



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2014

Media Contact: Julie de Carvalho (Spanish, Portuguese, English)

Links Media: 301-987-5495 ext.109

jdecarvalho@linksmedia.net

Media Contact: Scott Barnes (English)

Links Media: 301-987-5495 ext.101

sbarnes@linksmedia.net

Website: usaidami.org

News Release

Malaria challenge debated at meeting of regional health initiative in Managua from March 11-13, 2014

USAID, the Pan American Health Organization, ministries of health, and scientists discussed ongoing regional strategies for malaria control.

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA — Despite being preventable and treatable, malaria represents a persistent threat in 21 malaria-endemic countries in the Americas. One approach to address it has been to consolidate regional collaborative efforts for malaria control through the Regional Network for the Surveillance of Antimalarial Drug Resistance (known as RAVREDA for its acronym in Spanish) and the Amazon Malaria Initiative (AMI), with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

From March 11-13, 2014, at a meeting in Managua sponsored by the Ministry of Health of Nicaragua, PAHO and USAID, representatives of the national malaria control programs of the 11 countries participating in AMI and RAVREDA (Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Suriname) and four guest countries met to discuss progress in the implementation of evidence-based strategies to address increasingly localized malaria.

The regional approach has contributed to a considerable and sustained decrease in malaria transmission in all but one of the countries participating in AMI and RAVREDA. According to PAHO, the incidence of malaria has decreased by 60% from 2000 to 2013. Dr. Socorro Gross Galiano, PAHO's representative in Nicaragua, underscored that malaria control is related to economic development, since economic factors drive the population migration in Central America and the search for gold in the Amazon that contribute to disseminate malaria and make it more difficult to reach affected persons with diagnosis and treatment. She added that although some countries in the Americas have seen a reemergence of malaria along the past years, there is a big opportunity to eliminate malaria in the Americas, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean, where tourism is one of the most important sources of revenue, pointing out that "malaria and tourism do not go together."

USAID provides technical cooperation to Central American and Amazon countries based on a successful model for technical cooperation that began with eight Amazon basin countries in 2001. Additional information about USAID's Amazon Malaria Initiative is available at usaidami.org.

###