

Nairobi, Kenya
20 February 2024

Each year at its Annual Partners' Meeting, the Alliance for Malaria Prevention's (AMP) Core Group selects countries or individuals to receive awards for exceptional performance in the fight against malaria, specifically vector control with insecticide-treated nets (ITNs). The decision on the awards is difficult given the enormous efforts and accomplishments of so many national malaria programmes and their partners over the previous year. The AMP Core Group congratulates all the national malaria programmes and partners that have worked to ensure that ITN distributions, through both campaign and continuous channels, were implemented as planned.

The AMP Core Group presents three awards at the annual meeting. First, the award for leadership is provided in honour of the late Dr Samuel Juana Smith, former Programme Manager of the Sierra Leone National Malaria Control Programme. Dr Smith worked tirelessly to combat malaria, especially among children under five and pregnant women who are particularly affected by the disease. His leadership was critical for his country to accelerate progress against malaria with a focus on integrated interventions.

Second, the award for using data for decision-making honours the memory of Dr Jorge Alexandre Harrison Arroz, former Technical Malaria Manager of the World Vision Mozambique Global Fund Project, whose passion was to utilize quality data to ensure continuous improvements in programme planning and implementation.

Finally, the third award is provided to a country or individual making significant efforts to ensure that ITN access and use are scaled up through adapted operational strategies and innovative approaches or that has adopted other unique methods for the management of ITNs at different points in their in-country life.

South Sudan National Malaria Control Programme



The AMP Core Group is pleased to present its award for leadership to Dr Joseph Puok and the entire team of the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) in South Sudan. The AMP Core Group further recognizes the support of partners including the Against Malaria Foundation, the Global Fund, UNICEF and implementing partners towards the ITN distribution and digitalization achievements.

Between December 2022 and February 2024, amidst a backdrop of formidable challenges, including floods and conflicts in neighbouring territories, the South Sudan NMCP orchestrated the distribution of an impressive 7.2 million ITNs across nine states in the country. This initiative was not merely a logistics and operations feat but was a testament to the unwavering dedication and resilience of the teams involved from the community to the central level.

An important step on the road to the achievements of 2023 was the leadership of the Government of South Sudan through the NMCP to mobilize a significant contribution of ITNs from AMF and to negotiate and sign agreements in a timely manner. The adoption of a digitalized data management system in a country with significant infrastructural challenges demonstrates to all national malaria programmes that adoption and scale-up of new technology is possible, even in the most complex and challenging environments.

The ability of the NMCP and partners to lead efforts for humanitarian response - targeting internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the record flooding and the refugees and returnees from the conflict in Sudan – attests to the strong coordination around malaria in the country. The ability to navigate through the myriad of challenges faced and achieve set objectives speaks volumes about the commitment to the health and well-being of the affected South Sudanese population.

The AMP Core Group congratulates the South Sudan NMCP and encourages the national programme and partners to continue efforts to ensure access to ITNs and leverage their experiences with technology for future efforts.

Madagascar National Malaria Control Programme



The AMP Core Group presents the award for use of data for decision-making to the Madagascar NMCP. The AMP Core Group recognizes the support of partners such as the Global Fund, Population Services International, the US President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) and other partners.

Madagascar has, over the past several years, used data for decision-making and worked to ensure improved data visibility for ITN mass campaign and continuous distribution using a simple SMS system with dashboards. The NMCP and partners have worked to put in place ITN campaign data management, including for the supply chain, using available technology and infrastructure as well as local technical human resources. This management system will ensure timely availability of data to support decision-making across a vast territory targeted for ITN distribution. Additionally, the NMCP used malaria burden and risk data to target districts for community-based continuous distribution of ITNs to ensure high access and use in these areas.

The Madagascar NMCP and partners have been working to use data for improved decision-making around climate change and malaria. As the third most climate change-affected country in the world and with an average of six major cyclones a year, the Government of Madagascar puts climate at the top of its short-, medium- and long-term agenda. The new National Malaria Strategic Plan for the country, which is effective from 2023 to 2027, highlights climate change and includes risk stratification and use of data for anticipating and responding to potential climate impacts affecting the malaria response.

The AMP Core Group congratulates the Madagascar NMCP and encourages the national programme and partners to continue efforts to ensure continuous access to ITNs, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, and to continue to ensure that data are used to plan for and respond to climate and natural disasters.

Mali National Malaria Control Programme



The AMP Core Group presents the third annual award to the Mali NMCP. The AMP Core Group recognizes the support of partners such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Global Fund, US PMI and other partners.

The Mali NMCP strives to ensure that all populations have access to malaria services, using both community and facility-based channels. In 2023, the NMCP and partners completed the distribution of over 10 million ITNs of three different types during the mass campaign in the five southern and central regions of the country, an outstanding achievement in a very challenging environment.

With the degradation of the security situation in the five remaining northern regions, the NMCP and partners have worked tirelessly to develop a strategy that can address multiple operational challenges, including the closure of health facilities, difficulty implementing supervision and monitoring, difficulty of transporting commodities and the lack of a telephone network in multiple places. The ITN distribution strategy for 2024 will be community-based and will be adjusted based on the security level in each region, district and health area and include adaptations to ensure that both the general population and IDPs, nomads and refugees will receive nets. Security will be regularly assessed, and necessary operational adjustments made to ensure the safety of community members, ITN distribution personnel and commodities.

The AMP Core Group congratulates the Mali NMCP and encourages the national programme and partners to continue efforts to ensure continuous access to ITNs, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, and to continue strong coordination and engagement with humanitarian and other stakeholders at all levels for a coordinated and successful response to malaria in a very challenging context.