

The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) VectorLink Project

Insecticide-Treated Nets (ITNs)

Working across 23 countries in sub-Saharan Africa as well as Cambodia, the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative's (PMI) VectorLink Project is equipping countries to plan and implement safe, cost-effective and sustainable life-saving malaria vector control interventions with the overall goal of reducing the burden of malaria. Proven to reduce malaria illness, severe disease, and death due to malaria in endemic areas, insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) protect people while they are sleeping from the bite of mosquitoes. ITNs maintain effective levels of insecticide to repel mosquitoes for approximately three years, even after repeated washing. PMI VectorLink supports ministries of health to achieve and maintain universal coverage of ITNs, delivered through all available channels. In some of the most remote areas of the world, PMI VectorLink is building capacity for evidence-based policy and decision-making, social and behavior change communication (SBCC), and monitoring and evaluation to increase ITN access and ensure ITN use. To date, PMI VectorLink has supported ITN activities in 12 countries (Figure 1).

ITN Distribution through Mass Campaigns

PMI VectorLink supports national malaria control programs and stakeholders to plan and execute all phases of mass ITN distribution campaigns. From full-scale implementation to short-term technical assistance, the project strengthens coordination, planning, procurement, logistics, communication, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mass campaigns. Working in partnership with National Malaria Control Programs and implementing partners, PMI VectorLink distributed 1.3 million ITNs in the Far North of Cameroon, with an additional 1.4 million to be distributed in November. When planning mass campaigns, PMI VectorLink draws on resources developed by the [Alliance for Malaria Prevention](#) with inputs from global stakeholders.

ITN Distribution through Continuous Channels

In line with recent evidence showing that repeated campaigns lead to 'peaks and troughs' of ITN coverage, a renewed focus on complementary channels of continuous distribution is well placed.¹ ITNs undergo physical, chemical, and other types of deterioration over time and new sleeping spaces are continuously generated through birth, marriage, and population movement. Continuous distribution is recognized as a critical and cost-effective component of maintaining high ITN coverage.²

PMI VectorLink supports national malaria control programs to assess and strengthen existing distribution channels while also exploring new channels. Drawing on extensive implementation experience, the PMI VectorLink Project develops rigorous and participatory tools, such as the continuous distribution assessment tool, which the project has implemented in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Cameroon. The findings of these assessments informed the

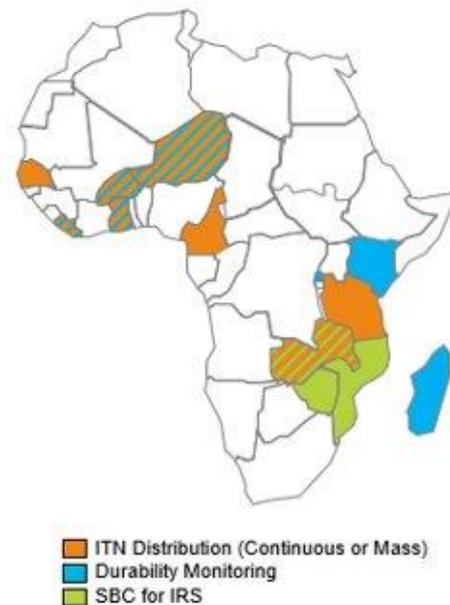


Figure 1.1. Countries in which VectorLink supports ITN Distribution, Durability Monitoring, or Social Behavior Change Communication (as of October 2019)



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development of national continuous ITN distribution guidelines in Niger and Cameroon. The project also uses and refines tools available at continuousdistribution.org to strengthen continuous ITN distribution.

ITN Durability Monitoring

PMI VectorLink supports durability monitoring of ITNs to provide in-country and global stakeholders with updated evidence on ITN survivorship, physical durability, and insecticide effectiveness in the field. The project collects data on attrition, physical integrity, bio-efficacy, use, and care and repair behaviors of ITNs and triangulates with durability monitoring data of standard ITNs, piperonyl-butoxide (PBO) ITNs, and next generation ITNs to inform procurement and programmatic decisions and develop effective, evidence-based integrated vector management strategies. PMI VectorLink uses World Health Organization-endorsed ITN durability monitoring resources, available at durabilitymonitoring.org. To date, the project has conducted durability monitoring research in Ghana, Madagascar, and Niger; preparations are underway in additional countries.

Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)

Where needed, PMI VectorLink partners with in-country stakeholders to support activities to assess the barriers and facilitators of vector control-related behaviors, lead or support the design of interventions to address the identified barriers and facilitators, and drive innovation in vector control-related SBCC activities. The project applies malaria SBCC global best practices and draws from resources developed by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership to End Malaria SBCC working group. Learn more at endmalaria.org.



Photo credit: Freddy Lokossa, PMI VectorLink

CONTACT

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To connect with the global malaria vector control community, join the [Vector LearningXchange!](http://www.vectorlearningxchange.com) An exciting new platform funded by the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative, the [Vector LearningXchange](http://www.vectorlearningxchange.com) is a collaborative site where vector control stakeholders from around the world can learn from one another on the most effective ways to prevent malaria. The [Vector LearningXchange](http://www.vectorlearningxchange.com) provides best practices, tools, trainings and lessons learned on vector control operations, entomological monitoring and surveillance, environmental compliance, monitoring and evaluation, community mobilization and social behavior change, capacity building, and gender inclusion. Get involved at www.vectorlearningxchange.com.

[1, 2] RBM Partnership to End Malaria, Vector Control Working Group, 13th Meeting Report; Hannah Koenker and Lena Lorenz, ITN Priorities Workstream Meeting Powerpoint presentation at VSWG 13th Annual Meeting.