

Sumitomo Chemical Celebrates Africa Malaria Day

Africa Malaria Day 2006 (25 April 2006) marks the sixth anniversary of the Abuja Declaration where African Heads of State committed themselves to an intensive effort aimed at tackling the scourge of malaria. It is also the first Malaria Day since the leaders of the G8 nations gathered together in Scotland last year with a pledge to “make poverty history”. Malaria is one of the principal contributors to poverty in rural communities.

In sub-Saharan Africa malaria is responsible annually for the deaths of around 1 million children under five. Its effect on national economies is equally devastating: the World Bank has calculated that malaria accounts for \$12 billion per year in lost African GDP and the reduction of GDP growth by 1% per year.

Sumitomo Chemical Company (SCC – www.SumiVector.com) is on the front line in the war against malaria via its development and production of the revolutionary Olyset® long-lasting insecticide bed net (Notes to Editors) and its active membership of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (www.rbm.who.int). Annual Olyset® production has risen from 2 million to 20 million since 2004 and SCC has undertaken a wide range of Olyset-based initiatives over the past 12 months:

Partnering with African Industry

SCC is committed to making Olyset® available to those who need it most at the lowest possible cost. To that end, in November 2004, SCC transferred the technology for manufacturing Olyset® - with a no-fee license – to an African manufacturer. In 2005 the two companies’ relationship was strengthened via the establishment of a ground-breaking joint venture partnership which involves the construction of a major manufacturing facility in Arusha, Tanzania. The factory, which will create approximately 2,000 jobs, opens later this year and will be producing seven million nets annually.

Millennium Villages (Notes to Editors)

SCC has donated over 330,000 Olyset® anti-malaria bed nets – worth around \$2 million – to the Millennium Villages in sub-Saharan Africa. One hundred villages (individual population c.5,000) in 10 African countries will receive the Olyset® nets, enabling at least half a million people to be protected from exposure to malaria.

Namasagali, Uganda

In December 2005 the distinguished journalist, Jon Snow, presenter of the UK’s Channel 4 News, revisited Namasagali where he had taught through VSO in the late 60s. Namasagali is badly affected by malaria and SCC provided nets for Jon Snow to distribute free to local residents.

Live8

When Bob Geldof mobilised the world’s music industry to stage concerts in all of the G8 countries last summer to raise the profile of African poverty, SCC invited celebrities involved in the UK concerts to sign an anti-malaria pledge which involved SCC sending an Olyset® net, on the celebrity’s behalf, to Africa. As a result, Olyset® nets have been sent to Ghana where they will be presented to schoolchildren.

G8 Summit 2005

To ensure malaria was truly on the G8 agenda, SCC embarked on a comprehensive lobbying campaign to inform key policy-makers at the Summit of the latest facts and figures on the fight against malaria and the benefits of using bed nets.

Unicef C8

It is vital that young people are educated to the dangers of malaria and appropriate precautions. SCC provided a presentation and briefing to all young international delegates at the Unicef C8 “Children’s Summit”.

Usa River Village, Tanzania

Early in 2005, all of the Usa River Village residents received a free net. While Sumitomo awaits clinical confirmation on the affect net distribution has had on the incidence of malaria, early anecdotal evidence is encouraging. When interviewed by Jon Snow (see above) in December 2005, sixty-year-old resident Elerehema Manga said that as a result of using the Olyset® net, his personal incidence of malaria had reduced from at least three times per year to zero.

Hiromasa Yonekura, President of SCC, said: “Africa Malaria Day gives all of us who are involved in the fight against malaria the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved to date and to re-energise ourselves for the next campaign. We cannot allow this disease to dominate and destroy the lives of the poorest members of the world community. Malaria may never be eradicated totally, but it can be controlled effectively if there is a collective will to make it happen. Sumitomo Chemical is proud and privileged to be involved in this vital work.”

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Notes to Editors

Olyset®

SCC's Olyset® is a long-lasting insecticide net (LLIN) recommended by the World Health Organisation. It never needs chemical treatment by the user and is the only long-lasting bed net guaranteed to last for at least five years. Olyset is based on a revolutionary slow-release technology, where the control agent is incorporated within the fibres of the net itself. The net is fiercely tear-resistant and wash-proof, and is effective as soon as it is installed.

The Olyset® Net – key facts:

- **toughness** – Olyset is tear-resistant and washproof;
- **no need for retreatment** – the insecticide remains effective for a minimum of five years;
- **improved ventilation** – Olyset's large mesh allows for better ventilation but has no negative effect on the number of mosquitoes controlled or repelled by the insecticide film;
- **safety** – Olyset's mosquito repellent is based on permethrin, a widely used, long acting synthetic pyrethroid. Permethrin has a proven safety record; it has low mammalian toxicity and there is no irritancy to users;
- **user and environment-friendly** – because no retreatment is needed, people do not have to handle insecticide concentrate kits;
- **cost-effectiveness** – because Olyset doesn't need retreatment, there are significant cost savings in distribution, training and maintenance.

The World Health Organisation recommends Olyset® and other products through WHOPES (World Health Organisation Pesticides Evaluation Scheme – www.who.int/whopes)

Millennium Villages (www.millenniumpromise.org)

Millennium Villages are at the heart of Millennium Promise, a non-profit initiative focusing on the eradication of extreme poverty. MP draws on partnerships, alliances and action planning to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the world's poorest countries. The rationale for the creation of Millennium Villages is to help individual communities escape poverty by providing them with the practical and affordable solutions needed to become self-sufficient and achieve the long-term sustained economic development that will spell the end of poverty in their lives. Tackling malaria is fundamental to MP's agenda.