

## **Alliance for Malaria Prevention TA Mentoring Concept Paper**

### **Introduction**

AMP<sup>1</sup> has been involved in supporting large-scale LLIN<sup>2</sup> distributions since 2002. Since 2004, a majority of country requests for technical support for the planning and implementation of mass LLIN distribution campaigns have been met by AMP. To date, international consultants, mainly based outside Africa, have provided the majority of AMP's support to countries through relatively short-term missions (on average 10 – 14 working days). However, there is existing capacity in Africa that should be further developed in order to support country-based and “owned” technical capacity, facilitate country-to-country exchange of experience, and develop a pool of skilled, Africa-based= consultants who can be deployed based on country requests for technical assistance. AMP's 2011 work-plan<sup>3</sup> includes a focus on providing learning opportunities through an implementation and logistics training (October 2011) for Africa-based Ministry of Health representatives in order to further develop regional technical assistance support.

Over the past years, AMP has worked to provide learning opportunities to National Malaria Control Program staff and partner organizations through several initiatives:

- identifying a pool of individuals to work with in-country counterparts and provide technical assistance in the areas of implementation, logistics, communication and M&E;
- developing “A toolkit for developing integrated campaigns to encourage the distribution and use of long lasting insecticide-treated nets”, soon to be released in its second version with a greater focus on universal coverage campaigns;
- developing the AMP website (in both English and French) to provide a central location for resources and tools – <http://allianceformalariaprevention.com>
- preparing and delivering knowledge specific workshops or trainings to enhance technical understanding specific to an area – scale up planning and implementation, logistics, behaviour change communication and monitoring and evaluation – with the goal of enhancing NMCP<sup>4</sup> staff and in-country partners ability to support campaigns;
- building collaboration and information sharing between countries through post-training e-mail group lists where problems, successes and updates can be shared;<sup>5</sup>
- informal mentoring of MoH and in-country partner staff during AMP TA missions.

These building blocks help to support countries to participate fully in the process of developing and delivering large scale LLIN campaigns successfully.

In 2011, AMP has proposed a next step, which is to provide mentoring opportunities to identified individuals<sup>6</sup> during AMP technical assistance missions. This concept paper outlines some broad ideas and thoughts in support of mentoring for LLIN campaigns.

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<sup>1</sup> Alliance For Malaria Prevention

<sup>2</sup> Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Bed Nets

<sup>3</sup> Roll Back Malaria

<sup>4</sup> National Malaria Control Program

<sup>5</sup> Note that these have been difficult to maintain and have lost purpose when no one has dedicated time to them.

<sup>6</sup> Note that criteria for participation have yet to be defined but will be specific to the type of person and role they should be in.

## **Value of Mentoring**

In supporting the goals and objectives of LLIN distributions, and increasing country and regional level capacity, AMP recognizes the importance of mentoring. When a mentoring candidate within an organization grows, their self growth will positively impact the outcomes of the organization's objectives as they gain new knowledge. In addition, empowering personnel for future implementation and delivery of important activities in the fight against malaria fits within, and works towards achieving, the RBM and MDG<sup>7</sup> targets.

“The role of the mentor is to facilitate learning in such a way that the knowledge, skills, or competencies connect to actions in the present and possibly in the future. This requires building on the learner's experience, providing a conducive environment for learning, and appropriately challenging, supporting, and providing vision for the learner.”<sup>8</sup>

## **Objectives**

The mentoring activities will be focused on LLIN scale up implementation and logistics as these are the core areas in which AMP has consultants with the ability to mentor individuals. Some advantages of mentoring relationships are:

- in-country capacity building and staff development in NMCP;
- avenue for countries to highlight where they want to build capacity in anticipation of upcoming large scale campaigns;
- hands on experience combined with targeted mentoring of key areas;
- further development of unique partnership and cooperation among in-country stakeholders;
- further development of regional capacity to promote country-to-country sharing of experiences and provision of technical assistance;
- initial planning phases of country project including distribution planning with district representatives in regions/areas; and
- develop skills to assist with the distribution framework with MoH.

The mentoring approach is not driven solely by a structured teaching method; it must include components of hands-on activities, experiential learning and reflection on experiences. It is based on steps that follow and support the overall LLIN campaign distribution planning and implementation.

A mentoring system offers a way to further staff development and, in certain situations, it could become the preferred approach for targeted training. Any malaria mentoring experience involves several levels to facilitate the learning relationship. Two crucial levels where commitment to the process is essential are at the TA<sup>9</sup> level (mentor) and the candidate(s) level (mentee). An initial step will require the supporting AMP TA consultant provide project knowledge and information in a clear, professional way with opportunities for experiential learning to increase the skill level of the selected candidate(s). A second level will involve the Africa based candidate(s) who must become engaged in the campaign process, be motivated, perform activities and actively participate in, and contribute to, learning experiences.

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<sup>7</sup> Millennium Development Goals

<sup>8</sup> Zachary, L. (2000), *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*, p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Technical Assistance

### **Mentoring Methodology / Approach**

Mentoring activities can take many forms, from building a mentoring culture within the AMP partnership, to developing one-on-one or small group mentoring with a TA provider, to broadening AMP's capacity to deliver train-the-trainer (ToT) mentoring education. It is suggested that an initial first step might be to develop focused one-on-one mentoring opportunities within targeted countries whereby AMP can develop Africa based NMCP capacity while learning how best to deliver this on a broader scale.

Effective mentoring requires preparation, with delivery presented in a logical, progressive order. A primary purpose of the process is to provide knowledge, skills and confidence in performing the required actions to bring the project to successful completion. Selection of any country candidate requires the NMCP or the SRN<sup>10</sup> focal point to consider the nominee(s) availability (both during the mentoring process but as well once the mentoring has been completed and the nominee will be the lead TA provider) and capacity, including skills, knowledge, and attitudes, two major elements of which are knowledge based in experience and interpersonal/teamwork skills<sup>11</sup>. This selection process is commonly known as "pairing protocols"<sup>12</sup>. Learning goals must be collaboratively established from the outset through discussion, clarification, suggestions and joint agreement.

Four phases in mentoring relationships as described by Lois Zachery<sup>13</sup> are:

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Description with some key elements</b>
Preparing	establishing clarity around expectation and role; discovery process; is the proposed mentor-mentee relationship a good fit? do all involved have the time?
Negotiating	mentoring partners come to agreement on achieving a common understanding around: expectations, goals, responsibilities, criteria for success, accountability, closure of relationship, etc
Enabling	time for the implementation of the learning relationship; effective communication is very important at this time
Closure	opportunity to evaluate personal learning of mentoring partners; evaluating, acknowledging and recognizing achievement of learning outcomes

The proposed approach is to work with the selected candidate, who is currently a member of the NMCP, with the longer term vision of developing capacity in the malaria program. Every country context will be different but some possible components of this approach are:

<b>Situation for Mentoring</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Person working at NMCP in the country AMP is working in	Possibly an in-country partner staff at the same time who is doing the same function – at partners expense
Staff member from NMCP from another country who joins the consultant and the	Mentored during an ongoing activity for an upcoming campaign and to develop regional

<sup>10</sup> Sub-regional network

<sup>11</sup> AMP will develop a standard set of criteria that nominees will need to meet in order to participate in the mentoring activities. This is to ensure the maximum gain from the mentoring process.

<sup>12</sup> Zachary, L. (2003), *Building an Effective Mentoring Program*, retrieved from: <http://leadservs.com/articles.php>.

<sup>13</sup> Zachary, L. (2000), *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*, p. 50-53.

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country team	capacity (or to prepare someone from another country with a planned campaign)
NMCP staff that have been identified highly capable of providing support with a bit of mentoring assistance	AMP consultant may be able to assist with the identification

The above three situations may require some of the following steps depending on the specific case:

- After nomination by the country's MoH a paramount first step is a detailed candidate briefing given by the in-country NMCP and partners;
- One-on-one or small group training in-country by selected AMP TA consultants (only implementation and logistics at this time);
- Shadowing by candidate to develop skills with AMP TA;
- Candidate assumes some TA responsibilities and leads in-country activities in area of mentoring as individual knowledge base grows, while distance support is provided by the AMP TA consultant between face-to-face meetings in country;
- Progress review of mentoring process with the mentee and in-country partnership; and
- Ongoing mentoring and support with AMP TA via e-mail and/or phone contact, as required.

### **Summary**

AMP is committed to developing and increasing country and regional capacity using a mentoring approach with existing AMP TA consultants and selected Africa based individuals with appropriate profiles working the NMCP or in-country partners. A mentoring system will help to decrease many of the present knowledge gaps within LLIN mass distribution campaign planning and implementation. Not all country campaigns will be suited for such an approach, nor will all AMP TA consultants have the appropriate profiles to undertake mentoring, but efforts will be made to develop this method where practical. Success in mentoring will depend on provision of adequate time, development of a clear process and objectives, ensuring proper pairing of mentor and mentee(s), and provision of suitable resources (including funds for training, communication, etc). It is envisioned that this concept document might serve as the starting point in the process of mentoring for further country and regional capacity development for scaling up coverage and utilization with LLINs to reach the RBM and MDG targets by 2015.