

AMP The Alliance for Malaria Prevention

Expanding the ownership and use of mosquito nets

Situation report – LLIN campaign in the Central African Republic

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Dates covered by report: October 3rd – October 23rd 2017
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Background: The Central African Republic is planning to undertake a mass campaign distribution between now and the end of the year. The entire campaign is funded by the Global Fund (net procurement and operational costs) and will be implemented through partners with access and capacity in the targeted areas.

Initially, the campaign aimed to cover health regions 4, 5 and 6 that were not covered in the 2014 – 2015 campaign, as well as Bangui in order to replace nets distributed in 2014. The security situation in the interior of the country is fluid, with a number of districts experiencing fighting between various armed groups, as well as between armed groups and MINUSCA soldiers. Prior to the microplanning, an updated security mapping was done to assess the access and feasibility for implementing the LLIN distribution in the targeted health regions (districts). Based on that assessment, it was determined that partners were still able to work in 18 of the 32 districts initially targeted and the microplanning workshops took place in July. Bangui's eight arrondissements are all accessible.

Partners identified for the LLIN campaign are largely national NGOs, an advantage in a context where iNGOs may pull out in times of extreme crisis. However, each of these organizations has been assessed and there are capacity limitations, particularly in terms of financial management systems.

As the IFRC will discontinue its role as the PR on the GF grants for CAR (HIV/TB and malaria) as of end of December 2017, there are new and different risks for both the PR and the GF as the year comes to an end and feasibility of the campaign is continually assessed and updated for all targeted areas and all partners.

Currently, efforts are focused on delivering the campaign in Bangui, despite the fact that the needs in the interior of the country are significantly higher. This is related not only to the security situation, but also to the availability of IFRC staff in the close out period of the grant, with routine activities running and with the campaign in Bangui happening soon.

The campaign in Bangui is one phase, with household registration/distribution of LLINs happening simultaneously. Teams of two volunteers will go door-to-door (D2D) to distribute nets, reaching approximately 30 households per day. In order to allow supervisors to actually supervise, mobile warehouses have been introduced to reduce burden on the supervision team. A contingency plan is in place if the D2D has challenges over the first days.

In addition to the mass campaign, LLINs are being provided to IDPs and other key populations.

Situation October 3rd – October 23rd:

Since the 3rd of October, with a lot of effort from the team in-country, significant advances have taken place. In the past 3 weeks, the following activities have taken place:

- **Briefing of the media** – a briefing of the local mass media companies and partners was undertaken on October 9th. The objective of the briefing was to provide an overview of the campaign and to solicit the support of the media in ensuring that the activities roll out as planned, that correct information is disseminated in a timely manner and that any rumours that begin during the campaign can be addressed rapidly and efficiently.
- **Training of database managers for each of the 8 arrondissements** – a total of 15 arrondissement database managers and the 2 IFRC database managers for the IFRC were trained over a period of 3 days from the 9th to the 11th of October. The training focused on the data collection tools and also on the use of mobile phones for sending the data collected each day from the program staff, logistics staff and rapid survey monitors to the Magpi database and the daily analysis required to be able to provide feedback to the central team, focal points and supervisors in advance of the following days’ activities.
- **Advocacy meetings in all 8 arrondissements** – in an effort to engage as many local leaders as possible for a smooth roll out of the campaign, advocacy meetings were organized in all arrondissements. These meetings aim to explain the objective of the campaign and how it will roll out, as well as to solicit the support of local leaders. In 4 of the 8 arrondissements, a single advocacy meeting took place, while in the remaining 4 arrondissements, 2 advocacy meetings took place to ensure that opposition groups were included.
- **Distribution to special populations** – as part of the microplanning, a list of special populations was put together in order to determine a way forward for these groups in terms of malaria prevention. The special groups include orphanages, religious training and welcoming centres, prisons and armed groups. The groups for which lists were received were delivered nets during the week of October 9th. Following the training of the implementation teams, a number of special populations were identified that had not yet been provided with nets. This uncovered list includes some of the armed groups in the city that must receive nets in advance of the distribution for security of teams during the implementation. Follow up is in progress.
- **Training of the logistics personnel (logisticians, warehouse managers and assistant warehouse managers)** – approximately 120 people were trained over a period of 3 days (October 11th – 13th) on logistics and supply chain management for the distribution in Bangui. These included the 35 managers of the “mobile warehouses” and the managers and assistant managers of the fixed pre-positioning sites that will be used as interim storage between the central warehouse and the mobile warehouses. All volunteer teams will be supplied from mobile warehouses versus from the pre-positioning sites to avoid overcrowding at those sites and to facilitate the work of the teams that must walk door-to-door carrying nets to reach all households. Each “mobile warehouse” will be staffed with one warehouse manager and two guards. The pre-positioning sites will each be staff with a manager and at least one assistant manager based on the number of nets to be managed over the period of the distribution. The training was concluded with a post-test, which demonstrated a significantly higher level of understanding than the pre-test used for the selection of the personnel, but also showed some weaknesses still remaining to be addressed. Because of the weaknesses seen and the need to ensure high accountability for the LLINs during the distribution, a retraining of 2 days is currently underway (October 22th – 25th) for all logistics personnel.
- **Finalization of contracts for pre-positioning sites and work for reinforcement of the structures for minimum security** – all of the identified pre-positioning sites were evaluated in terms of suitability and security, with most requiring some level of reinforcement in order to be considered sufficient for the storage of the nets. Upon signature of the contracts with the pre-positioning site owners, the work required to reinforce them to ensure minimum security has commenced and is expected to be completed in the next week.
- **Training of the implementation teams (program / M&E)** – the campaign will be overseen by a central team (composed of the NMCP, IFRC, Central African Red Cross and the Ministry of Health and Population) that will plan and implement the day to day activities of the distribution. This central team will oversee the work of the focal points (9 – 10 per arrondissement, representing the MOH, the NMCP, the mayor’s office, the CAR RC

and a local NGO partner based in the arrondissement) and the groupement supervisors (2 per groupement, one from the MOH and one from the CAR RC). The training for the focal points and the groupement supervisors took place from October 16th to October 20th. A total of 117 people were trained over the 5-day period on all campaign aspects, including communication, data management and logistics. The training focused on ensuring that these people were ready to be facilitators for the training of the volunteers, including the use of principles for adult learning. All of the implementation teams were provided with identification materials for the campaign and encouraged to hang posters and use key messages to begin to try to explain the roll out of the campaign and, particularly, the importance of households remaining at home to receive nets.

- **Finance planning** – there are enormous complications and risks associated with the volume of people to be paid where (1) many will not have identification to cash cheques; (2) the bank does not have capacity to pay the number or people needed on time and (3) mobile money is a very limited option. Since the previous sit rep, significant work has taken place on this point in an effort to identify an organization that can support making payments to the thousands of people that will be mobilized for this activity. It is expected that decisions on this will be concluded in the coming week.

The week ahead:

The schedule moving forward includes:

- ✚ Finalize LQAS and preparation of the mobile phones for the monitoring, as well as training of the monitors selected for implementation of the rapid survey during the door-to-door distribution for assessment of coverage and quality
- ✚ Finalize training of volunteers (2,626) and community supervisors (268)
- ✚ Refresher training will be required for the volunteers given a delay in the implementation dates to allow for the synchronized polio campaign to take place in advance of the LLIN distribution
- ✚ Current dates are:
 - November 8 – 9: social mobilization
 - November 10 – 16: implementation of the LLIN distribution