

Driving African private sector's contribution to malaria elimination

Why Malaria?

Sustained global efforts to drive malaria cases and deaths down over the last two decades have saved over 7 million lives and prevented more than 1 billion cases. Yet despite incredible progress, malaria remains a threat for people around the world, causing over 400,000 deaths in 2018 – and more than 90% of these deaths occur in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In some African countries, malaria reduces GDP growth by up to an estimated 1.3% and places a significant burden on private-sector businesses. The disease continues to affect company profits across the African continent and beyond - through employee absenteeism, reduced productivity, and escalating benefit costs. Malaria among a company's employees also increases the potential for transmission to the wider local community, which then impacts the local economy through the deterioration of human capital, losses in savings, and investments and tax revenues.

Private sector participation in malaria control and elimination can energize national goals by bringing more partners and resources to the table. The private sector has a vested interest in achieving malaria elimination as a healthier workforce means a healthier economy. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over US\$10 billion is needed to implement national strategic malaria control plans in 30 African countries over the next three years.

About the Initiative

Led by the Ecobank Group in partnership with the UN hosted RBM Partnership to End Malaria and Senegal-based policy and advocacy action tank Speak Up Africa, the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative sets out to drive private-sector engagement for the fight against malaria in Africa in support of the [Zero Malaria Starts with Me](#) Movement endorsed by African Union leaders in 2018. This collaboration will support communities at risk of malaria across the continent by advocating for stronger political will, increased funding, and more targeted malaria elimination responses.

Objectives



Foster domestic resource mobilization for sustained financing of malaria control and elimination;



Mobilize businesses and business leaders to contribute to the control and elimination of malaria;



Leverage Ecobank's networks and partners to reinforce or create collaborative platforms.

Approach



Establish and/or strengthen private sector coordination platforms for malaria at country and regional levels;



Cultivate a network of malaria champions to support malaria policy alignment and implementation;



Raise the profile of malaria on African health policy and corporate agendas.