**Job aid for community leaders during an insecticide-treated net (ITN) mass campaign**

Adaptable tool (remove blue text when adapting)

V1. April 2023

**This job aid assumes a two-phase campaign, i.e. door-to-door household registration followed by ITN distribution at a fixed distribution point (DP), including outreach and mobile distribution points. The national malaria programme should adapt this job aid based on the specific strategy (e.g. distribution door-to-door) that has been chosen for their campaign.**

**Community leaders have many responsibilities during an ITN mass campaign and national malaria programmes should ensure that these valuable partners are trained to implement their assigned roles and responsibilities. Training facilitators should use this job aid and the *Guidance for the training of community leaders in an ITN campaign[[1]](#footnote-1)* for these training sessions. All participants at the training should be provided with a job aid for use during the training and the implementation of campaign activities.**

**Background**

The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the national malaria programme continue to implement various activities to reduce malaria transmission in your community. They are providing insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs) to everyone by means of a mass distribution campaign. To receive ITNs, households in your community need to be registered so that the national malaria programme knows exactly how many ITNs are needed for each ITN storage site. People have been trained by the MoH to register people in your community, and on (*date*) they will start going from door to door to ask how many people are living in each house and to issue vouchers to household respondents that can be exchanged for ITNs. These people will identify themselves as campaign personnel so that households can trust them with the information. During the registration, each household will be told where and when to collect their nets.

As a community leader, you can support the campaign by ensuring that your community receives the correct information to fully participate and that the right number of ITNs are made available to protect you and other members of your community from malaria.

**How can you as a community leader help fight malaria in your community?**

To make this ITN campaign a success and to help reduce malaria, it is important for community members to receive correct information about malaria, the ITN campaign and how properly to use and care for the ITNs. Your role as a community leader is to share critical information with your community members including:

**Malaria is a dangerous disease**

Malaria is a dangerous disease that affects everyone! But it is especially dangerous for children under five and pregnant women:

* Children who have severe malaria may suffer from learning disabilities or brain injuries
* Malaria in pregnant women is a cause of still birth, low birth weight and maternal anaemia

Malaria is endemic in our community and we need to make sure that we are all sleeping under a mosquito net every night of the year. If we think anyone has malaria, especially a pregnant woman or a child, we must ensure that they have a test and are treated by a health worker as quickly as possible to avoid negative outcomes.

**Sleeping under insecticide-treated mosquito nets protects us from malaria**

The mosquitoes that transmit malaria usually bite at night, so one of the most effective ways to prevent malaria is to sleep under an insecticide-treated mosquito net.

There are many benefits of sleeping under insecticide-treated nets every night including:

* The insecticide in the net repels and kills mosquitoes. The insecticide has been proven not to be harmful to humans, even babies and toddlers.
* The ITN acts as a physical barrier between mosquitoes and people sleeping under it
* The ITN protects you from malaria and lets you have a good night’s sleep

**The ITNs must be used properly so that we are protected from malaria:**

* When you collect your new ITN, air it in the shade for 24 hours before you use it
* Hang your ITN over your sleeping place (mat, mattress, bed) and sleep under it every night
* Make sure the net is properly tucked in under the mattress or mat so that no mosquitoes will get in during the night
* We all need to use ITNs to ensure our community benefits from fewer mosquitoes and less malaria, so encourage your neighbours and community members to hang their ITNs and sleep inside them. The more people sleep inside their nets, the better and healthier our community will be

**The ITNs must be cared for so that they last as long as possible:**

* When your net is dirty, wash it with mild soap and water (never bleach); try not to wash your net more than once every three months
* Always dry your net in the shade after washing
* Carefully pack up the net during the day so that it is not accidently damaged by cooking fires, children playing, and other daily household activities
* Sew up small holes and rips in your net before they become big and hard to manage

**During the household registration**

Teams of people trained by the MoH and identifying themselves as campaign personnel will visit our community from (dates) to register households and give vouchers that can be exchanged for ITNs.

Community members are requested to support the registration process by attending to these visitors quickly and giving them the required information so that they can visit every household in the community and no one is left out. Household members should:

* Provide truthful information to the registration teams in response to the questions asked
* Keep the voucher in a safe place so that it is available to be exchanged for ITNs during the distribution
* Make a note of when and where to pick up their ITNs

**During the distribution**

The registration teams will tell households when and where they should be collecting their ITNs. Households must bring their voucher with them to get nets. Remember: no voucher = no nets.

It is important for community members to respect the following guidelines when they come to collect their nets at distribution points:

* Only one adult per household should come to collect the nets at distribution points
* Children should not come with the adult or alone
* Present the voucher to the distribution team so that you can get your nets
* Follow directions being given by the distribution team at the distribution points

If an adult household member is sick and cannot come to the distribution point, they should ask their neighbour to let you or the supervisor at the distribution point know. The supervisor will arrange for the household to get their ITN(s) safely and securely.

**Other ways that community leaders can help the ITN campaign**

As a community leader, you can support a successful ITN campaign by:

* Helping the national malaria programme identify trustworthy community volunteers to take part in the campaign
* Creating a safe environment for a successful campaign by:
  + Spreading the above messages and making community members aware of the benefits of the ITN campaign for everyone
  + Helping to resolve problems that may arise
* Ensuring the security of campaign workers and ITNs so that everyone in your community can be protected from malaria
* Providing safe and secure storage facilities for the nets
* Continuing to create awareness of the dangers of malaria and the benefits of sleeping inside the nets and caring for nets after the campaign

These messages can be passed to community members during community gatherings, such as meetings, social events or religious activities.

**Misinformation and rumours**

As a community leader, you are likely to be one of the first people who will hear rumours or misinformation about the campaign. You can ensure a successful campaign by quickly addressing any emergency/issue, misinformation or rumour that arises in your community. You should also let the campaign supervisor know about these issues so that supervisors and monitors in other areas are aware of potential rumours or misinformation early.

Some of the rumours that may arise during an ITN campaign include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **THE RUMOUR** | **THE TRUTH** |
| * The mosquito nets being distributed are bad for your health. | All the nets distributed during the campaign are approved by the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health. They have been rigorously tested to ensure that they are safe to sleep under.  It is important for household members to protect themselves and their community from malaria by sleeping under an insecticide-treated mosquito net every night. |
| * The mosquito nets are being distributed to government party supporters only. You won’t get one if you don’t share their politics. | * Mosquito nets are being distributed by the government free of charge. They are being distributed to everyone in the country/region/district irrespective of their politics, religion, race or gender. * The nets are being distributed to everyone to protect us from malaria. |

If you hear any incorrect information being spread in your community, you should take the time to listen to these community members, and then provide them with the correct information.

*Your partnership and support during this ITN campaign in your community is highly appreciated.*

*Thank you!*

1. <https://allianceformalariaprevention.com/resources/resource-library/?_sfm_res_campaign_component=Social%20%26%20Behavior%20Change> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)