

Cameroon

United Against Malaria



The UAM campaign in Cameroon is seeking to enlist the support of Cameroonian football stars such as Alexandre Song and Roger Milla.

COUNTRY SITUATION AND OBJECTIVES

Malaria is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in Cameroon among the most vulnerable groups, children and pregnant women. It is endemic throughout the country, with almost all Cameroonians reporting at least one episode annually. In addition, the country is one of 35 countries that contribute to 98% of the total malaria deaths worldwide. To achieve the 2010 and 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDG), support for malaria control in Cameroon is essential. The burden of the disease perpetuates poverty, thus jeopardizing the government's ability to meet its MDGs.

To tackle the burden caused by the disease, the Government of Cameroon established a national malaria control program, which implements several actions in the field. In the area of prevention, insecticide-treated mosquito nets are distributed free of charge to children under five and pregnant women. There has also been a lot of work done in the area of case management. Parasite resistance to certain drugs forced changes in malaria treatment protocols. Chloroquine which had been used to treat uncomplicated malaria was replaced in 2002 by Amodiaquin, which, in turn, was later replaced by Artemisine-based combination therapies (ACT) in 2004. Despite these efforts, lack of focus, inadequate sensitization and social mobilization of the population, a near absence of communication and advocacy policies and weak public/private partnerships for the fight against malaria are significant obstacles to malaria control in Cameroon.

In 2004, PSI's local affiliate, Association Camerounaise pour le Marketing Social (PSI/ACMS), partnered with the NMCP to launch a project providing ITNs through the private sector with financial support from USAID and PSI. This effort sought to reach those not covered by the Ministry of Health's free net distribution campaigns. In 2005, PSI/ACMS received funding from Exxon Mobil to expand the social marketing of nets from 3 to all 10 regions in Cameroon. The program has grown and to date PSI/ACMS has distributed more than 400,000 nets using a combination of free distribution and social marketing. Moreover, in 2006, PSI/ACMS launched a 6-month long project that provided women of child bearing age with a voucher subsidizing 60% of the purchase price for a net (i.e., 3 USD instead of 7 USD) at Mobil gas stations in Yaoundé and Douala. Through this project, 48,000 ITNs were distributed potentially averting 45,552 malaria cases and contributing to saving 10,448 healthy years of life or disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).

Campaign objectives:

- Increase national leadership engaged in the fight against malaria
- Increase utilization of malaria prevention and treatment tools, and general knowledge of malaria
- Increase access to existing malaria prevention and treatment measures

PLANNED MESSAGES

- Treat yourself or your child without wasting time - within the first 24 hours of the onset of fever
- A child without malaria attack is a Football Star of tomorrow, a Champion.
- Malaria is a very dangerous disease for all; it is responsible of the death of most children under five in Cameroon.
- Malaria is transmitted only through anopheles mosquito bites and mainly at night
- Sleeping under Insecticide Treated Bed net is the cheapest and most effective way to prevent malaria.
- Treat yourself or your child without wasting time - within the first 24 hours of the onset of fever
- ACT is the best treatment for malaria
- Lets protect our children against malaria and make them Star of Tomorrow such as Roger Milla (Eto Fills, etc.)
- I play my world cup against Malaria

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- The UAM campaign has yet to officially begin in Cameroon. A long list of potential partners and champions includes the NMCP, FECAFOOT, MTN and the football players Alexandre Song, Roger Milla, Eto'o Fils, Joseph Antoine Bell, and Stéphane Mbia.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **NMCP:** PSI/ACMS is currently one of the MOH's principal partners that actively assist in the development of the Malaria National Strategic Plan and securing funds to help achieve the national objectives. The NMCP will be highly involved in the implementation of this project. All communication messages and activities will be jointly developed and executed.
- **FECAFOOT (Cameroon Football Association):** Assist with facilitating contact with the national football team and football champions.
- **MTN:** MTN foundation in Cameroon is carrying out a malaria program through distribution of nets, which are supplied by ACMS.
- **Cameroonian football stars as malaria advocacy champions:** Alexandre Song (Arsenal FC, UK), Roger Milla (Former National team player, Cameroon), Eto'o Fils (Inter Milan, Italy), Joseph Antoine Bell (Former National team player, Cameroon), Stéphane Mbia (Olympic de Marseille, France)
- **In addition,** other locally based civil society organisations advocating for the fight against malaria will be approached to join the UAM project in Cameroon.

IMPORTANT WEBSITES

UAM website: <http://unitedagainstmalaria.org/>

PSI website: <http://www.psi.org>

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