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PMI and Global Fund Support Launch of Senegal-Gambia Cooperation in Fight Against Malaria

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KEUR AYIB, SENEGAL/FARAFENNI, GAMBIA — Today, the governments of Senegal and The Gambia officially launched a joint campaign to distribute 11 million mosquito nets to fight malaria. This is the first cooperative effort to synchronize nationwide mass net distribution on both sides of an international border.

The launch took place in Keur Ayib, Senegal, near the Senegambia Bridge and crossing point of Farafenni, symbolizing the commitment of both countries to join hands in the fight against malaria and accelerate progress in the high transmission cross-border region. The effort is a key part of the Senegambia Malaria Elimination Initiative Agreement signed between the countries in December 2018.

At the launch, Abdoulaye Diouf Sarr, Minister of Health and Social Action of the Republic of Senegal, and Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh, Minister of Health of the Republic of The Gambia, underscored that cross-border collaboration is one of the surest ways to defeat malaria regionally and across the continent. “In addition to the common goal and political will of neighbor countries, effective collaboration across donors is important to optimizing resources,” the ministers expressed in a joint statement. “The lessons learned from this campaign will help other countries that could benefit from similar cross-border malaria control initiatives.”

With strong support from the U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the campaign will deliver nearly 10 million long-lasting insecticide-treated nets in Senegal, and another 1 million in The Gambia. Both organizations collaborated closely with the national malaria control programs of Senegal and The Gambia to optimize financial and technical resources, and to support the joint planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the campaign.

U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator Dr. Ken Staley said, “Mass net distribution campaigns are critical for reducing malaria deaths and illness. This joint campaign is a breakthrough toward achieving comprehensive coverage of the most effective malaria interventions within and across countries. PMI is pleased to support countries to lead collective efforts like this.”

Peter Sands, Executive Director of the Global Fund, said, “Malaria, and the mosquitoes that carry the disease, know no borders. To protect people living along the border of Senegal and The Gambia, we need a coordinated approach. This first-ever joint distribution of mosquito nets to protect families from malaria across the two countries is the kind of innovative collaboration required to tackle the disease. The Global Fund is proud to be a supportive partner of the Senegal-Gambia Malaria Elimination Initiative.”

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