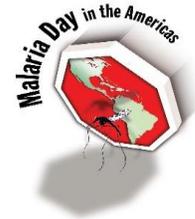


# MALARIA DAY IN THE AMERICAS 2020

## Guidelines for Commemoration, Communications, and Advocacy



### *I. Background*

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In September 2005, the 46th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) adopted Resolution [CD46.R13](#) which highlighted, among other things, the need to establish policies and operational plans to achieve a reduction of the malaria burden by at least 50% by 2010 and 75% by 2015; and to designate a Malaria Control Day in the Americas on a selected annual date, to recognize past and current efforts to prevent and control malaria, promote awareness, and monitor progress. Similarly, in May 2007, the 60th World Health Assembly passed resolution [WHA60.18](#): “Malaria, including a proposal for establishment of *World Malaria Day*” which provides, among other things, that: “*World Malaria Day* shall be commemorated annually on 25 April or on such other day or days as individual members may decide...” Guyana, which has been commemorating a *National Malaria Day* since 2003, proposed celebrate the *Malaria Day in the Americas* on November 6, which coincides with the day when the presence of malaria parasites in the blood of patients with febrile symptoms was first observed by Charles Louis Alphonse Lavéran in 1880. With these antecedents, the 27<sup>th</sup> Pan American Sanitary Conference held in Washington DC from 1–5 October 2007 resolved that **November 6** will henceforth be observed annually as **Malaria Day in the Americas**. ([CSP27.R11](#))

Currently, on its fourteenth year of commemoration, Malaria Day in the Americas is regarded as an important opportunity and mechanism for countries of the Region to engage various stakeholders in aggressively fighting malaria.

### *II. Malaria Day in the Americas: Concept and Objectives*

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The [Plan of Action for Malaria Elimination 2016-2020](#), approved by the 55th PAHO Directing Council (September 2016), highlights strategic advocacy and communications as among the key issues in malaria that needed increased emphasis in the Region. An important element of these efforts is the commemoration of *Malaria Day* in the countries of the Americas which campaigns for increased advocacy and commitment among stakeholders and draws communities and the general population into concrete actions that contribute to the achievement of goals and targets in all levels – global, regional, country, and community.

The Region of the Americas continues to pursue its commitment to global targets including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of the [Global Technical Strategy for Malaria \(GTS\)](#) which emphasizes that “all countries can accelerate efforts towards elimination through combinations of interventions tailored to local contexts”

*Malaria Day in the Americas* which will be observed for the fourteenth time on **6 November 2020**, is envisioned to be the platform upon which countries of the Region can engage in a year-round aggressive campaign against the disease. Specifically, *Malaria Day in the Americas* seeks to attain the following objectives:

- Improve the communication process and extension of advocacy work to all stakeholders and target audiences.
- Enhance visibility/interest on Malaria in the Region of Americas and the global scourge that the disease brings to peoples of the world.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the key issues among target audience/population.
- Catalyze change of attitudes and modification of behaviors in the affected population.

- Generate advocacy/support from the decision-makers and populations in malaria affected communities, policy makers, private sector, strategic partners, and the general public.
- Encourage increased and enduring support to efforts against malaria, including the elimination of local transmission and prevention of re-establishment.

Partners and malaria stakeholders in the Region are encouraged to consider this concept and objectives in the commemoration of *Malaria Day in the Americas 2019*.

## Theme for Malaria Day in the Americas 2020: “Zero malaria starts with me”

Following a sustained trend toward reduction of malaria from 2005 to 2014, in recent years the Region of the Americas experienced an increase in the total number of cases and deaths since 2015, mainly as an effect of the massive increase in transmission and outbreaks in areas with complex socio-political and economic challenges and recently compounded by other challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Much like the global trend, progress on the achievement of target reductions in malaria burden have stalled since 2015. Between 2015 and 2018, malaria cases and deaths have increased by 69% and 111% respectively.

Urgent action is needed to get the global response to malaria back on track – and ownership of the challenge lies in the hands of countries most affected by malaria. On the occasion of Malaria Day in the Americas 2020, and in keeping with this consolidated effort by the global malaria community to highlight the reported successes and the remaining challenges in malaria today, the Region is adapting the same theme used for the commemoration of World Malaria Day 2020: “**Zero malaria starts with me.**” In particular, PAHO highlights the importance of sustained malaria efforts while protecting health workers during COVID-19 pandemic.

Stakeholders in the Region have the option of using this theme to energize the commitment to fight malaria.

### Key Messages / Calls to Action

#### 1. Keep malaria high in the political agenda.

- On Malaria Day in the Americas 2020, PAHO reaffirms that it is crucial to sustain efforts in malaria diagnosis, treatment, and surveillance, ensuring that best practices to protect health workers and communities are followed and aligned with national COVID-19 guidelines
- Interventions must consider the importance of lowering disease and death caused by malaria, while ensuring the safety of communities and health workers
- Ensure that appropriate testing and treatment of patients as well as core malaria prevention measures such as insecticide-treated nets and indoor residual spraying are important strategies for reducing the strain on health systems
- Protecting the gains against malaria and moving forward with key malaria interventions such as reinforcing health and surveillance systems also contributes to better understanding of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic

## 2. Intensify efforts and support for places which are most affected by malaria in the Region

- Currently, an important proportion of malaria cases in the Region remain concentrated in a relatively few municipalities in countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, and Venezuela.
- This focalization is clearly manifested based on data from the last several years, which indicates that 25 municipalities accounted for approximately 50% of all reported malaria cases in the Region of the Americas; and that between 25-70% of all malaria cases at country level are usually concentrated within no more than three municipalities
- Many of the municipalities and areas with the highest malaria burden in the Region are now participating in the [Municipalities for Zero Malaria](#) Initiative, bringing together key partner organizations, relevant government agencies, and municipalities affected by malaria in order to support local efforts to take effective action against the disease.

## 3. Empower communities to take ownership of malaria prevention and elimination

- Organizations, citizens and local government authorities must be engaged in developing key interventions for malaria elimination at the municipality level if we are to ensure that no one gets left behind

## 4. Be part of the solution; be an advocate for malaria elimination.

- Learn about the disease and know if you're at risk
- Sustain malaria interventions while protecting yourself, health workers and communities from COVID-19
- Share these messages with your family and friends and support the cause to eliminate malaria

### *III. Key Facts and Figures*

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#### **Globally and in the Americas:**

- Effective malaria control and elimination is inextricably linked to the strength of health systems. Strong health systems can deliver effective safe, high-quality interventions when and where they are needed and assure access to reliable health information and effective disease surveillance. At the same time, integrating malaria treatment, prevention and surveillance into existing health programs and activities in endemic countries will ensure that funding earmarked for malaria control and elimination contributes to the development, expansion and continuous improvement of national health systems.

- In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, adaptation of malaria surveillance and control operations according to local COVID-19 situation scenarios, algorithms and attention flows is key to ensure essential actions and also enable the battle against COVID-19.

**Success stories and opportunities in the Americas, resulting from the implementation of best practices and collaboration include:**

- In 2019, Argentina was certified as malaria-free, duplicating Paraguay's achievement in 2018.
- El Salvador completed 3 years without local transmission and is likely to be certified as malaria-free this year 2020; while Belize also had no local transmission in 2019, putting it on track to be certified as malaria-free in 2022
- Many other countries across the Region are scaling up their efforts to control and eliminate malaria with support from PAHO, Global Fund, USAID, IDB, non-profit partners and other global development institutions.
  - In 2015, the Malaria Zero Alliance was launched with the bold goal of eliminating malaria from the island of Hispaniola, which includes Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, partners include the Ministry of Public Health and Population of Haiti, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance of the Dominican Republic, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the CDC Foundation, The Carter Center, the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.
  - Since 2018, the Inter-American Development Bank, in collaboration with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, PAHO, CHAI, and other partners, has been working in a new financial and technical assistance mechanism – the Regional Malaria Elimination Initiative in Mesoamerica and the Dominican Republic (RMEI) – to help the Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico<sup>1</sup>, Nicaragua, y Panama, to scale up effective surveillance, prevention and treatment on the road to elimination by 2022
- Of the 15 nonendemic countries which are receptive and vulnerable to the disease, 10 have been updated regarding their risk and are in the process of reinforcing their capacities
- Since 2009, thirty-six Malaria Champions of the Americas have been recognized as best practices in the Region, particularly from Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Suriname.
- This year, municipalities with among the highest malaria burden in the Region are showcasing the progress of their efforts and are being honored as Malaria Champions for their enduring work against the disease amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic.

*IV. Social Media Messages*

Handles and Hashtags	
<b>Handles:</b>	<b>Hashtags:</b>

<sup>1</sup> Operation under negotiation.



<p>@ASTMH  @nothingbutnets  @malarianomore  @rollbackmalaria  @unfoundation  @pahowho  @JohnsHopkinsSPH  @JohnsHopkinsCCP  @Gwpublichealth</p>	<p>#MalariaDayAmericas  #endmalaria  #MalariaChampions  #HealthForAll  #zeromalaria  #DíaMalariaAméricas  #Malaria  #SaludParaTodos  #TerminemosconlaMalaria  #malariacero</p>
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**Suggested tweets (Maximum: 280 characters)**

1. On #MalariaDayAmericas, PAHO calls to keep malaria high in the political agenda #malaria back on track. Sustain malaria efforts while protecting yourself, your community and health workers during COVID-19. # zeromalaria
2. 3 things are needed to move towards malaria elimination: 1 political commitment, 2 financial resources, 3 empowered communities. # zeromalaria #HealthForAll
3. This #MalariaDayAmericas and with COVID-19, interventions must consider the importance of lowering disease and death caused by malaria, while ensuring the safety of communities and health workers. #HealthForAll # zeromalaria
4. Be part of the solution to #EndMalaria, & be an advocate for malaria elimination #MalariaDayAmericas# zeromalaria
5. Universal coverage of proven #malaria prevention tools will improve health & save lives #MalariaDayAmericas # zeromalaria
6. #MalariaDayAmericas is an opportunity to learn about the disease and know if you're at risk. #zeromalaria
7. [#Municipalities for Zero Malaria](#) continue affirming that municipalities with challenging situations can be on the path towards # zeromalaria.

**Note: Specific tweets regarding 2020 Malaria Champions awardees to follow**

**For more information, please contact:**

**Dr. Roberto Montoya**

Advisor, Malaria & other Communicable Diseases  
Neglected, Tropical and Vector Borne Diseases  
Communicable Diseases & Environmental  
Determinants of Health (CDE)  
Pan American Health Organization  
525 23<sup>rd</sup> St. NW Washington DC 20037-2895  
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3843  
E-mail: [montoyar@paho.org](mailto:montoyar@paho.org)

**Ms. Cristina Mana**

Specialist, Knowledge Management &  
Communications  
Communicable Diseases & Environmental  
Determinants of Health (CDE)  
Pan American Health Organization  
525 23<sup>rd</sup> St. NW Washington DC 20037  
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3859  
E-mail: [manacris@paho.org](mailto:manacris@paho.org)

**Dr. Rainier P. Escalada**

Advisor, Malaria Policy, Advocacy and  
Capacity Building  
Neglected, Tropical and Vector Borne  
Diseases  
Communicable Diseases & Environmental  
Determinants of Health (CDE)  
Pan American Health Organization  
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3532  
E-mail: [escaladr@paho.org](mailto:escaladr@paho.org)

**Ms. Conie Reynoso**

Communications Specialist  
Communicable Diseases & Environmental  
Determinants of Health (CDE)  
Pan American Health Organization  
Tel. +1 (202) 974-3859 /  
+ 1 (202) 974-3916  
E-mail: [manacris@paho.org](mailto:manacris@paho.org)  
Email: [reynosocon@paho.org](mailto:reynosocon@paho.org)