the ‘winning’ message vs ‘the situation is getting worse’
  - Issues around different data sets being used
    - How do we contextualise the data we are using?
  - Should our message be ‘We should be able to have zero malaria – this is what we need to make that happen’
  - Should we encourage countries to compete in their battle against malaria?
- Messaging needs to cover topics such as:
  - Resource mobilisation
  - Need for more R&D
  - Complacency issue
- Different messages for different audiences, e.g., government/ media
- When it comes to answering the question ‘why is the situation getting worse’, we don’t have all the answers
- Need to tie malaria into the broader story around malaria stopping people from going to work/ school etc

## **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

- Unanimous consent that 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration activities should be more internal/partner focused – “the only people who care about anniversaries are the people celebrating them”
- Also consensus not to try and make the anniversary a media event as time and resources would be better spent on other efforts, and don’t want to compete with other substantive partner activities
- Nuance the celebratory tone of messaging just ahead of the 2018 World Malaria Report launch
- Messaging should be more forward looking – e.g. where do we want to be in 20 years’ time?
- How can we use the opportunity to catalyse action?
  - Is there a way to use the anniversary as a mechanism/platform to accelerate RBM goals and new substantive contributions to the malaria fight – e.g. announcing 5 new End Malaria Councils, launching the report on the economic impact of malaria
- Have fun – show up at ASTMH in a big way – including leading a fun Mozzie parade during the New Orleans celebration of Halloween parade
- FYI -- 23<sup>rd</sup> October is the UN Foundation 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Branding

- The RBM brand has evolved. We no longer use Roll Back Malaria because we've "rolled back malaria already"; RBM is not shorthand for it, we're instead focused on maintaining the equity of "RBM" while looking forward to ending malaria
- A request for SCPC members, as ambassadors of the brand, to help make sure that the RBM Partnership to End Malaria brand is consistently used going forward (e.g., on websites, in blogs, speeches, written materials, online)
- There is a need for increasing brand awareness in countries, perhaps with a branding toolkit
- Questions about branding or to get the logo and/or other branded materials, contact the RBM Secretariat: [scpc@rollbackmalaria.com](mailto:scpc@rollbackmalaria.com).

## Table Discussions on How RBM Can Add Value

- Media
  - Serve as a definitive source of facts and figures/resource for partner communications
    - Provide the interpretation behind WHO numbers/facts – offer different level of spokespeople who can offer analysis
  - Consider right level of content, audience and channel, e.g., the FT supplement only gets to a small, but influential audience
  - How can we use social, video channels?
  - Serve as a resource for journalists – malaria 101 for journalists who are new to malaria, but also a resource for journalists who are informed
  - Encourage more and better journalism
    - Set up an RBM Journalist Award to drive up standards for reporting
  - Work with news organizations on a documentary, e.g., what Blue Planet series did for impact of plastics pollution
  - Create a shared database of journalists and spokespeople who are regularly briefed on messages and content
  - Help coordinate outreach across the partnership both to help avoid conflicts and identify opportunities to pool efforts to have a bigger bang/impact
  - Identify channels to reach audiences beyond the malaria community so we're not just talking to ourselves
  - Support regional/national journalist capacity building in 10+1 countries, as well as media trainings for NMCP spokespeople
  - Need credible success stories
- Thought Leadership
  - Consider developing a series like Abt's Bold Leadership program that features high level experts

- Provide updated economic figures about the impact of malaria – consider releasing in conjunction with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary
  
- Partner Engagement
  - Need to make it easier to communicate, e.g., better conference line system, identify free ways for partners to participate from Africa, offer translation
  - What additional partner organisations aren't currently engaged?
  - How can we create feedback loops? e.g., feedback on how the work is useful to partners?
  - To improve participation on update calls – consider having an invited speaker to join and present
  - Stagger Steering Committee membership to preserve institutional memory
  - Improve transparency by making reports available to partners
  - Consider providing incentives to improve participation in surveys
  - Be clear on the time commitment needed to be engaged
  - Improve geographic and sector representation
  - Identify ways to create/improve conversation and brainstorming opportunities, don't just report out on calls
  - Hold meetings in endemic countries
  - Make greater use of digital communications to share and host information
  - Use single email address for all official communications
  - Give easier choice for opting into communications
  - How can we get more aligned and working with other health sectors, specifically HIV, TB and NTDs
  - Provide easier access to documents and databases

#### **RBM website**

- Website is being overhauled and the hope is that it will be ready to go live in July – URL will use 'EndMalaria.Org'
- In the meantime, the main website for World Malaria Day 2018 will be [www.worldmaliaday2018.org](http://www.worldmaliaday2018.org)