

Newsletter #32 April 2025



On Friday April 25 we will celebrate the annual World Malaria Day whose theme this year is

Malaria Ends with Us: Reinvest, Reimagine, Reignite.

which we discuss in some detail. This disease still remains a serious global health threat, not helped by ever increasing extremes in our climate.

We also report on the most recent education and net distribution campaigns by Scouts in Uganda, Ghana and Malawi with funds raised by UK Scouts.

World malaria day

Malaria is a life-threatening disease primarily found in tropical countries. It is both preventable and curable. However, without prompt diagnosis and effective treatment, a case of uncomplicated malaria can progress to a severe form of the disease, which is often fatal without treatment.

Malaria is caused by the bite of a female mosquito of the anopheles species. In sucking blood to feed her young, the female species injects a parasite called a *plasmodium* which infects the liver and attacks the red blood cells.

The theme for 2025 emphasizes the need for renewed effort and action at all levels to accelerate progress towards elimination of malaria. It highlights the importance of reinvesting in malaria prevention and control, reimaging strategies and reigniting commitment at all levels.

Scouting's contribution to this year's event will be the publication of our

Malaria Prevention Handbook, a Guide for Leaders

This will help leaders educate their Scouts of all ages on the origins of the disease, the symptoms, the need for treatment if bitten and how to prevent being bitten. Scouts will also have a card that they can carry to remind them of what are the symptoms and how to avoid being bitten..

Malaria card

Prevent being bitten

- Wear suitable clothing after dark that is long sleeve tops and trousers
- Sleep under an insecticide treated bed net and ensure there are no gaps
- Eliminate all nearby stagnant pools of water in which mosquitos can breed

Recognise symptoms and seek help if

- High temperature, chills, shivering
- Nausea and unable to retain food
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe anaemia such as very tired, pale skin, dizziness

Afuaman Campaign, Ghana Louis Okyere reports

This campaign was held 22 February in the Afuanman Community of Greater Accra.

The main goals were:

- To reduce malaria cases by distributing treated mosquito nets to vulnerable individuals.
- To educate the community on the proper use and benefits of mosquito nets.
- To strengthen community health through proactive measures against mosquito-borne diseases



The Chief of the Community, Nii Afua VII, played a vital role in welcoming and supporting the initiative. 100 insecticide treated bed nets (ITN) were purchased with funds sent by UK Scouts with house-to-house delivery to ensure that each net reached a household in need.

There was also a practical demonstration to educate community members on the correct usage of mosquito nets to maximize their effectiveness. In addition information was shared on the benefits of using mosquito nets in preventing malaria

The benefits of this campaign have included –

- Improved protection against malaria for vulnerable groups.
- Increased awareness and proper usage of mosquito nets.
- Strengthened community collaboration in fighting mosquito-borne diseases.

This mosquito net distribution campaign was a significant step in promoting health and reducing malaria cases in the Afuaman Community. Through partnerships and community engagement, the initiative successfully reached its target groups, ensuring a lasting impact on public health.





Chiseka Campaign, Malawi Howie Maujo reports

Malaria remains a significant public health concern in Chiseka, Lilongwe district, contributing to high morbidity and mortality rates, particularly among children under five and pregnant women. In response, a mass distribution of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) was carried out to enhance malaria prevention efforts and reduce transmission within the community.

The *key objectives* of this intervention were:

- To distribute ITNs to households in Chiseka to prevent mosquito bites.
- To educate the community on the proper use and maintenance of ITNs.
- To reduce malaria cases by promoting the consistent use of ITNs.
- To monitor ITN utilization and assess community feedback.

Planning, preparation and community engagement

- Conducted a pre-distribution survey to identify households and beneficiaries.
- Engaged local leaders, health workers, and volunteers for community mobilization.
- Procured 200 ITNs.
- Identified distribution points and set a schedule for distribution

We then held a community meeting with local leaders to plan and promote ITN use, conduct awareness campaigns and door-to-door sensitization. And to educate community members on malaria prevention and ITN usage.

ITN distribution process

- Distributed 200 ITNs to targeted households, prioritizing pregnant women and children under five.
- Registered each household receiving ITNs for follow-up monitoring.
- Provided demonstrations on proper net hanging, maintenance and care.
- Conducted household visits to assess ITN usage and identify challenges.
- Engaged community health workers to reinforce messages on ITN utilization.
- Gathered feedback from beneficiaries on the effectiveness of ITNs.

Challenges Faced

- Some households lacked proper sleeping arrangements to hang ITNs.
- Resistance from certain community members due to misconceptions about ITNs.
- Logistics challenges in reaching remote households.
- Limited supply of ITNs compared to the demand



Key Achievements

- Successfully distributed 200 ITNs to households in Chiseka.
- Increased ITN usage among pregnant women and children under five.
- Strengthened community knowledge on malaria prevention.
- Established a monitoring system to track ITN effectiveness.

Recommendations

- Increase ITN distribution to cover more households.
- Enhance continuous community engagement to address misconceptions.
- Improve logistics planning for more efficient distribution.
- Conduct regular follow-ups to ensure sustained ITN use.

Conclusion

The distribution of ITNs in Chiseka, Lilongwe, has significantly contributed to malaria prevention efforts. Continuous community education and monitoring will be essential in ensuring long-term impact and sustainability. Further resource mobilization is needed to expand coverage and sustain malaria control efforts.

Fort Portal Campaign, Uganda Cleopatra John reports

Malaria is a leading cause of sickness and death, especially among children under five and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable. It also has significant impacts beyond health such as significant economic losses and school absenteeism.

On 15th March, 2025 Scouts travelled to the south western part of Uganda, Fort Portal city to sensitise communities about Malaria: A 2024 study at Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital found a 10.3% prevalence of malaria in pregnant women attending the facility. This study also identified factors like age, education, income, residence, ITN use, gravidity, and ANC follow-up as being significantly associated with malaria in pregnancy. The study specifically targeted pregnant women in Fort Portal City, but the findings can provide insights into malaria prevalence and associated factors in the broader Fort Portal area.

A total of 150 ITN nets were therefore distributed to households with emphasis on expectant mothers and children below 5 years of age.



Fund raising 3rd Alton.

Adam Brook reports - We held our Mosquito Drive last week and raised **£395**. We had a very good turn out and it almost was standing room only in the end, we ran out of regular seating and had people sitting on camp benches. In addition, one Scout, Lawrence, organised a fund-raiser at his school and separately raised **£304**. One further fund-raiser from siblings who are in Beavers and Cubs raised well over £100-00 with a home-made cake and biscuit sale..

That's super Adam, so thanks to all for encouraging and organising these events. We will never know how many lives will have been saved by supplying ITN nets, but every life is a precious one.

Sectional activities

Scouts against Malaria is an activity which supports the World Organisation of Scouting Movements' (WOSM) global program, *Scouts for SDGs* (Sustainable Development Goals). SAM activities contribute towards SDG #3 *leading a healthy life*. If you or your Section/Group is willing to join the global partnership to fight malaria, visit our website www.scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk or email us at info@scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk.



We have developed a wide range of activities suitable for all sections which together with a slide set and videos of current campaigns can be downloaded from the SAM website. These are suitable for on-line learning for individual Scouts as well as sectional meetings.

Alternatively we are willing to visit your Group and organise an evening's activities if you are willing then to raise funds to purchase ITN treated nets and live within a reasonable distance of NE Hampshire. Editor Rayner Mayer.