



ZIMBABWE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN MALARIA

SUCCESS STORY

Continuous Community Engagement Led to increased LLINs Utilization in Chidodo Ward of Mbire District, Mashonaland Central Province

I vividly recall that up to the late 2000s' many people old and young succumbed to malaria in this ward yearly. The turning point to our health and livelihoods was in March 2017 when mosquito nets were distributed following a malaria outbreak which affected over 2,000 over a three month period" narrated Mr Chidodo the village head for Chidodo village below.



"This tool has improved our health and survivorship" Said Village Head Chidodo

In the low lands of the Zambezi Valley, situated on the northern border with Mozambique lies Chidodo Ward of Mbire District. The residents of this ward practice stream bank cultivation from October to July each year and this coupled with the hot weather which compels them to sleep outside, exposes them to mosquito bites and eventually to getting malaria. For decades this used to be the epi-centre of malaria transmission and outbreaks in the district and province up until the last outbreak in March 2017.

In response to the outbreak the Ministry of Health and their partner the Zimbabwe Assistance Program in Malaria (ZAPIM) distributed 3,000 and 2,866 long lasting insecticidal nets (LLIN) in 2017 and 2019 respectively to cover every sleeping space.

"The provision of nets has had a big impact on our lives as malaria deaths and cases have been averted. I wish this mosquito net project had come earlier; those innocent souls could have been saved. As village heads we have taken up the initiative of spearheading the net program. Discussions on nets are now a standing agenda item on our monthly meetings and we come up with action plans. From January to August this year (2019) no single case of malaria has occurred in my village and no village in Ward 5 has had more than 5 cases with no deaths reported since 2017. Previously villages would record over 50 cases per month. This is a clear testimony that we are winning the war against malaria. This has resulted in increased productivity at our stream bank plots as more time is now spent on the plots rather than attending to burying the dead or visiting and caring for the sick. We are very grateful to our partner ZAPIM who has brought us the right intervention" said Village Head Zhuwawo, one of the village heads for Chidodo Ward.

The malaria situation in the ward is rapidly changing as a result of the implementation of a malaria vector control program coupled with continuous engagement of the community leaders and their communities. The ward is one of the four wards out of the 19 wards in Mbire District, which are benefitting from the distribution of LLINs through the My Net My Life campaign. This US President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) funded project is being implemented by ZAPIM in collaboration with the NMCP and MOHCC. Before, the project, villagers would succumb to 3-4 bouts of malaria per season. This has all changed when people started getting nets in April, 2017. The My Net My Life campaign aims at encouraging people to get nets and to use them at all times.

