



SPEECH BY THE CEC FOR HEALTH, TURKANA COUNTY, HON.JANE AURU AJELE DURING THE 25TH APRIL 2019

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour for me to be with you today as we commemorate World Malaria Day. On this Day in the year 2000, African Heads of States and Government meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, made a commitment to reduce and eventually eliminate malaria from this continent.

This gave rise to overwhelming response and commitment from world leaders who in 2007 committed to making malaria control and elimination a global priority. From then on, Africa Malaria Day became known as “**World Malaria Day**”.

Ladies and Gentlemen

This year’s commemoration is anchored on the theme “**ZERO MALARIA BEGINS WITH ME**”. With a national rallying slogan **NATUMIA MBINU ZOTE KUMALIZA MALARIA**. This event is an opportunity for us to take stock of our performance and challenges, and to unify our efforts for the future.

We are all aware of the impact that malaria has on our county. Malaria contributes to school and work absenteeism; it erodes household incomes and impacts significantly on the public health sector.

Investing in healthcare and by extension in malaria control has huge benefits to the county. Our efforts will: reduce the number of school and work days lost due to illness; reduce the burden in the health care delivery system; enhance productivity of the working

population; spur growth in all sectors and ultimately lead to the growth of the economy. Financing malaria control is, therefore, a major and significant investment in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The County is profiled as a seasonal malaria transmission zone, in this regard, we have set up and strengthened malaria epidemic preparedness and response system, last year we set up 22 malaria sentinel sites to monitor malaria trends on weekly basis, and this year we have increased these sites to 35 and are distributed evenly in each sub County, this is aimed to ensure any malaria upsurge is detected early enough and timely responded to and hence a reduction in malaria specific illness and deaths.

To ensure malaria cases are attended to and treated accordingly, the county government has trained and continues to update health care workers on malaria case management and ensuring malaria commodities are available in both government and faith based health facilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The County government has further implemented integrated community case management by training more than 1000 community health care which allows them treat uncomplicated malaria at the community level bringing treatment of malaria closer to people.

To demonstrate the strides the county is making in malaria control intervention, in 2016, a total of 240,000 cases were treated for malaria compared to 170,000 cases last year, a reduction of 30% in less than 2 years.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me at this juncture to point out that despite the impressive strides the county has made, challenges remain. These challenges are

not unique to malaria control but impact on the entire healthcare delivery system and they include;

- Sustaining universal coverage of all key interventions
- Uptake of interventions by affected communities

These challenges are however surmountable. In view of the aforementioned, and in the spirit of this year's theme; **“ZERO MALARIA BEGINS WITH ME”** all individuals and stakeholders need to continue investing in malaria control to safeguard the gains and further bring down the malaria burden.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I conclude, let me reiterate the Turkana Government's commitment to the health sector. I reaffirm that the government will continue to provide the necessary political, policy and technical leadership in malaria control.

Ladies and Gentlemen

If we are to achieve further progress and move towards malaria free Turkana, we must all take up our roles with renewed vigour and commitment. I believe that we have the tools; the human resource base and skills, the requisite experience and the global support to enable us to Roll Back Malaria in Turkana and devote the resources saved to other sectors of development.

“NATUMIA MBINU ZOTE KUMALIZA MALARIA”

“ZERO MALARIA BEGINS WITH ME”.

Thank you and God bless you

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