

PRESS RELEASE

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With picture



Household names join United Against Malaria

Lusaka – Three of the largest consumer brand names in the country have joined forces in a unique tie-up that sets a new benchmark in corporate social responsibility.

Zambeef Products, Shoprite and Manzi Valley have come together to pledge their support for the United Against Malaria campaign, an innovative new strategy that aims to draw together government, the football fraternity, non-governmental organisations and the business sector in a push towards eradicating malaria.

“We are delighted to welcome these three companies as partners in the United Against Malaria campaign,” said Dr Elizabeth Chizema-Kawesha, Deputy Director, Public Health and Research – Malaria at the National Malaria Control Centre. “Malaria affects us all and the support of the private sector will help the government to disseminate its messages to the population in a bold new way.”

Shoprite serves 450,000 customers every week, Manzi Valley sells around 1 million bottles of water a month, and Zambeef processes 60,000 beef cattle, 3.5 million chickens, 25,000 pigs as pork, 20 million eggs, 7.2 million litres of milk and dairy products, 24,000 tons of edible oils and 7.2 million loaves of bread through 101 retail outlets in Zambia and West Africa annually. Between them the three companies employ some 5,760 local people.

“The world tends to think AIDS is the number one killer in Africa. Yet statistics show that malaria is worse. We at Shoprite are very aware of this,” said Shoprite Deputy General Manager Charles Bota. “Over the last three years in Zambia, Shoprite has put money into assisting the fight against this scourge. For example, we have been involved with the Roll Back Malaria campaign with PermaNet and Ecomed where we offered treated mosquito nets and treatment kits at very low prices all over Zambia. This year we are very pleased to be part of the United Against Malaria team. This partnership in all our stores countrywide will enhance the fight against this preventable and treatable disease that affects our customers,” added Bota, whose stores are working on a range of promotional plans to highlight the message.



Manzi Valley Chief Executive Officer Stewart Simpson pledged to put the United Against Malaria logo on millions of Manzi water bottles, and added: "Manzi Supports Health and Sports' is one of our slogans. We believe passionately in improving the lives of everyone in Zambia."

The sentiment was backed up by Nick Wilkinson, Chief Executive Officer of Zambef Products, which is planning to carry the logo on its trucking fleet. "We consider the fight against malaria extremely important because it remains the biggest killer within Zambia, with children being particularly vulnerable. Prevention is the best cure and must be a priority for all without the burden of cost. However access to medical treatment should be available to all Zambians. A healthier nation means more productivity from our workforce and a healthier, wealthier consumer to buy our products. The creation of wealth in any country is directly linked to health and education," he said.

With such large outreaches into the community, through their shops and distribution networks, the businesses have the capacity to reach people in the farthest corners of the country, from cities to remote villages. Each are well-established household names that are instantly recognisable to everyone, explained Todd Jennings of the Malaria Control and Evaluation Partnership in Africa (MACEPA).

"By drawing on these networks, we hope to get our message across to as many people as possible: sleep under a bednet every night, allow your home to be sprayed; pregnant women take preventive medicine and go for immediate testing if you suspect malaria," he said.

United Against Malaria's pioneering approach has drawn from football for its inspiration, believing that teamwork is the key to success.

Chipolopolo Boys captain Chris Katongo joined Health Minister Hon. Kapembwa Simbao earlier this month in launching the campaign, which aims to drive support for Zambia's goal of reaching the 2010 target of universal access to treated bednets and malaria medicine, a crucial first step to reaching the international target of reducing deaths to near zero by 2015.

United Against Malaria is being launched in countries across Africa in the run-up to next year's World Cup in South Africa. Global partners include the Gates Foundation with support from the United Nations Foundation, Roll Back Malaria Partnership, the One Campaign, Malaria No More, PATH, PSI, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Comic Relief.

By leveraging football, the most popular sport in the world, United Against Malaria aims to raise global awareness and renew worldwide commitment to ending malaria, as well as increase the use of prevention tools and malaria treatment in Africa.

Malaria is endemic in all nine provinces of Zambia, accounting for around a third of all hospital visits and having a major impact on families, the economy and the health system.



The government has made malaria prevention and control a national priority and has intensified its scale-up of interventions in recent years. Over six million insecticide-treated bednets (ITN), one of the best methods to prevent malaria, have been distributed nationwide. Indoor residual spraying (IRS) is now conducted in half of Zambia's 72 districts. Through these interventions, as well as nationwide access to testing and treatment, Zambia has recorded remarkable progress reducing the burden of malaria.

Visit <http://www.unitedagainstmalaria.org> for more information.

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Photo caption 1:

Picture 1: United Against Malaria corporate partners pledge their support: (from left) Shoprite Non-Food Buyer Graham Ritchie, Manzi Valley Chief Executive Officer Stewart Simpson and Zambeef Products Chief Executive Officer Nick Wilkinson.

Picture 2: United Against Malaria corporate partners pledge their support: (from left) Manzi Valley Chief Executive Officer Stewart Simpson, Shoprite Non-Food Buyer Graham Ritchie and Zambeef Products Chief Executive Officer Nick Wilkinson.

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