



HEALTHY FUTURES –Anticipating Future Climate Change Impacts on Water-related Vector-borne Diseases through International & Inter-disciplinary Collaboration

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Over the next four years, an EU-funded team of international and inter-disciplinary health, environment, socio-economic, disease modelling and climate experts, in addition to governmental health departments, aim to respond to concerns of environmental change in eastern Africa. The project titled HEALTHY FUTURES has received Euro 3.38 million under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

The project, which launched in January 2011, focuses on three water-related, high-impact vector-borne diseases (VBDs) (malaria, Rift Valley fever and schistosomiasis) in eastern Africa (comprising the countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania). It will take into account environmental and climatic trends and changes in socio-economic conditions to predict future risk outbreaks and impact (direct and indirect) on human health.

Led by Trinity College, University of Dublin (Ireland) the project will see a total of 15 partners located on the continents of Africa and Europe (Ireland, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa and United Kingdom) come together to enhance the capacity of health and veterinary services at local, national and supra-national levels to respond to changes in risk of transmission and outbreaks of the VBDs as a result of a convergence of changing climatic, land use and socio-economic conditions.

Guided by the concept that the stability of livelihoods, i.e. their strong resilience, crucially depends on maintaining environmental integrity, HEALTHY FUTURES, with its integrated holistic approach and innovative methodological developments, will improve disease outbreak surveillance and early warning via the provision and effective implementation of a new generation of Decision Support tools for VBD risk reduction in Africa. The aim of the project is to increase quality of life and contribute towards the reduction of disease burden, help to reduce poverty and increase health and well-being.

Although a major concern for the global community, the effects of environmental change, such as climate change, will be felt most acutely among the poorest members of society. At the kick-off meeting, project coordinator Professor David Taylor of Trinity College stated, "Outbreaks of water related, vector borne diseases such as malaria, have complex relationships with environmental conditions. As environmental conditions change, such as through climate and land use changes, then the incidence of disease outbreaks is likely to change. Although all those living in areas where

conditions become conducive to disease outbreaks are vulnerable, generally the most marginalised members of society are at greatest risk. HEALTHY FUTURES aims to minimise these risks by improving our ability to predict and to communicate the extent and severity of future outbreaks under different environmental change scenarios”.

For more information please visit: www.healthyfutures.eu

Note to Editors

Detailed partner profiles are available on request.

Trinity College Dublin is the coordinator of this project, with AquaTT as the project administrator partner. The HEALTHY FUTURES project has received funding from the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 266327.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD), founded in 1592, is the oldest University in Ireland. TCD now has more than 15,700 students, 3,700 staff and 86,000 alumni, while in 2007-2008 its staff secured more than €70m in research income. TCD is widely recognised for the high quality of its graduates, the international standing of its research and scholarship, and the value it places on contributing to Irish society and the wider world. In the most recent (2009) THES survey of universities internationally, TCD was ranked in the top 50 (43rd) and in the top 15 (13th) universities in the world and in Europe, respectively.

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AquaTT is an international foundation which provides project management and training services to support the sustainable development of Europe's aquatic resources. AquaTT's mission is to bridge the knowledge gap between the dynamic R&D environments and the progressive commercial sector. AquaTT supports its target audiences through the provision of support services and through participation in, and coordination of EU projects and initiatives in the area of knowledge management including customised dissemination, education, training and technology transfer.

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