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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **USAID donates 4.5 Million Mosquito Bed Nets to the People of Oyo State**

**Ibadan, Oyo, Nigeria** – Today, Dr. Rick Niska representative to the Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Nigeria, handed over 4.5 million bed nets at the flag-off event to the Oyo state Governor, Senator Abiola Ajimobi. The bed nets valued at \$13.5 million will be distributed through a mass campaign scheduled to take place tomorrow, within the thirty-three local government areas of the state. The United States Government also provided an additional \$4.5 million to support the logistics of the campaign, including transportation of the bed nets, community mobilization, training, and household mobilization. These nets and the support for distribution are a gift from the people of the United States to the people of Oyo State.

Speaking at the flag-off ceremony marking the formal handover, the USAID Mission Director Representative said, “We congratulate you on the ambition, initiative, and dedication it takes to plan, coordinate, and launch a statewide mass distribution of bed nets.”

The Executive Governor of Oyo state, Senator Abiola Ajimobi, a cross-section of traditional rulers, and Federal and State government officials attended the event, showing their support for overcoming malaria in Oyo State.

Malaria is one of the leading killers of children and a leading cause of illness in Nigeria, particularly during the rainy season when the mosquito population increases.

Nightly use of an insecticide treated bed net is the best way to prevent malaria. Bed nets put a vital barrier between people and the mosquitoes that carry malaria, particularly during the hours from dusk to dawn. Use of insecticide treated bed nets prevents infections, which in turn prevents the spread of malaria. Bed nets help to interrupt that cycle. A bed net not only protects an individual –when bed nets are used by everyone, particularly those who are already sick with malaria, bed nets also prevent others from becoming infected.

Since 2011, the U.S. government has provided \$419 million to control malaria in Nigeria. Over 50 percent of U.S. funding for malaria goes into procuring and distributing insecticide treated bed nets, malaria diagnostic kits, and malaria medicines. The U.S. also supports advocacy and community mobilization to sleep under the bed nets every night, training of health workers, and test for malaria before treatment.

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<http://nigeria.usembassy.gov> and [www.usaid.gov/ng](http://www.usaid.gov/ng)

