



Newsletter #16 February 2020

In this newsletter, we review the World Malaria Report published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on December 4 and the most recent SAM campaigns in Malawi, Uganda and Ghana.

World Malaria Report 2018

Some 228 million cases of malaria were reported in 2018 which is a very small decrease from that reported in 2017. The incidence of malaria has remained constant at 57 cases per 1000 population at risk. These results are disappointing

considering the amount of funding that is being spent each year by the Global Malaria Fund.

WHO report that 19 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and India carry 85% of the burden. Without accelerated change, the authors note the Global Technical Strategy will not be achieved within the envisaged time frame. In addition it should be noted that the damage inflicted extends far beyond loss of life: malaria takes a heavy toll on health systems, sapping productivity and eroding economic growth

Deaths There was also a small decrease in the number of deaths from 415,000 in 2017 to 405,000 in 2018. Yet again young children under the age of 5 were the most vulnerable group affected by malaria and accounted for 76% of all malaria deaths while the WHO African region accounted for 95% of all deaths. Of the 10 highest burden countries, Nigeria and Ghana reported the highest absolute increases in malaria. The burden in other countries was similar between 2017 and 2018 while significant reductions occurred in Uganda and India.

Insecticide treated bed nets (ITN) As the anopheles mosquitoes which carry the malaria parasite are active at night the safest form of protection is to sleep under insecticide treated bed nets. As the mosquitoes cannot penetrate these nets, the people sleeping under them are safe even if the mosquitoes are immune to the commonly used pyrethroid insecticides.

Of the 11 countries with the highest burden, at least 40% of the population were sleeping under ITN nets with Uganda having the highest proportion with 80% coverage. Between 2016 and 2018, 578 million nets were manufactured of which 80% were distributed via mass distribution campaigns. However the proportion of people sleeping under bed nets has only improved *marginally* since 2015 and has been at a *standstill* since 2016. This can only mean that the distribution campaigns have not been correctly targeted.

Contrast this with 20 campaigns that African Scout Associations have undertaken in local villages. Working with local health officers, vulnerable families have not only been identified but also help has been given with erecting the nets and alerting families where to seek help if someone has been bitten.

The sad fact is that in every campaign to date, Scouts have had to decide who should receive the nets and who would go without, something that no Scout should ever have to consider.

Having proven that Scouts can distribute nets effectively, we shall try again to obtain such nets as free issue so we can double or treble the number of recipients receiving these nets.

7th Malawi Campaign

Howie Maujo reports

Malaria continues to plague vast regions and populations of the world, Malawi inclusive. It is endemic in more than 100 countries. Every hour some 35 children around the world die of severe malaria infections, with the vast majority of deaths in sub-Saharan Africa, where Malawi is located.

It is estimated that between 250 and 500 million episodes occur each year, imposing a stark human and economic burden on households, communities, and countries. Resistance to commonly used insecticides is rendering current treatment options increasingly ineffective while the new therapies under development are 10 times as costly. Given the high incidence of the disease, the development of successful anti-malarial products and therapies will provide enormous human and economic returns on investment.

Malaria disproportionately affects the poor, perpetuates economic repression, and can trap families and communities in a downward spiral of poverty, impaired learning, and decreased school and work attendance. In Malawi, malaria imposes direct costs, including a combination of private and public expenditures on both prevention and treatment of disease, of approximately \$120 million every year. Malaria is suggested by some economists to be responsible for a “growth penalty” of up to 1.3 percent per year in Malawi. At the household level, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that a poor family in Malawi can spend a quarter of its income on preventing and treating malaria.

Since 2017 to date, the Scout Associations of Malawi and Hampshire Scout Council have entered an agreement to increase Scout’s visibility in fighting Malaria in Africa. Malawi being one of the other countries benefiting from this partnership, has reached five remote areas of Lilongwe, Salima, Chikhwawa, Mzuzu and Kasungu district providing civic education on malaria prevention and on the use of impregnated mosquito nets.

During International Volunteer Day in December 2019, the Scout Association of Malawi reached out to 200 vulnerable individuals in Champhevu area in Kasungu District with impregnated mosquito nets and civic educated the community on benefits of using ITN treated bed nets as regards protection and its economic benefits for prevention of the disease.

*Villagers
receiving
nets in
Champhevu
area of
Kasungu
district*



The most recent campaign involved -

- Encouraging vulnerable groups to use impregnated mosquito nets more frequently
- Having a healthy and energetic community
- Mainstreaming Scout values to mitigate spread of malaria

And the strategy adopted was

- Identification and distribution of impregnated mosquito nets to vulnerable groups
- Civic education of proper usage of IMN and clearing myth around IMN

Issues addressed

The distribution has been implemented without difficulties, though demand looks to be *increasing* in each area that we do distribution. This is so because government free nets are worn out already and some areas are unable to receive these free impregnated mosquito nets from government.

The Identification exercise unveiled another vulnerable group of people with physical challenges who have never used ITN treated nets since malaria poses as a great threat to their health and well being.

Conclusion of project implementation to date

The project has given the Scout Association another dimension to consider in giving service to the community. Scouts are able to help in civic educate communities the dangers of mosquitoes and how they can keep their surroundings clean to prevent further breeding of mosquitoes which transmit malaria.

Communities served become aware of importance of ITN nets and their proper usage and malaria is being mainstreamed into youth forums



Notable quotes:

“Inform the Scouts helping us in UK that we appreciate the gesture, but people here are dying of hunger, if this mango season is over, we will die of hunger...we are eating mangoes from morning, afternoon and evening, let them consider us food as well”

“With abject poverty here, the mosquito net will not only prevent us from mosquitoes that cause malaria but to others it will be a blanket during this cold weather”

“There is another village 20km from here, they villagers have never at anytime received free mosquito nets from government, please remember them”

These were some captivating and heart breaking speeches from the audience and village headmen.

Listen to Colin Andrews interviewing Howie Maujo at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0171fWxVpg&feature=youtu.be>



6th Ghanaian Campaign, Distribution 200 nets to Tontro Community, Eastern Region January 31, 2020

6th Ugandan campaign

This was undertaken in the Soroti District and some 300 insecticide treated nets were distributed, 200 to expectant mothers and 100 to families with children under 5 years of age in January 2020

Distributing nets in Soroti district, Uganda



Join the fight against malaria

If your Section/Group is willing to join the global partnership to fight malaria, visit our website www.scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk or email us at info@scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk.

A resource box is also available which provides the educational resources to undertake a range of activities relating to this disease and the order form can be downloaded from our website.

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