UAE Health Fund Prize awarded to Gates Foundation

MMV worked with the UAE Government to support the award of its Health Foundation Prize to a uniquely worthy recipient, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Accepting the prize on behalf of the Foundation at the World Health Assembly in May 2007 Dr Tachi Yamada recognized the importance of UAE’s entry into the field of global public health and cited the planned Malaria Research Facility in the UAE as part of this trend. The Research Facility is being jointly coordinated by MMV, the Global Medical Forum, Genzyme Corp., and the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard.

New Malaria Clinical Trial Site at Bagamoyo, Tanzania

A new Research and Training Unit specializing in clinical trials for novel antimalarial drugs and vaccines has been launched in Bagamoyo. The facility was built with support from MMV, the Malaria Vaccine Initiative (MVI) and the Malaria Clinical Trials Alliance (MCTA). MMV provided the facility with equipment such as Haematology and Biochemistry analysers, microscopes, freezers, and computers to make it fully functional. The site now has the capacity to conduct GCP compliant clinical trials for drugs and vaccines.

Adieu…

Carl Craft, MMV’s Chief Scientific Officer; Leon Rosenberg, R A Mashelkar, and Trevor Jones, members of MMV’s Board; Virander Chauhan, David Roos, Dennis Schmatz, Henrietta Ukwu, Thomas Wellemes, and Kitima Yuthavong, members of the Expert Scientific Advisory Committee (ESAC).

Sincere thanks to them all for actively building up the momentum that has brought MMV to this juncture, with four new drugs soon to emerge from the pipeline. We wish them the very best with their future endeavours.

Bienvenue…

MMV warmly welcomes new team members: Stephan Duparc, Medical Director, Sylvie Fonteilles-Drabek, Contracts Officer, and Liz Kernen, Administrative Assistant; and new ESAC members: Christine Clayton, Chantal Laburte, Wilbur Milhous, and Ronnratrai Ruangweerayut.

Dr Sornchai Looareesuwan

The malaria community has lost a great champion with the untimely death of Dr Sornchai Looareesuwan, former Dean of the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University Thailand. Dr Looareesuwan, a physician of over 30 years, had contributed significantly to malaria research. He had served on MMV’s Expert Scientific Advisory Committee from 1999 to 2004 and was principal investigator for a number of antimalarial clinical trials, including MMV trials at Mahidol and at other research facilities in Thailand.

Sornchai was a great friend of MMV and his wise counsel and infectious enthusiasm will be sadly missed.

coming events…

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>16-18 October</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>BMGF Malaria Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 Oct-2 November</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>Forum 11, Global Forum for Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-8 November</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>56th ASTMH</td>
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MMV is organising five symposia at ASTMH. Look out for the ASTMH flyer, closer to the date, with details of these not-to-be-missed meetings.
MMV Project of the Year 2006 goes to Next Generation OZ

Congratulations to the OZ team! For the second time in 5 years the Product Development Team (PDT) of this next-generation synthetic peroxide programme has won the MMV Project of the Year Award. This class of compounds shows great promise as a malaria cure.

At the 7th MMV Stakeholders’ Meeting in Kampala, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda presented the 2006 award to Prof Jonathan Vennerstrom, University of Nebraska (USA), Prof William Charman, Monash University, Australia, and their team.

In collaboration with MMV & MMV’s Expert Scientific Advisory Committee, the team set its sights on pushing the utility of this novel class of drugs to the challenging targets of a single-dose oral cure for patients with uncomplicated *P. falciparum* malaria (and possibly *P. vivax*). Furthermore, an effective, safe and easy dosage could also be a potential prophylactic treatment as well as intermittent preventive treatment in pregnant women and infants.

These efforts are showing promising results and the team is hopeful that they will once again be in a position to put forward a lead candidate, with the potential for this unique profile, by the end of 2007.

DHA-Piperaquine gets Orphan Drug Status

The European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMEA) granted orphan drug status to Dihydroartemisinin-Piperaquine (DHA-PPQ) in July 2007.

This is excellent news for the upcoming submission for registration of one of MMV’s four new artemisinin combination therapies (ACTs) soon to emerge from its pipeline. It should facilitate faster registration of this efficacious new antimalarial, and thus enable quicker access to patients.

DHA-PPQ was developed over 3 years by MMV in collaboration with Sigma Tau Industrie Farmaceutiche reunita S.p.A of Italy and Holley Pharmaceuticals of China, as well as Guangzhou University (China) and the University of Oxford, (UK). It is now ready to be filed for registration.
World Bank gives MMV a positive review

The World Bank recently commissioned a Global Program Review (GPR) of MMV.

The GPR demonstrates a deep understanding of MMV, its origins and evolution, the challenges it has overcome, and those it currently faces. MMV is delighted that the evaluation considers it to be ‘a successful product development public private partnership (PD-PPP) in the field of malaria’, and ‘an accepted part of the landscape of drug R&D on diseases of developing countries.’

To read the Global Program Review please visit: www.mmv.org

First Access Symposium sparks keen interest

The Access Symposium in Kampala, chaired by Francisco Songane, WHO, and Catherine Hodgkin, KIT, the Netherlands was well-attended, reflecting the concern over access to new malaria medicines in Africa.

The symposium assembled relevant players in Access and Delivery in east Africa, scrutinised the reality of antimalarial distribution in the private sector, highlighted gaps in ACT provision especially to the rural poor, and shared innovative approaches to close this gap. Another meeting with country decision-makers is in the offing and an MMV information meeting is planned for Francophone Africa in November 2007.

The Power of Partnerships

MMV in Uganda

This year, Kampala, Uganda played host to three important MMV meetings – the Board of Directors Meeting, MMV’s 7th Stakeholders’ Meeting, and the first Access Symposium. His Excellency, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda inaugurated the Stakeholders’ Meeting, where representatives of our stakeholders, industry partners, research institutes, national malaria programmes, and NGOs had gathered to hear about MMV’s progress and growth. Apart from official work, other events had been organised for participants: a boat cruise along the shores of Lake Victoria, a visit to malaria clinics in Kampala, and a trip to rural research sites near Jinja Falls.

Living with malaria in Kampala – a child’s-eye view

The MMV children’s drawing competition, to raise awareness of malaria, has now become a tradition. This year, over 250 six to 13 year olds from schools in Kampala took part in the competition. The five lucky winners were given MMV caps, T-shirts, and rucksacks full of goodies.

Malaria poses a major public health challenge in Uganda with almost 50 malaria infections for every 100 people. The nation’s children know about malaria, perhaps too well – most of them suffer the disease many times over in their lives. They clearly understand the effects of malaria and the urgent need to prevent this fatal disease.

As a tribute to MMV three schools staged a concert where they sang poignantly about malaria’s stranglehold on their lives.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni warned that malaria is a major killer and should be eradicated as a matter of urgency.
Interview with SABC’s ‘African Views’

On the role of PPPs in the fight against malaria in Africa
“The role of PPPs is broader than just the fight against malaria – they are mechanisms that allow innovation to occur where there isn’t a market. Commercial research and development (R&D) for new drugs is incredibly expensive – unless there are very large markets it basically doesn’t happen, which is why it wasn’t happening with anti-malarial drugs.”

Dr Chris Hentschel, President/CEO MMV

On malaria, the public health scourge
“The world is now realising that malaria is not only a public health scourge in Africa, and not only a single disease that needs to be addressed very forthrightly, but that it’s almost a sentinel indicator of the success of Africa’s development such a broad impact does it have on social and environmental issues.”

Dr Steven Phillips, Medical Director, ExxonMobil

MMV on the road in Africa
In May 2007, MMV undertook a five week mission in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Togo and Benin. The aim was to draw attention to the new products soon to emerge from MMV’s portfolio in 2008-2009, build increased awareness about MMV among key decision makers in these countries, and listen to their concerns about the registration and uptake of new ACTs.

MMV met with National Malaria Control Programme managers, heads of Pharmacy departments, national Procurement Agencies and heads of Regulatory Agencies in the six countries.

These decision-makers appreciated MMV’s investment in the outreach programme and requested that this be increased as the new antimalarial products reach regulatory approval.

Forum explores key Artemisinin challenges
His Excellency, Dr Yongyuth Yuthavong, the Thai Minister of Science & Technology, inaugurated the 2nd international conference on “Artemisinin production and market needs: Meeting Global Demand” in Bangkok, 25-26 June. The meeting was convened by the WHO and MMV.

Growers, extractors, pharmaceutical company representatives, and scientists, gathered from South America, Europe, Africa, China, Vietnam, India and Thailand to participate in the two-day conference on current technologies for, and supply issues with, the world’s most effective antimalarial drug, artemisinin.

Since the first Artemisinin production conference in Arusha, Tanzania, in 2005 significant changes in market demand for artemisinin have occurred and there has been technological progress in plant production and processing.

This conference gave A.annua/artemisinin/ACT producers, researchers, and donors, the platform to discuss the problems and opportunities within the industry, and identify areas where they believe on-going support and research is required.