

In response to the high-stakes battle against Malaria in Africa, leaders from seven African nations have convened in Nairobi to chart a course for raising the estimated US\$6.3 billion needed annually to sustain and expand malaria control efforts.

The African leaders have convened for the 2025 End Malaria Councils and Funds Chairs Meeting, to advocate for the full replenishment of the Global Fund—a cornerstone in the fight against malaria.

Leaders from the private sector, civil society and healthcare sector reaffirmed their commitment to closing the country's malaria funding gap through domestic resource mobilisation.

This pledge was made at a multi-sectoral meeting of End Malaria Councils and Funds from 7 African countries (Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Zambia, and the Kingdom of Eswatini), aimed at accelerating Africa's progress against malaria by mobilising commitments for advocacy, action and resources across different sectors, to address gaps and bottlenecks in respective national-level malaria strategies.

The African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA), the leaders warned that Africa faces a "perfect storm" that threatens to reverse decades of progress in malaria control. With global donor funding expected to decline, Chris Getonga, the Chairman of End Malaria Council, Kenya noted that mobilizing domestic resources, particularly from the private sector, is critical to sustaining progress and achieving malaria elimination by 2030.

Since 2019, countries including Zambia, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Eswatini, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria have launched councils, collectively mobilizing USD \$125 million in cash and kind to support ongoing malaria efforts.

"Malaria has something for all of us causing pain for family members who are sick, causing the economy the pain of down time for people who are not able to go to work and reducing our productivity, said Ms. Thandile Nxumalo, the Chief Executive Officer at Sanlam Investment Management, Eswatini and Chair of the country's End Malaria Fund.

"This meeting is to review progress in fighting malaria in Africa, share best practices and facilitate the exchange of experiences and strategies to strengthen our efforts in fighting malaria," said Hon. Mazrui Nassor, Zanzibar's Minister of Health.

“The key is to have our governments working hand in hand with the private sector to increase budgetary allocation for fighting malaria in addition to seeking more private sector support,” said Zouera Youssoufou, the Managing director and CEO of the Aliko Dangote Foundation.

While Kenya has made significant progress in reducing malaria prevalence from 8% in 2015 to 6% in 2023, the disease remains a major public health challenge. In 2022 alone, the country reported an estimated 5 million malaria cases and more than 12,000 deaths. The persistence of malaria is exacerbated by growing insecticide resistance, particularly in high-prevalence areas around Lake Victoria in western Kenya. In addition, a substantial funding shortfall, estimated at 50 percent of the resources needed to fully implement the Kenya Malaria Strategic Plan has hindered national malaria control efforts.

In response, private sector leaders, through the End Malaria Council (EMC), Kenya are intensifying efforts to leverage Kenya’s business landscape to mobilise financial and in-kind support for priority malaria interventions under the National Malaria Control Program.

Established in February 2021, EMC Kenya works to keep malaria high on the national agenda while driving financial commitments and in-kind donations from various sectors. Since its inception, the council has mobilised substantial resources, including a US\$ 400,000 commitment from SC Johnson in 2022.

The funds were earmarked to support biolarviciding efforts using drones in Busia County and an additional US\$ 1 million to fund continued Social Behaviour Change Campaign efforts, establish health clinics at border areas as centers of excellence for malaria prevention and control, and deploy new malaria prevention tools.

The meeting was held against a backdrop of an executive order by the US administration, halting all foreign aid funding for 90 days, affecting critical health services, including malaria programmes. This suspension threatens the supply of essential malaria drugs to countries reliant on USAID support.

“Despite the high burden of malaria, domestic investment by African governments remains insufficient, with 70 percent of resources for fighting Malaria on the continent coming from external funders. We need to increase domestic funding as well,” said Hon. Mazrui Nassor, Minister of Health, Zanzibar.