

The Alliance for Malaria Prevention

Expanding the ownership and use of mosquito nets

Malaria is a leading cause of death for children under five in Africa, and kills approximately 1 million people a year. Sleeping under a mosquito net treated with insecticide provides protection from malaria-carrying mosquitoes. The nets are non-toxic to humans.

Since 2002, mosquito net campaigns in Africa have delivered tens of millions of long lasting insecticide treated nets (LLINs) under the leadership of African Ministries of Health and National Malaria Control Programs. Many other campaigns are being planned by Ministries of Health across Africa to help end malaria deaths, and to meet the challenge by U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to cover every man, woman, and child at risk for malaria with a mosquito net by December 31, 2010.

Taking on this challenge is the Alliance for Malaria Prevention (AMP), a subgroup of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, which represents more than 30 partners, including government, business, faith-based and humanitarian organizations. AMP's goal is to expand ownership and use of LLINs, which have been shown to reduce malaria incidence by 50 percent and reduce all-cause child mortality by 20 percent. LLINs, along with life-saving drugs, indoor residual spraying of homes, and timely diagnosis, are an essential component of the malaria control tool box.

Local and international partners are coming together under the AMP umbrella to deliver LLINs to vulnerable groups via mass delivery platforms focused on child survival. These mass campaigns may

include vaccination against measles or polio, Vitamin A supplementation, treatment for intestinal worms, and other maternal and child health interventions.

Recognizing that simultaneous multiple approaches are needed to boost and maintain long-term coverage of LLINs, campaigns will complement routine systems, such as delivery of LLINs to pregnant women during antenatal visits.

The origins of this approach have a long history. For many years, public health and development partners have packaged and integrated health services to provide children under five years old with a measles vaccination, Vitamin A and treatment for intestinal worms to strengthen immune systems.

In 2002, a measles campaign in Ghana included the distribution of mosquito nets in its health intervention package. Results from this pilot study showed that the cost-effectiveness of piggybacking net distribution on the measles vaccination platform. This study helped shift the major international donor agencies and key implementing partners to support the integration of delivery of mosquito nets into these child health campaigns, and the partnership that led to the Alliance for Malaria Prevention (AMP) was born.

It is now broadly acknowledged that the campaign package of high-impact interventions will help save lives and give children a better chance to develop and thrive. In countries where two out five children do not reach their fifth birthday, integrated child health campaigns make a significant contribution to child survival. ■

The Alliance for Malaria Prevention partners include:

The Academy for Educational Development (AED)
Against Malaria
Africa's Health in 2010
American Red Cross
BASF
Canadian Red Cross
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
Deliver
European Alliance Against Malaria (EAAM)
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

Global Health Advocates
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Immunization Basics
Izumi Foundation
Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs
Lutheran World Relief
Macepa
Medical Care Development International (MCDI)

The Malaria Consortium
Malaria No More
Mentor Initiative
Nets for Life
Nothing but Nets
Population Services International (PSI)
The President's Malaria Initiative (PMI)
Rotarians Against Malaria
Olyset Net
Speaking Books

United Nations Children's Development Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Foundation
The World Bank
The United Methodist Church
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Vestergaard Frandsen
The World Health Organization
LLIN manufacturers

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