

AMP The Alliance for Malaria Prevention

Expanding the ownership and use of mosquito nets

Country profile

Sierra Leone



Background

Target population: 5,876,868

Distribution dates: November 2010

Distribution strategy: Universal coverage, defined as ownership of at least 1 LLIN for every 2 household members, with a maximum of three LLINs per household

Technical assistance provided by AMP:

Implementation, logistics, monitoring and evaluation

LLINs distributed: 3 million plus

According to the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation 2009 statistics, infant mortality attributed to malaria is as high as 38 per cent among children under five and 25 per cent among all age groups.

In November 2010, Sierra Leone launched a week-long *National Integrated Maternal and Child Health Campaign* that included LLIN distribution to reach universal coverage, in addition to other life-saving interventions for children under five, including:

- polio vaccination
- presumptive treatment for intestinal worms
- vitamin A supplementation

A nationally-representative post-campaign coverage and utilization survey showed high levels of LLIN ownership and a significant difference between net-hanging rates in houses that had received a visit from a community volunteer and houses that had not received a visit.

“We would like AMP to continue mobilizing resources especially now that we have gained a lot in terms of our targets that have been achieved. So AMP is now more than ever important to ensure that we work together to sustain gains and maximize our impact.”

– Dr Samuel Smith, NMCP, Sierra Leone



For additional information:

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The Alliance for Malaria Prevention: In Sierra Leone, the Alliance for Malaria Prevention worked with NMCP and partners to provide a range of support to strengthen country capacity for LLIN scale-up. In addition, AMP supported resource mobilization for LLIN funding. AMP-specific support for the campaign included:

Implementation: Implementation support was provided early to develop a campaign plan, timeline and budget that could be used to advocate for resources. An overall campaign plan and timeline allowed for coordinated and consistent forward movement towards the one-week *National Integrated Maternal and Child Health Campaign*. Over three million LLINs were distributed towards achieving universal coverage in all households and “hang up” activities, during which trained community-based volunteers went door-to-door to assist households with hanging nets, were implemented to ensure high utilization. Volunteers discussed and promoted net usage and proper care and repair of nets.

Monitoring and evaluation: In 2011, six months after the campaign, a nationally representative LLIN ownership and use survey was conducted by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, in collaboration with Statistics Sierra Leone. AMP members provided technical feedback on the initial protocol shared by the ministry, and helped identify a partner – Tulane University – to provide in-country guidance on the final protocol and questionnaire, survey implementation, data analysis and reporting. The survey revealed that 86.6 per cent of the households own at least one LLIN, and 66.4% own more than one LLIN. 95% of all LLINs owned by household were obtained through the national campaign. It was also found that the ownership of LLINs was greater in rural areas (93%) compared to urban areas (74%). Similarly, 96% of LLINs owned by households in rural areas were hanging at the time of the survey as compared to 87% in urban areas. The ministry is using the results and recommendations to help focus its LLIN distribution and communication strategies, especially in urban areas.

Lessons learned

1. Integrating the LLIN distribution into an already existing system for delivering maternal and child health interventions was both cost-effective and an opportunity to increase coverage of all interventions.
2. Engaging multi-sectorial partners by soliciting their financial and technical support and having them actively participate in planning and coordinating the campaign was critical for leveraging resources.
3. Implementing door-to-door hang-up activities immediately after distribution facilitated initiation of net utilization; however, more concerted efforts by all stakeholders will be required to ensure retention and sustained utilization over-time.

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