2014 World Malaria Day Event

On April 25, 2014, the global health community in Tokyo commemorated **World Malaria Day** by emphasizing the power one person has to make a difference and focusing on Japan's efforts to combat malaria. **Dr. Toshihiro Horii**, a Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT Fund) grant recipient from Osaka University, shared his experience working to develop a malaria vaccine and **Mr. Tatsuo Mizuno**, vector control specialist with Malaria No More Japan (MNMJ), shared the importance of continued attention on this stifling disease. **Anyango** performed live adding a vibrant flair to the event. **Malaria No More Japan** (MNMJ), **Japan Center for International Exchange** (JCIE), and the **GHIT Fund** joined HGPI in co-organizing this unique event.

Horii Toshihiro
Professor and Researcher
Research Institute for Microbial Diseases
Osaka University

Malaria is prevalent in tropical, affects 400 million people, and results in 1.2 million deaths each year, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Those most at risk are children under 5, pregnant women, and nursing mothers in those regions. The unique life cycle of a malaria parasite leads to the prevalence of this disease.

In the past, malaria was a threat across Japan. During World War Ⅱ, hundreds of thousands of people were infected with malaria with a high prevalence amongst those returning from abroad. The most well-known effort to address malaria was conducted in Yaejima and Miyakogunto, Okinawa. In those regions, DDT was used to eliminate mosquitoes and antimalarial agents were used to bring down infections in cooperation with the local

population. As a result, malaria in Japan was eradicated by 1961. However, in other Asian countries like South Korea and North Korea, cases of malaria continue to be confirmed. The menace of malaria has not disappeared.

There are several ways to prevent malaria. At Osaka University's Research Institute for Microbial Diseases, we continue to work on developing a malaria vaccine. Effective malaria vaccines do not yet exist and the immune response mechanism to malaria has also not yet been identified. Utilizing the SERA antigenic gene, which is produced by a malaria parasite in human blood cell cycle, we performed clinical trials in Japan and Uganda on BK-SE36 malaria vaccine using the SE36 antigen, a recombinant protein expressed in E. coli. Phase I clinical trials in healthy Japanese adults and in healthy Ugandan adults and children have been conducted and we plan to conduct phase II clinical trials in a larger population. Based on clinical trial outcomes, BK-SE36 is a promising vaccine candidate being developed in Japan.

Dr. Horii's work to develop a malaria vaccine is supported by a grant from the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund. https://www.ghitfund.org

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Tatsuo Mizuno
Executive Director
Malaria No More Japan

Malaria is a preventable and treatable disease, and efforts to tackle it are now being done worldwide. The results of such global efforts are especially encouraging and it is reported that the mortality rate of malaria has declined by 42% in this past 12 years. However, while distributing mosquito nets as an employee of Sumitomo Chemical Company, I realized that we must do more in the affected areas. So, after retiring from the company, I continued to engage in projects to eradicate malaria.

I want to inform you what we can do to end malaria. Malaria No More launched the POWER OF ONE campaign in autumn of 2013 with the cooperation of groups such as Novartis, who develops anti-malarial agents. Through this campaign, a 100 yen or one dollar donation funds a diagnostic test or malaria treatment. The donations in Japan can be made through the Malaria No More Japan campaign site. In addition to this project, Malaria No More Japan established the Zero-Malaria Award, which will be given to the individuals and organizations that make efforts to eradicate malaria. The first winner is the Junior Chamber International Japan, which has made a substantial donation over the years to the Nothing But Nets campaign that distributes mosquito-nets to African children.

Sumitomo Chemical's Olyset Net Project http://sumivector.com/mosquito-nets/olyset-net
Junior Chamber International Japan (JCIJ) http://www.jaycee.or.jp
Malaria No More Japan's POWER OF ONE http://mnmj.asia/po1/

Anyango

World's first female nyatiti player

Enchanted by the nyatiti, I decided to practice in Lake Victoria, an area without electricity or running water in the western Kenya. One day, I got a fever suddenly and it was suggested that I take medicinal herbs. Yet, my fever persisted. Suspecting that it might be malaria, I stumbled alone for two hours under the brilliant sunlight to a hospital in the neighboring town. It was malaria. I got malaria four times. While I was learning the nyatiti in Kenya, I saw many children and the elders die from malaria. I was fortunate not to die from it, but the fact is that some people still believe that malaria can be cured with medicinal herbs- without seeing a doctor. I want to continue to use my music to advocate for access to proper medical care for those infected with malaria.

Kiyoshi Kurokawa, HGPI Chairman, closed the event by highlighting the importance of global collaborations to tackle malaria.

Satoko Itoh, Managing Director of Japan Center for International Exchange, was the evening's moderator.

- Date: Friday, April 25, 2014
- Time: 19:00－21:00
- Speakers: **Dr. Toshihiro Horii**, Professor and Researcher, Research Institute for Microbial Diseases, Osaka University
  Tatsuo Mizuno, Executive Director, Malaria No More Japan
- Concert: **Anyango**, World's first female nyatiti player
- Venue: The GARDEN Ginza
  1st Five Bldg 10F, 1-5-10 Ginza, Chūō, Tokyo 104-0061 Japan
- Fee: 3000 円 (Included dinner and a 500 円 donation to Malaria No More Japan's POWER OF ONE Campaign)

This event was held in Japanese.