

Report on the ELCA Malaria Campaign



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is working to contain malaria—a preventable disease that claims the lives of almost 900,000 people each year, most of them women and children in Africa. The ELCA, encouraged by the vote of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, has developed a strategy to join the global movement to overcome malaria in Africa by 2015.

Through this effort, the ELCA is building upon its commitments to companion churches in other countries as they develop and implement strategies for preventing and treating malaria in Africa. This work is already underway in five countries in Southern Africa (Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).¹ Companion churches of the ELCA have begun to mobilize their congregations, women's and youth groups, and service organizations to contain malaria community by community, family by family. Through the ELCA Malaria Campaign, church-based efforts are expanding to promote insecticide-treated bed nets and help mothers get quick medical help to prevent malaria deaths. This church is helping communities living in poverty to manage standing water in order to keep mosquitoes from breeding. Hospitals, clinics, and health systems are expanding their battle against malaria, creating synergies with their work on HIV and AIDS and other diseases that are intensified by poverty. The ELCA's companion churches also will work with and encourage their governments to act decisively and effectively to contain malaria.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign also is helping to contain malaria in East Africa (Tanzania—in partnership with Lutheran World Relief) and West Africa (Nigeria—with Global Health Ministries). As the ELCA Malaria Campaign unfolds and as funds are received to support these initiatives, work will expand to companion churches in Liberia, Central African Republic, and Ethiopia as well as to Lutheran World Federation's engagements with refugees and impoverished communities.

The United Nations Foundation-related campaign that had been under consideration at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly required that 30 percent of the funds raised go to the Global Fund, 20 percent to be used for capacity building to encourage companion churches to participate in Global Fund country efforts, and 50 percent to support companions' malaria programming. In the fall of 2010, it became evident that the projected campaign goal for the work within this broader partnership was too high

given the current economic conditions, and the ELCA stepped away from that proposal in order to establish a campaign which it could embrace and which would provide for its commitments to this church's global partners with more certainty.

The proposed \$15 million goal for the restructured ELCA Malaria Campaign will be challenging, but it is achievable and ambitious enough to meet the commitments that have been made to the ELCA's companion churches in Africa.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign expands support for the mission of the ELCA that is built through mission support and ELCA World Hunger. It provides an exciting opportunity for ELCA members, congregations, and networks to deepen their commitment above and beyond their regular ELCA World Hunger giving. In the pilot phase of the campaign (2009–2010), it was discovered that a malaria focus often provided opportunities for creative action and a basis to invite new participants into discovering and supporting the ELCA's work. Through the ELCA Malaria Campaign, this church's commitment to health and hope for African sisters and brothers is strong, focused, and prioritized.

¹ This work is facilitated by the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa, a regional expression of the Lutheran World Federation.

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