



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

October 31, 2008.

Links Media invites you to participate in the effort to communicate the serious nature of malaria in Peru and the Amazon Region. To raise awareness about malaria prevention and control in the region, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) designated November 6, 2008 as **Malaria Day in the Americas**.

Approximately 1 million cases of malaria are reported in the Americas each year. Ninety-one percent of all malaria cases and 87 percent of malaria-related deaths in the Americas occur in the Amazon region. Data from 2004 illustrate that 30 percent (264 of 869 million) people in the Americas live in at-risk areas.

Efforts to combat malaria have brought considerable success. For example, Peru has gone from 98,000 reported and confirmed cases of malaria in 2002 to 64,871 cases in 2006. Peru also reported 17 malaria-related deaths in 2002; this was reduced to 6 deaths in 2006.

To recognize **Malaria Day in the Americas**, the Ministerio de Salud del Perú (MINSA) and the Colegio Médico del Perú have joined efforts to organize two public events that will discuss the current situation of malaria in Peru and the region as a whole:

- The Colegio Médico del Perú will host “Malaria in the Americas: Overcoming the Challenges of a Borderless Disease,” on **November 6**. A distinguished group of academics and health professionals will discuss climate change and malaria, lessons learned, and future needs for malaria control. The event will take place at 7:00 PM at Malecón Armendáriz 791 Miraflores in Lima; Tel: (511) 213-1400.

On **November 7**, at 9:00 AM, the Congreso de la República del Perú will host a panel discussion about malaria, borders, and health diplomacy. The event will take place at Plaza Bolívar, Av. Abancay s/n - Lima, Perú, Central telefónica: 311-7777. Prominent government representatives, members of the scientific community, and members of the public will discuss malaria control initiatives in the region.

These two events are sponsored by the Amazon Malaria Initiative (AMI), a multidisciplinary and multinational partnership improving malaria prevention and control. Technical partners are the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Links Media, Management Sciences for Health, Pan American Health Organization, and the U.S. Pharmacopeia; and organizations in 8 partner countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, and Suriname).

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided the essential support and tools for coordinating AMI, and the partner countries have taken the essential next steps in working to prevent and control malaria. AMI’s specific technical activities include:

- Determining drug efficacy and working toward the implementation of evidence-based antimalarial drug policies
- Harmonizing national drug policy with specific sub-regions of the partner countries
- Building human capacity regarding malaria issues
- Building decentralized laboratory capacity through the use of minilabs
- Testing the effectiveness and appropriate use of selected new rapid diagnostic methods
- Integrating malaria vector control through selective control application
- Addressing drug quality control through procurement, distribution chain management, and marketing oversight



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We invite you not only to report this important event to your audience, but to help educate them in understanding the facts behind the statistics. Scientists and MINSA representatives such as Dr. Luis Miguel León will be at the meeting, and a number of them will be available to provide you with in-depth information about malaria and strategies for its prevention and control. Dr. Jaime Chang, AMI's representative in Peru, will be also available for interviews.

We will contact your assignment desk to coordinate interviews and to provide you with detailed background information and support for developing your story.

Sincerely,

Rodolfo Pereira, Links Media
Anngie Caballero, Links Media

AMI is consistent with the Presidential Malaria Initiative announced by U.S. President George W. Bush in 2005, along with his pledge to increase funding for malaria prevention and control by more than \$1.2 billion through 2010 in 15 of the hardest hit nations in Africa to cut malaria deaths by half.

Led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), PMI is working in partnership with host country governments in Africa, non-governmental organizations, faith-based and community groups, and the private sector to decrease the intolerable burden malaria imposes on African countries.

Besides Africa and Latin America, USAID supports malaria control and prevention programs in Asia through the Mekong Regional Initiative covering Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.