

# Bed net Distribution

Medina Bloc  
Tambacounda, Senegal  
PCV Mary O'Brien



Medina Bloc celebrating in front of the school

## **Introduction:**

The Medina Bloc Community is located 70 kilometers Southeast of Tambacounda, Senegal. The community is a cluster of 8 villages of both Pulaar and Mandinka Ethnic groups and a total population close to 2,000. With the help of Against Malaria, Peace Corps Volunteer, Mary O'Brien was able to secure 875 bed nets to provide complete coverage for the entire community. In the months leading up to the distribution, PCV Mary O'Brien along with the rural health workers held meetings to discuss malaria prevention techniques, proper care and use of bed nets as well as the details of the actual distribution.



Volunteers, Mary O'Brien and Rebecca Semmes preparing for a health lesson about malaria

### **Process of Distribution:**

#### **Method:**

Peace Corps Volunteer, Mary O'Brien, along with members of the Medina community decided to keep all the nets at a central location and have representatives from each community come to the set point to pick up the nets for his or her family on the day of the distribution. The community, along with the volunteer chose this mode of distribution because it was felt that it would create the most ordered distribution and also allow for work to continue in the fields and throughout the village while the distribution was taking place.

#### **Distribution:**

In preparation for the distribution, PCV Mary O'Brien along with the rural health workers went compound to compound in each of the 8 villages counting the number of beds in need of nets. These numbers were then used, in conjunction with the distribution numbers for the national under 5 distribution that took place two weeks before the Peace Corps/Against Malaria distribution. By working in conjunction with the health post it was ensured that every bed would be supplied with a net on the day of distribution if they did not receive one during the national distribution.

The nets were delivered to the primary school that serves the Medina community. It served as a central location for all of the villages partaking in the distribution. The school also provided a place for volunteers to prepare for the distribution, including removing the nets from packaging to reduce the chance of resale.



Members of the distribution team getting ready to start

In efforts to create as much order as possible, the distribution team decided the distribution would span 2 days. The first day serving communities; Medina Baousaou, Medina Dar Salam and Medina Niemenke and the second day serving communities, Missirah Damantan, Wakilare Damantan, Medina Soko, Mamboya and Medina Tounty.

Because all of the education was done prior to the day, the actual distribution was quite simple. Peace Corps Volunteer, Mary O'Brien gave a short speech welcoming the family representatives, discussed the details of the distribution and introduced the distribution team; comprised of three Peace Corps Volunteers; Mary O'Brien, Roxanne O'Connell and Krystle Dunn, the Director of the Primary School and the Director of the Preschool. The rural health worker was also committed to assist with his or her respective community. The distribution team assisted with the literal distribution of materials as well as aided in troubleshooting for any problems the team encountered during the actual distribution.





PCV Mary O'Brien during the distribution



Members of each family were called into the room to collect the nets for their compound. In the case of a dispute over the number of nets to be distributed to a family, the individual's name was taken and their home was visited the next day to verify the report.

There were a few problems encountered throughout the distribution. The close proximity of villages in the area and the vast need for mosquito nets created quite the buzz about the distribution. Villagers came to the distribution site trying to request nets for villages that were not partaking in the distribution also there was some confusion about the number of nets each family was to receive due to the national distribution. It may have been helpful to do the national distribution along with the private distribution on back to back days to alleviate some of this confusion, but in general the distribution went off without a problem.



PCV Roxanne O'Connell sorting nets to be distributed

### **Conclusions:**

All in all, the bed net distribution was a huge success. With the help of Against Malaria I was able to provide 100% bed net coverage to my entire rural community. This should greatly reduce the number of cases of malaria this rainy season, improving the quality of life for the community and increasing knowledge and awareness of bed nets and malaria prevention. In the future I hope to continue with education about bed nets and other malaria prevention techniques. Although I will not be around the next rainy

season I will encourage my replacement to continue with net distributions and education in the surrounding villages.

