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SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone's entire population of 6.5 million people is vulnerable to malaria. A civil conflict ending in 2002 eroded vital healthcare infrastructure, and more recently, the Ebola epidemic negatively impacted people's ability to access community health services, critical in the fight against malaria. Thanks to recent funding expansions, the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) and Sierra Leone teamed up in 2017 to double-down on combatting the disease. Today, U.S. investments are focused on ensuring life-saving malaria interventions are available to all: from distributing insecticide-treated nets and supporting preventive treatment for pregnant women (who are at high-risk for malaria), to supporting health worker training, and distributing millions of effective malaria diagnostics and treatments.

↓ 22%

REDUCTION IN ALL-CAUSE MORTALITY IN CHILDREN UNDER 5 SINCE 2013



WHY U.S. FUNDING MATTERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA: BUILDING LAB CAPACITY IN SIERRA LEONE

Critical to beating malaria, is understanding the mosquito whose bite transmits it. Studying mosquitoes, monitoring their prevalence and their patterns provides scientists and epidemiologists with the information and data needed to outsmart them. This is more important than ever in the malaria fight as insecticide resistance has emerged in sub-Saharan Africa.

Now, thanks to PMI's investments and collaboration with Sierra Leone's malaria control program, scientists there have been equipped with a new tool: the country's first fully functioning Vector-Borne Disease Insectary and Laboratory.

The new lab builds important capacity in-country for the real-time monitoring of malaria transmission and mosquito resistance to insecticides. This information helps scientists identify where insecticide resistance might be occurring and gives malaria control program managers the information, they need to make strategic decisions about which malaria interventions will be most effective and ensure they are targeted where they are most needed. In 2020, this information helped Sierra Leone make the case for introducing new, more effective insecticide-treated nets.

Just as essential the laboratory is to the malaria fight, the new laboratory also serves as an early-warning system for new diseases, a critical step in stopping the spread of disease before it goes beyond a country's borders.



We have no doubt that the collaboration and partnership with PMI will contribute immensely to the fight against malaria in Sierra Leone.

– Dr. Samuel Juana Smith, SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL MALARIA CONTROL PROGRAM MANAGER