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## **€12 million project to develop new tools for malaria control**

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LSTM has launched a collaborative project to develop and evaluate new tools to control the spread of malaria in Africa. AvecNet is a five year, €12 million project involving sixteen partners in Africa and Europe, funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework programme.

Because malaria is transmitted by mosquitoes, their effective control is essential to combating the disease. Wide scale use of insecticides on bednets and in interior spraying programmes has dramatically reduced transmission but continued success is dependent on a very limited range of insecticides and other tools.

AvecNet aims to secure the continued effectiveness of these methods into the future by developing and evaluating new insecticides and techniques that will overcome the growing threat of insecticide resistance, as well as designing new tools and interventions to target the mosquitoes that currently evade these control methods. The project also aims to increase existing knowledge about the biology and behaviour of mosquitoes to enable more effective control as urbanisation and other environmental factors alter the balance in this continuing fight against an evolving and formidable opponent.

Dr Hilary Ranson, Head of the Vector Group at LSTM and leader of AvecNet, said: "We need to secure the viability of existing malaria control programmes and expand their scope and reach by developing new methods and tools based upon a vastly increased understanding of how mosquitoes behave and react in different environments.

"We will also rigorously field test existing and prototype tools and techniques to both inform their further development and refinement and to add to the knowledge base from which we can develop further tools and interventions.

"By increasing research capacity in Africa and Europe and uniting people with skills in lots of different fields we are going to generate the momentum to achieve what we hope will be a number of significant breakthroughs in malaria control."

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) has been engaged in the fight against infectious, debilitating and disabling diseases for more than a hundred years and continues that tradition today with a research portfolio in excess of £190 million and a teaching programme attracting students from over 50 countries.

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