

SUCCESS STORY

Malaria-free for four years by sleeping under a Long-Lasting Insecticide-treated Net



Vicky sits with her daughter Sylvester Lenia at their home. They continue to use the mosquito net they received in 2008, which has kept Sylvester malaria-free for the last four and half years.

When Sylvester Lenia was just three and a half years old, she used to suffer from malaria on a monthly basis. She would develop a very high fever, vomit and sometimes have diarrhoea as a result, according to her mother Vicky Anguya. Now, thanks to a Long-Lasting Insecticide-treated Net (LLIN) the family received in 2008, Sylvester has been malaria-free for the past four years.

“I used to spend a lot of time and money taking my daughter to the health centre and buying anti-malarials because these would be out of stock in the health facilities, says Vicky. I had actually feared that my daughter would not grow up healthy due to the persistent malaria attacks.”

In 2008, Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment – West Nile (RICE-WN) under the Uganda Malaria Communities Program (UMCP) distributed over 4,000 LLINs in Tara sub-county. This was a two year project that ran from August 2008 to July 2010. Besides distributing 4,000 LLINs, the Organization carried out malaria awareness days, provided Village Health Team refresher training on malaria prevention, and conducted community education on malaria prevention. The net distribution targeted more than 7,500 pregnant mothers and children under five. These efforts helped reduce morbidity and mortality due to malaria in West Nile. Vicky was one of the net recipients.

“Since I received this net, I have not spent a penny to treat malaria,” Vicky shares with gratitude, noting that this has enabled her to save some money for her other needs such as scholastic materials. She further noted that on two occasions when she suspected Sylvester to have caught malaria, she took the little girl to the health centre but the test results were negative. She then confidently concluded that the net had saved her daughter. The daughter is healthy and strong as observed, she further concluded. Sylvester now helps her mother with household chores such as washing utensils and fetching water.

Vicky has guarded the net jealously, as she feels it is like a guardian angel that has kept her daughter safe from the deadly malaria disease which has claimed many children’s lives. When RICE-WN got a chance to see the net recently, the LLIN was in good condition except for a small burned part. Vicky has tied that part with a piece of cloth and is determined to keep the lifesaving net for the next two to three years.