



Successful youth participation in community-based malaria control – Cameroon

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Introduction

Plan International

- A child-centered community development organization founded more than 70 years ago
- Works with more than 3.5 million families across 48 countries each year



Plan Cameroon

- Operating since 1996; now supports 534 communities in five of the country's 10 regions.
- Core areas of activity include child health, food security, HIV amongst young people, primary education, and children's rights.



Project Scope

Background


- Beginning in 2005, Plan Cameroon, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Natexis Bank (France), implemented a three-year malaria control project.

Project area

- Akonolinga health district
- Total population: 113,147 inhabitants

Target population

- 23,667 pregnant women and children under five
- Targeted for free distribution of long-lasting insecticide treated nets, environmental cleanliness, and intermittent preventive treatment of malaria in pregnancy




Goals and Objectives

Goal

To reduce by 50 percent morbidity and mortality in the Akonolinga health district due to malaria.




Objectives

- To raise awareness in 350 communities on the causes of malaria;
- To ease both financial and geographical access to LLINs to at least 60 percent of children under five years old and pregnant women;
- To promote effective use of LLINs by at least 60 percent of children under five years old and pregnant women; and
- To make 350 youth groups/CBOs actors of malaria control in Akonolinga health district.



Summary of Methods

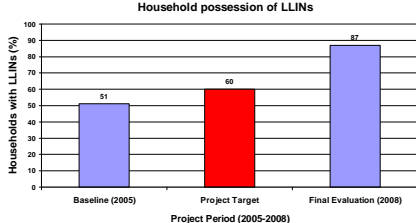
- Role-plays, sketches, theater, and health talks on malaria control during public ceremonies by youth
- Clean-up campaigns to drain stagnant water, fill up pot holes, and clear bushes
- Exchange visits to learn from high-performing youth groups on malaria control
- Free distribution of LLINs to under-five children and pregnant women
- Regular home visits conducted by youth and CBO members to ensure effective use of bed nets and check IPT uptake for pregnant women


Results (1)

The percentage of households owning long-lasting insecticide treated nets has increased over the project period.

Household possession of LLINs

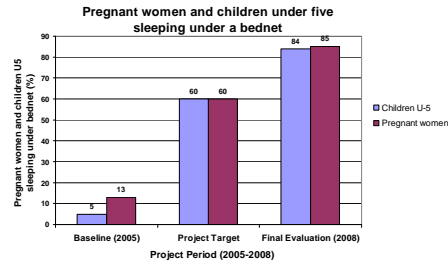


Project Period (2005-2008)	Households with LLINs (%)
Baseline (2005)	51
Project Target	60
Final Evaluation (2008)	87



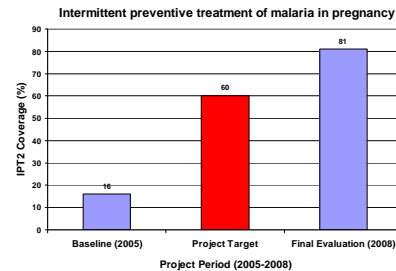
Results (2)

The percentage of pregnant women and children under five who sleep under a mosquito net has increased.



Results (3)

Many pregnant women were protected from malaria with Sulphadoxine Pyrimethamine tablets.



Views from Participants

Malaria is a very bad sickness. Every month at least one of my children was hospitalized because of it. I spent a lot of money on drips and drugs.

Since the coming of this project into our area, I have stopped going to the hospital and I can save some money and use it to send my children to school and they are looking healthier.

E. Amougou, family head, Yeme Yeme community



Conclusions

- Youth participation is an effective tool in the control of malaria.
- Bed net use is enhanced by frequent home visits by youth and CBO members.
- Youth participation is not only effectual, but also cost-effective. Cost per beneficiary was less than US\$2.
- Malaria interventions can offer immense economic benefit: target household spending on health dropped by 80 percent.



Keys to Success

Youth participation

In community-based management of malaria, the role of youth is invaluable.

Role-plays, dramas, and sketches

These strategies help to widely disseminate community-based messages.

Involvement of community leaders and women's groups

These groups are critical in creating an enabling environment.



Next Steps for Plan Cameroon

- Scaling up youth participation in malaria control activities to other health districts of Cameroon
- Involving youths in the home management of simple malaria with Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy
- Involving youths in other health related issues, such as home management of diarrhea with ORS/zinc, distribution of condoms in the fight against HIV/AIDS, etc.



Thank you!

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