

Project 4: External assessment of proficiency of malaria microscopists and laboratory capacity in districts stratified for malaria elimination in Ethiopia

Date supported: July 2017

Description of project:

Ethiopia has a National Strategic Plan (NSP) for the elimination of malaria from the country. Whilst substantial external funding has been obtained to support the overall NSP there has been scant recognition of the importance of the quality of diagnosis obtained by laboratory medicine microscopists.



The FEN has provided an award of 10,000 Swiss Francs to a collaboration with the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) and the Federal Ministry of Health in Ethiopia to support a project that will assess the competence of the individuals performing malaria microscopy and the capacity of the laboratories in which they work.

The project, led by Desalegn Nega Wada from the EPHI, has the following specific objectives: (1) To assess the competency of malaria microscopists; (2) To assess clinical laboratory capacity; (3) To provide further refresher training in all aspects of malaria microscopy to low-level professionals; (4) To identify gaps in laboratory capacity and to make recommendations to the national malaria control and elimination programme.

A cross sectional study will be conducted in 100 hospitals and 100 health centres selected randomly from 235 malaria elimination-planned districts of Ethiopia. Up to five laboratory professionals in each health-facility will be included in the study. Data will be collected by distributing a standardised pre-validated malaria slide-panel sets and self-administered questionnaires. Sensitivity, specificity, and kappa score will be calculated to check the strength of agreement between the reference and WHO-certified expert malaria readers. Then, post-study training will be provided to in-training levels (based on the present study finding) to enhance the skill of professionals in malaria microscopy.

Date project completed:

Project report and outcome: