



Recommendations: Lutheran Malaria Initiative

Background

A unique opportunity for engagement by Lutheran partners to address “diseases of poverty,” including malaria, came to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in 2007, when LWR staff members were approached by the United Nations Foundation (UNF). UNF encouraged LWR to explore the possibility of embarking on a unique partnership to mobilize the “Lutheran constituency” in this country against malaria. The specific opportunity involved a possible multimillion-dollar grant from the United Nations Foundation, which had received funds to combat malaria from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. These funds could assist LWR to develop its capacity to mobilize Lutherans to combat malaria. The campaign would include both a significant educational component and a major fundraising component.

When approached by UNF, Lutheran World Relief staff understood that the goal of mobilizing U.S. Lutherans and engaging in international program work on malaria would require the full engagement of both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). Since July 2007, LWR and ELCA churchwide staff from a number of units, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop, Church in Society, Global Mission, Communication Services, and Development Services, have engaged in intensive conversation about what such a proposal might look like and whether to participate. At various stages, but with increasing intentionality, these conversations included The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. LCMS leadership has affirmed that LCMS is a full partner in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) with LWR and the ELCA and is committed to the joint partnership goals of education, advocacy, and raising funds to contain malaria. The LCMS meets in convention in 2010.

In the summer of 2007, an initial feasibility study was conducted by Community Counseling Services (CCS) on behalf of LWR. CCS recommended a campaign goal of \$75 million over five years. An initial suggested breakdown of this goal was the following: LWR, \$30 million; ELCA, \$25 million; and LCMS, \$20 million. Money raised in this campaign would be channeled through the following:

- Church or church-related entities, specifically:
 - 1) LWR, as it builds its capacity to provide malaria-related services in Africa (particularly in West and East Africa);

- 2) the ELCA, as it engages companion churches in all regions of Africa and within the wider context of the Lutheran World Federation; and
 - 3) LCMS, as it develops projects in eight African countries; and
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria,¹ a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector, and affected communities.

For the ELCA, the core LMI case for support is to articulate LMI as a priority among the priorities of the ELCA. From the beginning, the case must integrate the opportunity in a way that allows this church’s LMI efforts to flow out of the World Hunger Appeal and the “Stand with Africa” campaign and to integrate with other strategic priorities, including the HIV and AIDS strategy, which was mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

In LMI the ELCA will engage companion churches in other countries, seeking their leadership and guidance as anti-malaria activities are developed in those countries and as the malaria initiative is interpreted in the United States. This will be done within the context of the ELCA’s relationships within the Lutheran World Federation and its bilateral relationships with companion churches. Developing synergy with existing health-related and HIV and AIDS efforts will be a high priority.

At this time, the ELCA has given a minimum commitment to raise \$20 million for malaria and \$10 million to support the ELCA’s HIV and AIDS strategy. In addition, in 2008, the ELCA completed a feasibility study on a comprehensive churchwide campaign in conjunction with its 25th anniversary in 2012. If recommended, such a campaign would incorporate LMI and the HIV and AIDS strategy into a larger effort. A positive recommendation to move forward with a comprehensive campaign would need approval by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

All three potential LMI partners have agreed that, given their history and mission commitments, any common inter-Lutheran campaign on malaria would need to reflect the understanding that malaria is a disease of and is intensified by

¹ From the Global Fund’s Web site: “The Global Fund’s purpose is to attract, manage, and disburse resources to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. [The fund] does not implement programs directly, relying instead on the knowledge of local experts. As a financing mechanism, the Global Fund works closely with other multilateral and bilateral organizations involved in health and development issues to ensure that newly funded programs are coordinated with existing ones. In many cases, these partners participate in local Country Coordinating Mechanisms, providing important technical assistance during the development of proposals and implementation of programs.”

poverty. They agreed that Lutheran engagement in malaria projects would be deficient if it were based on simplistic approaches to malaria eradication (e.g., handing out nets). LMI partners also agreed that a malaria response, to be effective in the field, would need to be carried out within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development. Education about malaria in this country similarly would need to avoid simplistic or purely medical approaches; it would need to show clearly and convincingly the connections between poverty and malaria.

The ELCA, therefore, has been considering the wisdom of engaging in a possible malaria initiative at the same time it lives out its commitment to intensify its HIV and AIDS response and develops a comprehensive churchwide HIV and AIDS strategy, as mandated by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly. ELCA staff emphasized from the beginning of the conversations with LWR, LCMS, and the UNF that engagement in malaria work would not come at the expense of its HIV and AIDS commitment. Rather, the two would need to be held together strategically, both in interpretation and in work with companions.

The ELCA Church Council has taken two actions related to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. In November 2007 the Church Council voted [CC07.11.80]:

To authorize staff of Development Services, Global Mission, and Church in Society, under the coordination of the Office of the Presiding Bishop:

To develop, in partnership with Lutheran World Relief, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the United Nations Foundation, a proposal for a possible Lutheran Malaria Initiative, which would support the work of companion churches in the Lutheran World Federation and other international partners in ministry as well as the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and

To develop plans for integrating and coordinating such an effort with the ELCA's longstanding commitment to walk with those affected by HIV and AIDS and companion churches that are responding to this crisis, within the context of the integrated churchwide HIV and AIDS strategy that was called for by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly;

To request Development Services, Global Mission, and Church in Society to bring through the Office of the Presiding Bishop a report and possible recommendations on this initiative to the April 2008 meeting of the Church Council;

To authorize the Executive Committee, between meetings of the Church Council, to monitor and take appropriate action relating to the development of a possible malaria appeal and program, including the possible receipt of funding from the UN Foundation;

To request that the Office of the Presiding Bishop seek input from the Cabinet of Executives and that any information relating to the development of a possible malaria appeal and program be posted to the

Church Council's online listserv for input to the Executive Committee prior to any decision; and

To authorize staff of Development Services and Global Mission to include in the World Hunger program's "Stand with Africa" campaign pilot efforts in anti-malaria fundraising, education, and international programming in 2008–2009 as proposals for action by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on a possible churchwide appeal are developed during that period.

At its April 2008 meeting, the Church Council voted [CC08.04.12]:

To affirm the work of the Church in Society, Communication Services, Development Services, and Global Mission units and the Office of the Presiding Bishop in developing a proposed Lutheran Malaria Initiative;

To acknowledge that the proposed initiative also will include an HIV and AIDS emphasis and will be integrated with the churchwide strategy on HIV and AIDS and any churchwide appeal;

To authorize receipt of funds and their utilization for the purposes of preparation for a potential Lutheran Malaria Initiative educational and fundraising campaign in accordance with the United Nations Foundation grant proposal;

To authorize continued Lutheran Malaria Initiative work until the 2009 Churchwide Assembly under the auspices of the World Hunger Appeal and Program;

To stipulate that, as specifically designated monies, United Nations Foundation grant funds for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative are not subject to the allocation between World Hunger domestic and international projects; and

To request that an update on the initiative be brought to the November 2008 meeting of the Church Council and that a report and recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly be brought to the April 2009 meeting of the Church Council.

Engagement in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative includes, but is not limited to, the following categories:

Framework:

- Strengthened relationships with the U.S. partners in LMI: Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);
- Strengthened relationships with global partners, particularly this church's companion churches in Africa;
- Commitment to participate in LMI for up to five years, beginning in 2009;
- Clear communication among LMI partners;

- Clear reporting and supervision of LMI work within the ELCA by the Church Council on a regular basis, with a progress report to the 2011 and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies;
- Collaboration across appropriate units of the churchwide organization so that the work related to LMI provides synergy and energy for this church's broader mission, both internationally and domestically; and
- Particular attention to be given to the proposed HIV and AIDS strategy and its education and fundraising goals so that these two important efforts are done as cooperatively as possible within this church.

Education and awareness:

Education emphasizing malaria as a disease of poverty would:

- Be carried out globally within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development, in close cooperation and partnership with ELCA companion churches in Africa;
- Understand this disease within the larger cycle of poverty and acknowledge the capacity of global companion churches to address this pandemic;
- Reflect a broad spectrum of approaches to combating malaria (e.g., medical, faith community, government and community organizations and structure);
- Show clearly and convincingly the connections between poverty and malaria and the relationship of this effort to the broader World Hunger Appeal and Program; and
- Be coordinated within the LMI partnership whenever possible, with a goal of providing every aspect of this church's ministry, as well as every age group, with the opportunity to engage this LMI.

Fundraising:

- Approach congregations, synods, all related ministries of the ELCA, and individuals for education and awareness-raising (following the 2009 Churchwide Assembly) and fundraising (in synods and congregations following the 2011 Churchwide Assembly);
- Work closely with the fundraising consultant for LMI, Community Counseling Service (CCS), to provide a comprehensive and clear approach to donors, congregations, synods, and others;
- Receive donations through the World Hunger Appeal, designated for LMI, while encouraging continued strong support for the WHA and new support for the HIV and AIDS strategy;
- Receive grant monies from UNF to enable start-up of fundraising efforts; and
- Share in the LMI partners' fundraising goal of \$75 million over five years (2009–2014).

Timeline:

- 2009: Anticipated approval of continued development of and involvement in LMI by the ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly.

- 2009–2011: Development of resources for education; planning for implementation of LMI in synods and congregations; quiet fundraising stage.
- 2010: The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod meets in convention.
- 2010–2011: Roll out of materials and educational resources through programs and organizations of the LMI partnership.
- 2011: Anticipated approval of official LMI engagement by ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly.
- 2011–2014: Fundraising campaign across all LMI partners.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To approve continued development of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in partnership with Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);

To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa and the Lutheran World Federation;

To begin work related to LMI in the next biennium (2009–2011), specifically involving preparation of resources, pilot projects at sites to be determined, solicitation of individual donors, and collaboration with synods and congregations for anticipated LMI fundraising engagement following the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To develop the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in ways that reinforce efforts by the World Hunger Appeal both to achieve its \$25 million goal and to continue to raise designated funds to address another disease intensified by poverty: HIV and AIDS;

To authorize continued receipt of designated LMI gifts under the auspices of the World Hunger Appeal, with such funds to be allocated through a specific budget for this initiative;

To request that a report and recommendations for a possible churchwide campaign for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative be brought to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly; and

To anticipate that this whole church—members of every age, congregations, synods, the churchwide

organization, agencies and institutions, the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, the Lutheran Youth Organization, colleges and universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, camping ministries, and all others will learn about malaria and other diseases intensified by poverty and prayerfully support the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as it grows into readiness for a possible major fundraising campaign in synods and congregations following authorizing action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.