



Malaria Initiative Succeeding

Freedom from Hunger, April 12, 2005

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Africa Malaria Day, April 25, is a reminder that Malaria is one the deadliest diseases in the world -- killing more than one million people per year, mostly poor women and young children in tropical countries. Because of this urgent need, in 2002, Freedom from Hunger, with help from the drug company GlaxoSmithKline, launched an anti-malaria pilot program in six West African countries.

PR9.NET April 12, 2005 - This Malaria Initiative educates women in poor rural areas about malaria; brings them access to subsidized, insecticide treated bednets; and provides linkages to local health services for treatment. Education, provided in the form of role-play, story and song, is the key because it teaches women who have never been to school how to prevent malaria, when and how to treat it, and even how to organize community safeguards.

Overcoming Cost Barriers

Many women whose families are threatened by malaria cannot afford insecticide-treated mosquito nets. So Freedom from Hunger has convinced manufacturers and distributors to provide the nets at a substantially reduced cost (about \$4 per net). Freedom from Hunger also arranged for local sources of appropriate and reliable anti-malarial drugs to be provided at reasonable prices to individuals when the disease strikes. Because Freedom from Hunger's Malaria Initiative is layered onto a self-financing microcredit program, women gain sustainable access to credit to build home-based business, earning money to buy nets and pay for health services.

In a recent visit to program areas in Burkina Faso, it was seen that many of the women had already purchased the nets and the rest were setting aside money to buy them soon. One participant, Fatoumata Monomata, expressed the essence of the program, "I learned how to keep my children safe from malaria." By the end of the three-year pilot, the Malaria Initiative will be reaching 180,000 women in West Africa.

Achieving Sustainability

Wherever poverty, hunger, and poor health combine they often form a vicious cycle that lasts for generations. To break this chain of hopelessness permanently, Freedom from Hunger will make the anti-malaria activities a regular part of the Credit with Education program whenever it is implemented in malaria-endemic areas. The women themselves cover the local costs of the anti-malaria program through earnings generated by their loan repayments. The powerful combination of services provided by Credit with Education creates a ladder out of poverty, hunger, and ill health—with each step leading to a life of self-reliance, health, and hope.

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About Freedom from Hunger

Freedom from Hunger is an international development organization working in sixteen countries across the globe. Our Mission is to bring innovative and sustainable self-help solutions to the fight against chronic hunger and poverty. Together with local partners, we equip families with resources they need to build futures of health, hope and dignity. Freedom from Hunger is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, non-sectarian organization classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charity.

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