

SUCCESS STORY

REDUCING MALARIA INFECTIONS WITH INSECTICIDE TREATED NETS

Use of treated nets is very low in Uganda representing only 10% of the bed nets used and with only about 18% of the households using them.

Most households know about the benefits of ordinary nets, but have limited knowledge about ITNs. ITNs are more effective than untreated nets, because in addition to providing a barrier against mosquito bites, they also kill and repel mosquitos, thus preventing disease transmission and night time annoyances " says, Dan Kiwalabye, Director, Uganda Child and Aid Development (UGACAD) Foundation".

Even when families know of these benefits, they some times do not buy ITNs, because they cost a bit more than other nets. Rural communities also sometimes have limited availability of ITNs. In addition, some community members have concerns about the safety and effects of the chemicals used in ITNs, other have insufficient information about retreating the nets.

To promote increased use of insecticide treated net. UGACAD distributed 2,300 ITNs during the years 2007 and 2010. The main program objective was to reduce malaria infection among 3,000 people living with HIV in the fishing communities of Ntenjeru. This subcounty has a very low net coverage and a very high HIV prevalence rate of about 25% among the fishing communities, according to the ministry of health.

After distribution of the nets, the local health center recorded a significant reduction of malaria infection among people living with HIV, with infection rates decreasing from 40% to 25%. These results promise an even greater reduction in incidences of morbidity and mortality, if more people living with HIV begin using ITNs.