

Free Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Net (LLIN) distribution in the districts of Majunga I and Majunga II, Madagascar

11,000 LLINs from World Swim for Malaria (WSM) were requested by PSI for distribution during Mother and Child Health Week from April 23rd-27th 2007. The LLINs were distributed to pregnant women and children under one year of age, who came to health centers in the districts of Majunga I and II.

Arranging the logistics

Upon arrival, the 11,000 LLINs were first stored at the PSI central warehouse, where they were transferred to health center based on figures provided by the district health officers. They were then dispatched to PSI's warehouse in Majunga, where PSI staff organized their distribution to each of the health centers. It took three days for two Landcruisers to complete the job. Most health centers in Majunga I are were within the city itself, so distribution there was fairly easy. The districts of Majunga II were more of a challenge. In these districts, PSI made arrangements with the District Health Office (DHO) to assist with distribution as 11 of the 16 health centers are accessible only by oxcarts and/or canoes.

Getting prepared for the distribution

Ensuring that LLINs are distributed to the appropriate beneficiaries (pregnant women and children under 1) was PSI's objective. With the NMCP, PSI established and wrote the procedures to be followed by the health personnel. As services provision during MCH weeks is typically well organized, PSI needed only one additional person at the end of the "chain" to assist in the distribution. This community representative was appointed by each health center head, and s/he gave one LLIN to each person whose health cards were stamped as a beneficiary. PSI has provided some allowances to the net distributors for the week.

One week before the MCH week, all health centers heads were grouped in Majunga for a half-day session with PSI staff regarding distribution procedures. PSI also arranged for each health center to receive scissors, a "NET" stamp, markers, forms to record stocks and distribution. In order to avoid having the LLINs leak into the market, the net distributor was instructed to open the packet with scissors.

Communication : Getting people to health centers

A large media campaign for MCH week was conducted at a national level by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning (MOHFP). At the local level, our Mobile Video Unit (MVU) team was mobilized before and during the week to encourage mothers to go to health centers. They also partnered with local authorities to conduct mass sensitization sessions on malaria in Majunga I and II. These sessions also provided a good opportunity to communicate that LLINs were being distributed at health centers.

Results

- The official launch of MCH week in Belobaka (Majunga II) was sponsored by the provincial and regional authorities and drew a large crowd including mothers bringing their children for health services.
- 4,650 LLINs were distributed through 16 health centers in Majunga II.
- 6,350 LLINs were distributed through 7 health centers in Majunga I.

The distribution took place during the MCH week from April 23rd -27th during which 90% of nets were distributed. We allowed the health centers to pursue nets distribution the week after until May 5th.

Challenges

- More demand than expected. The numbers requested by the health centers were higher than the 11,000 LLINs received. Working with the DHOs, PSI gave priority to rural Majunga II.
- Arranging for transportation of LLINs to inaccessible sites. The LLINs needed to be in health centers at least one week before MCH week. PSI and the DHOs collaborated well to ensure this difficult task was completed successfully.
- Communication: As most of the health centers are difficult to access, it was not possible to get reports on the distribution until weeks after it took place.

What's next?

A joint mission with DHOs and NMCP is planned to visit Majunga I and II. The objective is to evaluate the quality of the distribution by health centers and assess coverage.

Success stories from the field

Bernadette lives in Majunga I. She received a treated mosquito net for her eight month old son during the April Mother and Child Health Week. He has his own bed and since he received the net, he is sleeping under it every night. Bernadette says she can sleep well knowing that he is protected from mosquito bites and from malaria.

Louissette lives in Majunga I and heard from her neighbors that children under one could get a treated net during the Mother and Child Health week. So, she went to the nearest health center for health services as well as to get a net. Since then, she has been sleeping with her five month old daughter under the net every night. Her nights are now peaceful since she is not bothered by mosquito bites anymore.

Table 1: Nets distributed by health centers

Majunga I		Majunga II	
Health centers	Nets	Health centers	Nets
CSB2 Mahabibo	2,400	CSB2 Ambalambe-Befanjava	199
CSB2 Antanimasaja	400	CSB2 Antanimalandy	127
CSB2 Mahavoky Atsimo	950	CSB1 Ampananirabe	19
CSB2 Sotema	1,100	CSB2 Boanamary	446
CSB2 Tsararano Ambony	1,000	CSB2 Mariarano	358
CSB2 Amborovy	300	CSB2 Mitsinjo Mariarano	81
CSS Majunga I	200	CSB2 Andranoboka	276
		CSB1 Mangabe	142
		CSB2 Ambalakida	327
		CSB1 Antanambao-Manarenja	242
		CSB2 Belobaka	630
		CSB2 Bekobay	450
		CSB2 Ambodimanga	613
		CSB1 Tsarazamandimby	88
		CSB2 Besakoa	265
		CSB2 Betsako	387
	6,350		4,650

Report written by : Eliane Razafimandimby , Malaria Prevention Program Coordinator