



RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PLANNING FOR AN INSECTICIDE-TREATED NET (ITN) DISTRIBUTION CAMPAIGN

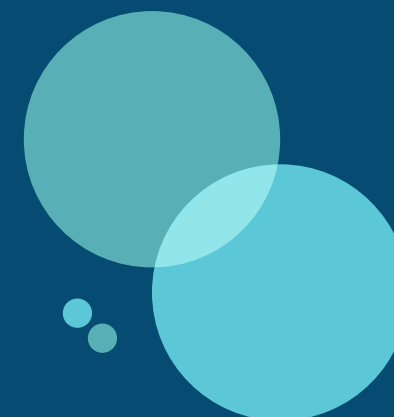
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Malaria Prevention
Expanding the ownership and use of mosquito nets



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UNDERSTAND THE MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are many definitions of risk. The UNESCO Risk Management Training Handbook (2010)¹ uses the following: “Risk is the expression of the likelihood and impact of an uncertain, sudden and extreme

event that, if it occurs, may impact positively (opportunity) or negatively (threat) on the achievement of a project or programme objective”. (p. 12)

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Likelihood} \times \text{Impact}$$

Why is it important to manage risk? The ultimate purpose of the exercise of risk identification and analysis is to prepare for risk mitigation. Risk mitigation is the process of taking steps to reduce adverse effects and/or events. Mitigation includes the reduction of the likelihood that a risk event will occur and/or reduction of the impact of a risk event if it does occur²; e.g. risk mitigation can help to minimize potential negative effects on the different aspects of the ITN campaign, such as road conditions leading to transport delays of delivery of ITNs during the logistics operation or the possibility of refusals during the household registration process.

Inherently, large-scale ITN distribution campaigns have many uncertainties and rapidly changing events or situations. To plan for success, it is important to identify these potential risks at the campaign macroplanning stage. Some broad categories of risks to consider are:

1. Source: UNESCO Risk Management Training Handbook, 2010. Bureau of Strategic Planning. BSP-2010/WS7. Available at unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001906/190604E.pdf
2. Source: National Academies Press. The Owner's Role in Project Risk Management (2005), Chapter 5. Available at: www.nap.edu/read/11183/chapter/7

Risk categories	Examples
Strategic factors: those risks that affect the entire strategy planned for the campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy to implement a single-phase door-to-door distribution but without standalone household registration to specify ITN needs there is a risk of over- or under-supply • Strategy to implement an integrated campaign but there are risks linked to the timing of arrival of different commodities against the campaign timelines for different interventions • Strategy does not include a maximum number of ITNs per household and ITNs are insufficient for the registered population
Operational factors: those risks that affect, in part or wholly, ability to implement the operation as planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy adopted does not effectively address areas of complexity in the country with the risk that ITNs do not reach targeted recipients • Funding is insufficient to cover every aspect of the campaign operations with risks that certain key activities are not implemented • Insufficient structures or personnel to meet the planning for storage, transport and implementation of the logistics operation • Management of crowds insufficient, risking security of commodities, personnel and ITN recipients
Financial factors: those risks associated with budget and financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets inadequately developed and do not reflect real costs with the risk of suspension of activities during implementation • Changes in exchange rates or costs for necessary items, such as fuel, due to inflation or contextual changes in the target area with the risk of suspension of activities during implementation • Insufficient financial resources lead to targeted ITN distribution and limited social and behaviour change (SBC), risking security of teams and commodities during implementation • Delays in campaign implementation leading to increased storage costs • Poor data for ITN pre-positioning leading to over/under stock and the need for lateral logistics with the risk that resources are insufficient to cover this movement • Poor or incomplete planning for mobile money payments (e.g. incomplete lists of personnel and needed information) with risk of suspension of campaign activities
Compliance risk: those risks associated with legal penalties when there are actions not in accordance with laws, regulations or internal policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper procedures followed for financial disbursement and justification leading to ineligible expenditure with financial partners • Improper tendering and contracting processes • Improper procedures followed for local and/or international procurement

Note that some issues may have implications in more than one category. National malaria programmes may also add other categories, e.g. political risks.

DEFINE LIKELIHOOD AND IMPACT

Two key elements to consider for each identified risk are the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact if the risk occurs. The table below shows one approach to categorizing each of these factors.

LIKELIHOOD OF RISK/ PROBABILITY	IMPACT OF RISK	Example of colours if using heat map ³
Unlikely	Negligible	Low
Likely	Insignificant	Moderate
Possible	Moderate	High
Almost certain	Significant	Extreme

Every campaign will have a variety of risks related to each aspect of the campaign implementation and each of these risks may have an effect across all areas of operations (operations, digitalization, monitoring and evaluation, logistics, SBC, security, finance, etc.). Often, it will not be possible (or necessary where risks are unlikely and of limited

impact) to map all risks, so a consolidated risk table with the most important risks can be considered. See the table below for part of an example risk mitigation framework developed for the ITN campaign in Burundi in 2016. It outlines the “top four” risks.

³. A heat map is a data visualization technique that shows magnitude of a phenomenon (in this case the risk) as colour.

Top four	Risk	Category of risk	Risk to whom
Supply chain	Late arrival of ITNs at provincial level (production delays, maritime transport delays, delays on arrival in country, customs delays, delays in transport to provinces)	Operational	PPM ⁴ NMP
	Changes to policy on import of goods and purchases (for example, taxes not covered by budget)	Strategic Operational Financial	NMP/MoH
	Delays in delivery from provinces to communities/distribution sites (delays in call for tenders, delays in contracting transporters)	Operational	NMP/PR ⁵
	Failure to identify and verify sufficient and appropriate storage in each community/distribution site for the quantity of ITNs being received	Operational	NMP/PR
Security	Difficulty to access some zones	Operational	NMP/PR, transporter
	Refusal to register during household registration	Operational	NMP/PR
	Difficulties in urban areas (such as the capital of the country)	Operational	NMP/PR
	Displacement of population	Operational	NMP/PR
Seasonality of operations	Difficulty to access some zones due to rains	Operational	NMP/PR, transporter
	Campaign personnel (operational level) demotivated in difficult working conditions (rainy season implementation)	Operational	NMP/PR
ITN quantification	Insufficient ITNs after household registration (e.g. quantification based on census carried out several years before)	Operational	NMP/PR

Risk has become an increasingly important element in planning for ITN distribution campaigns given the need to ensure that the funds invested in the procurement and distribution of the ITNs are well utilized. As the resource context and ITN targeting decisions change, risk becomes even more important to consider at the macroplanning stage. Even where a national malaria programme has not been

requested to submit a risk assessment and mitigation plan as part of the campaign macroplanning documents, it is good practice for the campaign team to go through the process of identifying any potential risks to the overall campaign, the accountability of the ITNs and the security of campaign personnel.

^{4.} Global Fund/Pooled Procurement Mechanism

^{5.} Principal Recipient

FOCUS RISK MITIGATION ON EVERY ASPECT OF THE CAMPAIGN

Planning for mitigation of risks should cover all areas of the campaign and national malaria programmes should be able to rapidly identify key, high priority risks from their previous campaign implementation experiences. For example, there is sufficient evidence across countries pointing to the importance of household registration for ensuring that families receive the correct number of ITNs, as well as to the challenges of ensuring that the household registration is implemented as planned and achieves set targets. Therefore, identifying the risks that households may not be reached or may not be registered correctly during the household registration can be a good way to strengthen planning for this activity. It is good practice to look back at reports (particularly sections on lessons learned and recommendations) in order to refresh memories on where challenges happened, which warning signs were noted and how bottlenecks were resolved.

National malaria programmes should consider risk assessment as a critical aspect of the terms of reference for all sub-committees (logistics, strategy/operations, digitalization, M&E and SBC)⁶, and use identified risks and mitigation measures to develop timelines and budgets for activities to improve the quality of ITN campaign implementation. During the macroplanning phase, it will be possible for the central level team to identify the general risks that may affect the overall campaign planning and implementation, but during microplanning,

these assessments of risk can be more localized and show specific risks in only small parts of the district or health facility catchment area that will be important to mitigate to ensure campaign success.

Once risks have been identified, the risk owner (e.g. the Ministry of Health, the national malaria programme, the implementing partner, the third-party logistics operator, etc.) can work to develop tools/plans to assess, determine, safeguard and implement suitable corrective actions to mitigate the risk in the planning.

In exceptional situations, the risk may need to be tolerated. Transferring the risk responsibility by contracting out certain activities to third parties (e.g. transport or warehousing) is an option. But if transferring the risk is the preferred option, the goal of delivering campaign ITNs to the targeted households must be the highest priority and the ongoing scrutiny of a contractor's activities would be a national coordination committee responsibility. Similarly, if the monitoring of the implementation of the SBC plan for timing and frequency of radio and television spots is contracted out to an independent party, the SBC sub-committee would need to ensure that the duties are performed to the level required. In addition, the risks associated with contracting out an activity would need to be considered and evaluated, including the timelines for the contracting process.

6. Terminology may differ between countries but function of sub-committees should be similar. There may also be other sub-committees, e.g. security, finance, etc. who should all consider risk assessment.

UPDATE THE RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PLAN ON A REGULAR BASIS

During macroplanning the development of a risk mitigation plan alongside the core campaign documents is important. It is a continuous process, as risks will change over time (e.g. funding constraints

exacerbated by country-wide inflation, areas of insecurity) and it is important for the risk mitigation plan to be kept as up to date as possible to avoid problems during implementation.

The risk assessment and mitigation plan should be seen as a key component of the macroplanning package and should be submitted at the same time as the campaign plan of action, logistics plan of action, SBC plan of action, M&E plan of action, digitalization plan of action (if appropriate), timeline and budget.

The risk assessment and mitigation plan should be kept in a central storage location, such as in Google Drive, to allow the different sub-committees to update the plan as discussions continue and the context changes. The different sub-committees must continually monitor and discuss the ongoing risks. As risks will change over time, the risk assessment and mitigation process is continuous.

Risk assessment and mitigation plans can be standalone or can be integrated into the campaign timeline to allow for both to be updated easily during national coordination and sub-committee meetings.

The example in the Annex is adapted from different risk assessment and mitigation plans that have been developed by national malaria programmes and their partners.

ANNEX: Example of part of a risk assessment and mitigation plan

Campaign area	Risk	Detail of risk	Likelihood	Impact	Heat map	Mitigation plan	Risk owner	Timing for addressing risk
Quantification	Insufficient ITNs available in the case of single-phase distribution	ITNs are insufficient to cover the targeted households because updated needs from household registration are not available in advance of ITN distribution (e.g. pre-positioning is based on microplanning figures)	3 Possible	4 Significant		Pre-position contingency stock (if available) at district or regional level for deployment as needed based on data during implementation. If no contingency stock available, consider capping the number of ITNs per household either prior to or during the implementation of the registration/distribution based on microplanning data received.	MoH (NMP)	After microplanning and during implementation of the registration/distribution
ITN storage at community level	Insufficient secure pre-positioning sites (PPS) to facilitate resupply of door-to-door distribution teams	Many PPS are required to avoid a need to resupply ITNs to teams with other means such as motorcycles or tricycles which increase the operational budget. In some targeted areas, it may not be possible to find the required number of PPS that meet the minimum criteria for security.	2 Likely	3 Moderate		Early identification of areas with problems during microplanning. Where storage exists but security is an issue, plan for local security to reinforce any existing measures in place. Where no storage exists, determine alternate means for resupply of teams and ensure that the budget reflects the needs.	MoH (NMP)	Verification of storage gaps at community level immediately after microplanning consolidation and validation; final operational budget including alternatives where needed after microplanning
Resupply of door-to-door ITN distribution teams	Difficulties in quantifying and ensuring sufficient resources for regular resupply of door-to-door ITN distribution teams	Teams may move more slowly or quickly than planned, making the timing and frequency of resupply difficult to establish. Urban areas add additional complexity with traffic and other conditions. Risk of delayed distribution to households if the resupply cannot be planned in a timely manner. Financial implications of extending days of distribution if daily targets cannot be met due to slow resupply.	3 Possible	4 Significant		Identify PPS as close as possible to door-to-door teams to reduce the need for resupply of ITNs (e.g. have teams resupply themselves during the day). Monitor implementation of the resupply on the initial distribution days and adjust as needed.	MoH (NMP)	After microplanning consolidation and validation and during implementation
Waste management of ITN packaging	Possibility of residual chemicals from the ITNs adhering to plastic materials used to package ITNs being spread into the environment.	Individual ITN packaging, bales, baling material, strapping and other plastic wrapping, all have the potential to harm campaign personnel and the environment.	2 Likely	3 Moderate		Develop a waste management plan to gather and dispose of all campaign waste. Follow national government guidance for disposal and ensure that microplanning includes mapping of appropriate waste management facilities. Engage with recycling companies in the country to assess options.	MoH (NMP)	During macroplanning and quantification for the distribution, as well as during microplanning
Payments	Delayed personnel payment	Inadequate verification of account details Payment agency not able to operate at local level Delays with mobile money transfer or non-receipt of funds by campaign actors	2 Likely	3 Moderate		Plan for early submission and verification of personnel lists and account details. Plan for timely submission of payment justifications. Ensure regular follow up. Include payment related milestones in the campaign timeline. Track progress of mobile money transfers and issues to rapidly address problems and prevent rumour generation.	MoH (NMP)	During macroplanning, microplanning and implementation of activities

KEY	
Likelihood	Impact
1 Unlikely	1 Negligible
2 Likely	2 Insignificant
3 Possible	3 Moderate
4 Almost certain	4 Significant

Risk	Heat color
Negligible	
Low	
Moderate	
High	

HEAT MAP - IMPACT				
Likelihood	Negligible	Insignificant	Moderate	Significant
1 Unlikely				
2 Likely				
3 Possible				
4 Almost certain				



AMP CONTACTS

To join the weekly AMP conference call each Wednesday at 10:00 AM Eastern time (16.00 PM CET) use the following Zoom meeting line:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88935481892?pwd=h3cuJ3x5LOsR58YXcEaub8ULqu5LMj.1>

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