

## Six African Countries Lead the Way to a Malaria-Free Africa by 2030

*Algeria, Comoros, Madagascar, the Gambia, Senegal, and Zimbabwe recognized by the African Leaders Malaria Alliance for their sharp decline in malaria cases.*

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (29 January 2018)** – During the 30th African Union Summit, the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA) honored six African countries for their exemplary leadership in driving down malaria cases, even as regional and global progress risks losing momentum.

The 2018 ALMA Awards for Excellence were presented to the heads of state of the following countries:

- **Madagascar, the Gambia, Senegal and Zimbabwe**
  - For: reducing malaria cases by more than 20 percent from 2015 to 2016
- **Algeria and Comoros**
  - For: being on-track to achieve a more than 40 percent drop in cases by 2020

ALMA is an alliance of 49 African countries working to end malaria on the continent by 2030. [The ALMA Scorecard for Accountability & Action](#) tracks progress and drives action on malaria control and elimination, and are chosen by an independent committee of experts in health, academia, and the private sector.

While malaria deaths have plunged by more than 60 percent since 2000, cases rose in a majority of African countries in 2016, signaling that years of progress are at risk of stalling.

“When we take our eyes off malaria, the cost for our countries is huge. Yet if we increase our efforts to control and eventually eliminate malaria, the yield we get from it is tremendous. It is time that we dig deep into our pockets and provide malaria programmes with the needed resources,” said H.E. Dr. Barnabas Sibusiso Dlamini, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Commenting on the awards, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said: “In a new development era, we must go further, with greater resolve to not only reverse malaria incidence; but to stop transmission altogether. Success will require even greater commitment and stronger collaboration across sectors and borders, particularly as countries near their elimination targets.”

### MEMBERS

Angola  
Benin  
Botswana  
Burkina Faso  
Burundi  
Cameroon  
Cape Verde  
Chad  
Comoros  
Republic of Congo  
Democratic Republic of Congo  
Côte d'Ivoire  
Djibouti  
Egypt  
Equatorial Guinea  
Eritrea  
Ethiopia  
Gabon  
Ghana  
Guinea  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Madagascar  
Malawi  
Mali  
Mauritania  
Mauritius  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Rwanda  
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic  
São Tomé and Príncipe  
Senegal  
Seychelles  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
South Africa  
South Sudan  
Sudan  
Swaziland  
The Gambia  
Togo  
Uganda  
United Republic of Tanzania  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

Speakers at the awards ceremony urged countries to prioritize funding for malaria, ensure that life-saving tools such as medicines, mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying reach the people who need them, while investing in better surveillance and strengthening health systems.

In recent years, with the support of global partners, countries like Rwanda have increased their reporting on malaria through their national health information systems. In addition, in 2017, African countries purchased and distributed 203 million mosquito nets to families across Africa, a record level.

“To continue to win the war against malaria, countries will have to work differently and smarter to outsmart the mosquito and the parasite it carries,” said Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance. “ALMA stands ready to work with every country and partners to ensure that we achieve a malaria-free Africa.”

Malaria is a preventable and treatable disease that still affects hundreds of millions of families across the African continent. It keeps children out of school and prevents parents from earning a steady income, costing the African economy US\$12 billion a year in direct losses, and 1.3 percent of lost annual GDP growth.

The ALMA Awards for Excellence come just two months after the World Malaria Report revealed that progress was fragile and uneven in 2016. More than 40 countries are on track to meet global elimination goals, yet cases went up by more than 20 percent in 25 countries, indicating a reversal in progress, including eight in the African region. Some 90 percent of all malaria cases and deaths still occur in Africa.

Starting this year, the ALMA Scorecard for Accountability & Action includes progress on combatting Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), which, like malaria, disproportionately impact marginalized communities and are linked to poverty and inequity. The new NTD indicator reveals progress and tracks African leadership across the five most common NTDs in sub-Saharan Africa.

NTDs are some of the world’s oldest and most painful diseases, including rabies, leprosy and trachoma. More than 1.5 billion people, of which almost half are in Africa, are at risk.

“As heads of state and government at the African Union, we will have an opportunity to review our progress on neglected tropical diseases as part of the ALMA Scorecard. These diseases deserve our attention. Eliminating NTDs can put Africa on the path to prosperity and universal health coverage. I urge my fellow African leaders to build on the progress already made and increase their efforts to tackle NTDs and make them a subject for much concerted effort and action at the African Union,” said His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

##ENDS##

### **About ALMA**

Founded in 2009, the African Leaders Malaria Alliance is a ground-breaking coalition of African Heads of State and government working across country and regional borders to achieve a malaria-free Africa by 2030. All African Union countries are members of ALMA. For more information visit: [www.alma2030.org](http://www.alma2030.org)

### **Note to editors:**

High resolution photos are available for download through the following link:  
<http://bit.ly/2DLvKWe>

Journalists can access a broadcast quality radio interview with Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance through the following link:  
<http://bit.ly/2nmVu06>

### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

Simon Crump, Portland Communications (Nairobi)  
Email: [simon.crump@portland-communications.com](mailto:simon.crump@portland-communications.com)  
Tel: +254 791 398 792

Tara Flores, Portland Communications (London)  
Email: [tara.flores@portland-communications.com](mailto:tara.flores@portland-communications.com)  
Tel: +44 20 7554 1750

### **Follow us on:**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ALMA-African-Leaders-Malaria-Alliance-356455541093491](https://www.facebook.com/ALMA-African-Leaders-Malaria-Alliance-356455541093491)  
Twitter: [https://twitter.com/alma\\_2030](https://twitter.com/alma_2030)  
LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/african-leaders-malaria-alliance-alma](http://www.linkedin.com/company/african-leaders-malaria-alliance-alma)  
Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/103141785@N06](http://www.flickr.com/photos/103141785@N06)