

Mission Report – Mauritania

Communication TA

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Mission dates: October 16-27, 2016

Location (s): Nouakchott, Mauritania

Date of report: November 7, 2016

Subject of report: Communications technical assistance

1. Objectives of the mission

- Develop a communication plan
- Develop a communication budget
- Create a general implementation timeline for communication activities

2. General overview of planned distribution

Mauritania is planning a universal distribution campaigns in its malaria endemic regions to be completed in two phases. The campaign plan calls for distributing 1,721,442 LLINs to an estimated population of 2,816,904. The first distribution phase had been scheduled for November 2017, but this has been delayed without a new date to allow for a strengthening of the technical, logistics and communication components in order to guarantee the successful completion of the first phase. The second distribution phase is scheduled for April 2017.

3. Campaign planning / implementation situation on arrival (only for the second phase)

- Limited communication planning had taken place
- An overall campaign plan and macro-budget are in place for the second phase activities, and microplanning training has taken place at the central level
- the campaign plan calls for a two-member team for household registration, one member of the team would be responsible for BCC; plans and a budget are in place for a post-distribution door-to-door campaign to encourage hang up and use; also in place is a budget for advocacy meetings in the four regions targeted during the second phase

4. Mission roll out and main accomplishments

A communication plan and preliminary timeline have been produced; both are still under review for feedback. A budget template was established for several activities and as much as possible details were filled in, awaiting further inputs from individuals unavailable for the meetings.

5. Key challenges and recommendations

- There appears to be little in-country experience in conducting a mass distribution campaign, so there is considerable need for communication technical support
- Communication specialists remained focussed on messaging around protecting pregnant women and children under five; it will be important to develop a new set of messages and communication supports consistent with the full range of goals for a universal distribution campaign
- There has been no communication planning for the first phase of distribution; if possible, it would be important to delay distribution until basic communication activities are put into place

6. Next steps / Future planning

- A campaign communication sub-committee must be set up and key partners need to commit to participate in its activities
- A workshop needs to be organized to develop new messages and images consistent with the goals of a universal distribution campaign
- Components of a communication plan were put into place, but given unavailability of key personnel, a communication macro-budget remains incomplete
- Consultant intends to continue to supply distance support to assure the completion of the budget and implementation of the communication plan

7. Conclusion

The PNLN needs to have considerable support for implementing communication activities, especially at the central level. The draft communication plan, which is under review before official submission to the PNLN, highlights in considerable detail the many steps needed to be taken to assure a successful campaign from a behaviour change point of view. These activities are applicable to both the first and second phases of the distribution campaign. The draft plan calls for the hiring of a national consultant, if a qualified person can be found, to help buttress the capacity of the communication sub-committee to carry out activities. It also calls for the contracting of an advertising agency to develop printed and audio materials to compensate for the apparent lack of expertise and involvement of partners.

List of key people met during mission

- **Dr. Mohamed Lemine Khairy, NMCP Coordinator**
- **Dr. Mah Amar, Coordinator of distribution campaign, PEC PNLP**
- **Cheikh Tijani, Responsable de Gestion des Approvisionnement et Stocks (GAS-PNLP)**
- **Brahim Khalil d Med Salem, Charge de IEC, PNLP**
- **M. Ouldabdallah, epidemiologist, PNLP**

Regional Health Communicators

- **Eslemhoum ma Amar Salek –Region of Hodh Charghi**
- **Egjouj Mnt Cheich – Region of Hodh et Gharbi**
- **Sel di Kamera – Region of Assaba**
- **Kadijetou Mnt Mouhamed – Region of Tagant**

List of Annexes

The communication plan and budget will be submitted upon completion.