

RELEASE OF THE UCMI DOCUMENTARY "A REVOLUTION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA"

UCMI released the documentary "A revolution in the fight against malaria", which presents information about the project's activities in São Tomé and Príncipe, in order to increase the dissemination of project information to all citizens of the country. The documentary was released January 19th in São Tomé and on the 26th in the Autonomous Region of Príncipe. These launch events were of vital importance for the discussion with various sectors of society in order to clarify doubts about the project. Post-launch the documentary was released on STP social media sites and national TV.



UCMI VISITS NGO - ZATONA ADIL WAREHOUSE IN SAO TOME

The UCMI Team and two Mitigation Experts from California, visited the warehouse of NGO Zatona Adil to assess the chemicals and equipment currently used in the for Indoor Spraying (IRS), as part of the National Fight Against Malaria in STP.



Zatona Adil is a national NGO that conducts IRS in STP. They work in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

The visit took place after a meeting with Zatona Adil, as part of the preparation of a mitigation plan for the release of Genetically Modified Mosquitoes.

UCMI ACTIVITIES IN HEALTH CENTERS IN MÉ-ZÒCHI AND ÁGUA GRANDE

The engagement teams from the districts of Mé-Zóchi and Água Grande were involved in activities aimed at providing information to users and health professionals working in local health centers such as the Madalena Health Center, Trindade, Caixão Grande, Água Grande, Água Rice and the Mother and Child Program Center.

The activities at the health centers included information about modified mosquitoes, the UCMI program objectives, and exhibitions of samples of *Anopheles Coluzzii* mosquitoes, at different stages of their life cycle. For the professionals at the centers, training sessions were held on the strategies that UCMI intends implement in São Tomé and Príncipe, in the next phase of the project.



UCMI GOES TO THE PORTUGUESE SCHOOL OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

UCMI met with students from the Escola Portuguesa de São Tomé, in a lecture on the importance of using new technologies, such as modified mosquitoes, to combat malaria in the country. The activity included the active participation of secondary school students and teachers from this institution and was an important opportunity to discuss information about the Project.

UCMI, NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSULTANTS COME TOGETHER TO PREPARE THE MITIGATION AND BIODIVERSITY MONITORING PLAN FOR THE PROJECT

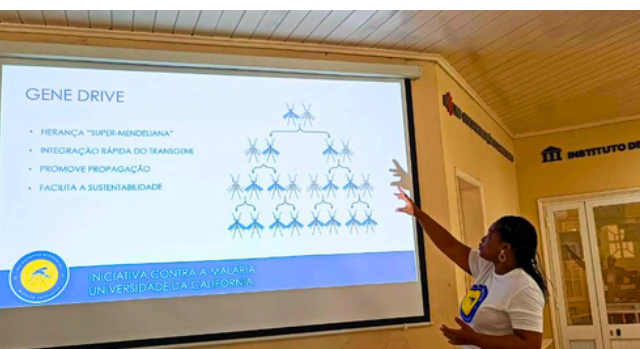
UCMI developed a mitigation plan for the release of genetically modified mosquitoes, with the support of two American experts with more than 30 years of experience in Vector Control Programs in the state of California.

In preparing this plan, consultation meetings were held with various national institutions to identify potential synergies and to share knowledge and experience. These institutions included the National Center for Endemic Diseases via the PNEP–National Malaria Elimination Program; NGO Zatona Adil, the implementer of the PID–Indoor Spraying program; District Health Offices; the General Directorate of Environment and Climate Action; the Regional Directorate of the Príncipe Natural Park; and the Health Services of the Autonomous Region. Other stakeholders interested in biodiversity monitoring such as NGO’s Birdlife, Oikos, and Fundação Príncipe were also consulted.



LOBATA COMMUNITY LEADERS ENGAGED - TRAINING ABOUT THE UCMI MODIFIED MOSQUITO STRATEGY

The UCMI engagement and awareness team in the Lobata District conducted a training session for community leaders, aimed at informing and educating them about the strategies the project plans to implement in São Tomé and Príncipe for malaria control.





UCMI MEETS WITH THE NEW MINISTER OF HEALTH AND THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH CARE

The UCMI Project team met with the new Minister of Health to discuss the innovative technologies they are developing to combat malaria in São Tomé and Príncipe.

During the meeting, the team outlined their ongoing activities in São Tomé and Príncipe, which includes engagement, scientific research, and training. They also presented their plan to propose the first release of Genetically Modified Mosquitoes in Príncipe.

The Health Secretary welcomed the project initiative and expressed great interest in the initiative, recognizing its potential impact on public health. The collaborative spirit between UCMI and the Ministry of Health was evident, promising a joint effort to combat malaria and improve healthcare outcomes in São Tomé and Príncipe.



MEETING WITH THE NEW MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The UCMI team met with the new Minister of the Environment, Dr. Nilda da Mata, to present and discuss the project. This meeting served as an important occasion to present the existing synergies between the project and the Ministry of the Environment, emphasizing the Ministry's significant role in the implementation of future project activities in São Tomé and Príncipe.



REGIONAL GOVERNMENT RECEIVES THE UCMI TEAM

In a meeting with the President of the Government of the Príncipe Region, UCMI discussed the activities that the project has been carrying out in the Autonomous Region and the next phases of the project, which include the presentation of a proposal for the release of genetically modified mosquitoes in Príncipe.

The Regional President expressed great interest in the project, recognizing its potential to revolutionize malaria elimination efforts, as the UCMI strategy could lead RAP to sustainable malaria elimination.



VECTOR HARVESTING AND MAPPING CARRIED OUT ON ISLAND OF ROLAS

The UCMI Project field research team carried out a search for immature stages of *Anopheles coluzzii* on Ilhéu das Rolas, São Tomé.

The aim is to further expand the search for vector larvae on the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe to understand the spatial distribution of the vector and its vector competence. During these harvests, 6 new breeding sites were identified.



UCMI'S ENGAGEMENT REACHES THE MOST REMOTE COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY

During the months of January and February, the UCMI Engagement Team carried out several engagement activities in the most distant communities in the country. In São Tomé, several engagement activities were carried out in the extreme south of the country, with particular emphasis on Ilhéu das Rolas, which can be accessed exclusively by boat.



In the Autonomous Region, the engagement team carried out engagement activities in the communities of Lapa and Praia Seca, communities isolated from the others without any access by land. Engagement activities in these remote communities contributed to increasing the community engagement reach of the UCMI Project among the country's population.

COLLECTION OF ANOPHELES COLUZZII IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF PRÍNCIPE

During the months of January and February, collections of resting *Anopheles coluzzii* females were carried out in four communities in the Autonomous region. The objective is to evaluate the blood feeding preferences of *Anopheles* in RAP. Collections were carried out inside homes, in surrounding backyards and in houses under construction.



NEW COLLECTIONS IN REMOTE AREAS - PRÍNCIPE NATURAL PARK

The UCMI field research team carried out another round of mosquito collections in the Príncipe Natural Park, during the months of January and February, with the aim of understanding the distribution of the Malaria vector (*Anopheles coluzzii*) in the Autonomous Region.

The collections were carried out in the innermost areas of the Príncipe Natural Park, at different altitudes, and the data will complement existing data on vector distribution in these regions.

UCMI ANNUAL MEETING IN CALIFORNIA



The UCMI annual meeting was held February 15 and 16 at UC Irvine. The meeting was an opportunity for all UCMI members to learn more about the specific research being conducted by UCMI partners and evaluate the progress made with the implementation of the project in São Tomé and Príncipe. The Meeting also served to evaluate the proposal for the release of Genetically Modified Mosquitoes that UCMI intends to present to the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe.

NEW EQUIPMENT WILL ALLOW THE MODIFICATION OF MOSQUITOES IN STP TO FIGHT MALARIA

The UCMI Project has just received new equipment for the UCMI laboratory located at the University of São Tomé - USTP. The new equipment will reinforce the capacity of local technicians to carry out Genetic Modification of Mosquitoes in São Tomé and Príncipe.

In this second stage, the country has received microscopes equipped with mechanical arms and microinjectors for mosquito modification. Additionally, an automatic DNA extractor has been included to facilitate genetic analysis.



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