

## **Merck Vaccine Network-Africa Program Overview**

### **Program Objective**

In support of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI), grants will be awarded to develop sustainable training Centers in Africa to increase the capacity of immunization programs to effectively deliver vaccines. The Merck Vaccine Network-Africa (MVN-A) Program will contribute to the training of national and regional mid- to high-level program managers in vaccine management and immunization services.

### **Program Design**

The multi-year program will provide grants to United States (U.S.), European, or other academic institutions that have partnerships with academic institutions in Africa to establish the training Centers.

Key elements of the MVN-A program include:

- Each Center will receive \$200,000 per grant year for up to four years. Funding will be provided by The Merck Company Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck & Co., Inc.;
- Centers will build upon existing academic collaborations;
- Each site will form a Technical Advisory Group, composed of national and regional officials, including World Health Organization (WHO) and WHO African regional officials (AFRO), to provide ongoing guidance to the Center;
- Training activities will focus on the needs of national and regional mid- to high-level program managers;
- The training curricula will be adapted from source materials developed by WHO and other GAVI partners;
- Efforts will be made to ensure Center activities are coordinated with other GAVI partner training initiatives (e.g. Global Training Network); and
- Efforts will be made to ensure Center activities are consistent, sustainable, and integrated with other GAVI, GAVI partner, and local/regional immunization initiatives.

### **Current MVN-A Training Centers**

In November 2003 following a competitive grants process, grants were awarded to the following collaborations to develop Centers in Mali and Kenya.

**Mali** - University of Maryland School of Medicine, Center for Vaccine Development and Centre National d' Appui à la Lutte contre la Maladie in Bamako; and

**Kenya** - Indiana University School of Medicine and Moi University Faculty of Health Sciences in Eldoret.