



## Newsletter # 11

February 2018

Malaria is a disease endemic in many tropical areas of the world particularly in sub tropical Africa for which no vaccine has yet been discovered.

So Scouts have joined the global partnership to fight the disease. In this issue we discuss the principal findings of the 2017 World malaria report, and the outcomes of further SAM campaigns in Ghana and Gambia.

### Global response to malaria at crossroads

*WHO report shows gains are levelling*

After unprecedented global success in malaria control, progress has stalled, according to the World Malaria Report 2017 issued by the World Health Organisation. "In recent years, we have made major gains in the fight against malaria," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO. "We are now at a turning point. Without urgent action, we risk going backwards, and missing the global malaria targets for 2020 and beyond." The WHO Global Technical Strategy for Malaria calls for reductions of at least 40% in malaria case incidence and mortality rates by the year 2020. According to WHO's latest malaria report, the world is **not** on track to reach these critical milestones.

*Statistics* The report shows that, in 2016, there were an estimated 216 million cases of malaria in 91 countries, *up* from 211 million cases in 2015. The estimated global tally of malaria deaths reached 445 000 in 2016 compared to 446 000 the previous year. While the rate of new cases of malaria had fallen overall, since 2014 the trend has levelled off and even reversed in some regions. Malaria mortality rates followed a similar pattern.

The African Region continues to bear an estimated 90% of all malaria cases and deaths worldwide. Fifteen countries – all but one in sub-Saharan Africa – carry 80% of the global malaria burden. Clearly, if we are to get the global malaria response back on track, supporting the most heavily affected countries in the *African Region must be the primary focus*," said Dr Tedros

### SAM's outreach

Scouts against Malaria is collaborating with Scouts in 4 tropical countries in Africa that is Gambia, Malawi, Ghana and Uganda. Whereas Scouts in the UK learn about the debilitating effect of tropical diseases such as malaria and how these can be prevented, any funds raised are sent to the Scouts in these countries who work with local health officials in various areas to identify vulnerable families.

### Gambia

Hampshire Scouts have recently visited Soma with whose Scouts they have had a very long term collaboration. Copythorne Cubs (leader Ruth Farmers) recently raised £225 in a sponsored car wash and in November, Ruth visited Soma and used these funds to purchase and distribute bed nets



In December, Jackie Heath (also 1<sup>st</sup> Copythorne) led a group of Explorer Scouts to Soma and in the village that they worked in they used expedition funds to purchase some nets. Jackie reports:

*We did a survey in a number of schools about nutrition and bed nets. I have not processed the data yet, but most children slept under a bed net last night. This is consistent with the information that we have researched/ been advised about Malaria in the Gambia.*

*Ruth Farmers helping with erecting a bed net in Soma District*

The Global Fund is currently running 2 active programmes which has seen the distribution of over 3.5 million bed nets over the past 4 years which averages 1.5 bed nets per person. This indicates a certain amount of redundancy but this may be necessary to get sufficient coverage. Once the coverage is above 50% it is likely that mosquito population will decrease thus providing a degree of protection to those who do not have access to a bed net. Net distribution is being accompanied by a number of educational programmes and diagnostic and treatment initiatives in endemic areas.

Consequently, the number of malaria cases in the Gambia is *falling*, prevalence rate being now <0.2 per 1000. The aim is to be No New Case free by 2020, and the Gambia is on track to achieve that. The 'last mile' is the most difficult part, no Sub-Saharan country has achieved it yet

## Ghana

*Gregory Manful reports on campaign at Bidi and Bidi Junction on 14 January 2018*

As part of the Scouts Against Malaria project of the Ghana Scout Association with support from UK Scouts, the Association embarked on another activity in malaria prevention in deprived villages of Bidi and Bidi junction respectively where three hundred mosquito treated nets were distributed to the inhabitants. The distribution was done by Scouts of the Volta region of Ghana. Bidi and Bidi Junction are farming villages in the northern part of the Volta region.

After a brief meeting with the chief and elders of Bidi, the team met with groups, families and individuals to share with them the essence of the treated mosquito nets. The team added that, the mosquito bed nets are meant for nursing mothers, pregnant women, children and the aged. As the day was Sunday and some of the inhabitants were in church, the team also did the distribution of the mosquito bed nets in a church with the support of the pastor who highly appreciated the support as malaria remains one of the main challenges of the inhabitants of that village.

At Bidi junction village, the chief and elders were helpful in informing the inhabitants of our project. The team met with mainly families and distributed the treated mosquito nets amidst education on its usage and essence.



**Malawi** is the country where the fewest insecticide treated bed nets have been made available and so Malawian Scouts will be the recipient of the next SAM funds to be sent from the UK.

**Gone home** Margaret Ellis, one of the founders of the Scouts against Malaria initiative, passed away on January 3 after a long illness. We wish to record our appreciation of the work she has done and the activities she has developed to help the understand of the scourge of this disease.

**Funds** Since November, funds have been raised by Enterprise Explorers, 11<sup>th</sup> Southampton City, 8<sup>th</sup> Burgess Hill, 1<sup>st</sup> Blagdon, 1<sup>st</sup> Copythorne Cubs, Surrey Lions and Charles Kingsley School, Eversley

## Join the fight against malaria

If your Section/Group is willing to join the global partnership to fight malaria and earn the SAM badge, please visit our website [www.scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk](http://www.scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk) or email us at [info@scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk](mailto:info@scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk).