

EXECUTIVE GROUP UPDATE

December 2004



A FUTURE FREE OF LF
Global Alliance

Dear Colleagues

As you will see this circular is a little earlier than scheduled because of the Christmas break. Mention of which provides me with the opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I would also like to say thank you to you all for all your efforts in the past year working with the Global Programme and Global Alliance to ensure that work continues towards the goal of eliminating lymphatic filariasis.

Before I bring you up to date with activities let me say that from this circular forward it will be known as "Executive Group Update" and not 'Information Share' as previously. I understand that calling it Information Share has caused some confusion for which I apologise.

Moving into the New Year the main focus and priority of the Executive Group's work will continue to be on fundraising both in-country and globally.

For the first time a few weeks ago the fundraising team met for a two-day intensive fundraising team meeting in Atlanta resulting in, amongst the outputs, an aggressive, results-oriented 6-month plan.

Coordination of Donor Development: When funding is tight, coordinating interventions and fundraising among relevant programmes makes both financial and political sense. LF is leading the way using its extensive community-based network to assist other diseases with drug or product distributions and thus tap into other potential financial sources. Following the example in Togo, where the LF and malaria programmes successfully collaborated on an application to the Global Fund, the Global Alliance is sponsoring workshops to try to replicate this experience elsewhere in Africa.

Contacts in Europe and the U.S. are being established to forge donor relationships at the country level. Working with the Programme Managers from Zanzibar and Kenya proposals are being developed for submission to the Izumi Foundation and Shell International. Other contacts in Kenya are also being followed up.

Donor giving which traditionally was headquarter based is without doubt being decentralised, making the Alliance's multi-level, integrated approach to donors all the more important for successful LF proposals. The fundraising team's plans to follow up on leads identified at the headquarters of multi-national corporations is therefore most appropriate.

The Executive Group would like to take this opportunity of encouraging Programme Managers in those countries where Shell (and also Standard Chartered Bank who have been approached at headquarter level) have operations to take advantage of such process as in Kenya. Programme Managers who are prepared to take advantage of these lead but would like assistance should contact either myself or any other Executive Group member or Joan Fahy and we will set the process rolling.

Sri Lanka is undertaking integration the opposite way by approaching the international companies at country level providing the opportunity for follow up at corporate headquarters. Programme

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Director, Dr. Tilaka Liyanage and Dr. Usha Jayasooriya, Medical Officer and concurrent fund raising coordinator approached different companies in Sri Lanka to explore possible partnerships and as a result Nestlé Sri Lanka and Lifebuoy (Unilever) Sri Lanka requested proposals for next year's MDA and morbidity management programme there. Especially noteworthy has been the efforts of Professor Mahroof Ismail, Chair of the RPRG, and a valued adviser of the LF programme in Sri Lanka, to support both the fundraising workshop and in-country training. He also generously tapped contacts in the business community and paved the way for some of the visits.

Not only does in-country training provide an opportunity for the LF team to learn the language and skills of fundraising but provides the opportunity for cooperation with other national health programmes.

Advocacy: An exciting event to look forward to in the New Year will be the re-launch of the filariasis.org website, which is expected to take place by February. The entire Alliance advocacy and fundraising team have worked together with Francesco Rio of WHO and other members of the Global Alliance to revise the current website to be more user-friendly and accessible to external audiences, including donors and media. This also includes making the filariasis.org website barrier-free, a way of coding that allows those with disabilities to also view the website easily. Also in the advocacy area, set of discrete projects, including a sample press kit for use by national programmes, are being developed.

Fundraising Steps and Successes: Merck & Co., Inc. and GSK have both made generous contributions in support of the Global Alliance. As reported earlier a proposal to the Izumi Foundation (U.S.) for support in the Zanzibar MDA is imminent and an interest in support expressed by Johnson & Johnson (U.S.) has been followed up with a recently submitted proposal focused on supplies for hydrocoele surgeries in West Africa.

Raising visibility and support for the LF programme also remains a high priority. In the last couple of months several meetings for this purpose have taken place in Europe and the US.

In addition at the invitation of the Gates Foundation a key meeting was held in which targeted support for the Global Programme was discussed. The Executive Group is now guiding the development of a Letter of Intent, which is the next step in seeking funding from the Foundation. While support will not be as broad as the previous grant, the recent visit to Seattle was very encouraging. The more limited nature of Gates' interest, however, makes it all the more important that fundraising is creative and a range of donors are engaged to fully fund the Programme.

Many bases are being covered and interest in the Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis is growing, but it takes the participation of all the programmes and partners in the Alliance and I am sure that together we will succeed!

The Liverpool Lymphatic Filariasis Support Centre has recently heard that they have been successful in obtaining operational funding for the current year (2004/5). In collaboration and in line with UK Department for International Development recommendations the funding received will support activities in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Tanzania Dominican Republic, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vanuatu. Negotiations are also ongoing for a further five-year contract which will not only fund the core activities of the Centre but also continue support for operational activities but in a more focused down capacity – a recommendation of their recent external review.

I am pleased to be able to attach to this Executive Group Update the latest version of the Communication Plan. If you have any comments the Executive Group will be more than pleased to received them

Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of many, the report from the Cairo meeting (GAELF3) will not be ready before Christmas as hoped for. However, be assured you will receive a copy early in the New Year.

In the last week copies of a brochure and a fourfold, both of which can be used for advocacy and fundraising have been sent to all partners. The brochure is the first to be produced by the Executive Group of the Global Alliance. It is a 16-page brochure detailing LF, the Global Alliance, the successes and the challenges of the Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis. The fourfold companion piece contains, in summary, the information contained in the brochure. If you do not receive copies or require more please contact Joan Fahy at the Executive Group Secretariat (fahy@liv.ac.uk).

Issue No.5 of the Newsletter has been printed and is on its way to you. I hope you will enjoy articles written by the Chair of the Africa Programme Review Group, Dr. John Gyapong, on 'Progress on the elimination of LF in the African PRG' and the Chair of the Eastern Mediterranean Programme Review Group, Dr. Maged El Setouhy on 'LF elimination in the Eastern Mediterranean PRG'. There is also updated data on the total population of all IUs for MDA with drug co-administration in 2003 plus the number of LF endemic countries globally. The Executive Summary of the Communication Plan and a short summary of the fundraising successes are also included.

The Representative Contact Group responded to the request for input on the first draft of the theme, objectives and outline agenda for the next Global Alliance meeting in 2006. Their comments were much appreciated and will now remain on file to be taken into account at a time when the meeting documentation will be pulled together.

Finally the Executive Group plans to meet in early February. If you have any issues which you feel should be put on their agenda for discussion please do not hesitate to either let myself, any member of the Executive Group or Joan Fahy know.

As a reminder I attach the lists of the members of the Executive Group and the Representative Contact Group for your information.

Finally again on behalf of the Executive Group I wish a Happy Christmas and New Year.



Yankum Dadzie
Chair
Executive Group
Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis