

PSI ZIMBABWE

LLIN Distribution in Dotito

Maria Bhonzi is 23 and lives in a rural village in Dotito District, Zimbabwe with her husband and two young children, Marcia and Tendayi. Maria is currently pregnant with her third child. The family lives in a one-roomed hut which is used for both sleeping and cooking. The family lives near the Chiutsa River, a major breeding site for mosquitoes, and despite Maria and her family being regular visitors to the local clinic, seeking treatment for malaria they are unable to afford the protection of a long lasting insecticide treated bednet (LLIN).

This year, the Dotito area suffered another malaria outbreak and Maria's 2 year old daughter, Marcia suffered her second bout of malaria. This impacted negatively on Maria's harvest due to working days lost whilst attending to Marcia. Maria and her husband decided to seek malaria prevention instead of waiting for them to be attacked and then seek treatment. She then heard that the local clinic is embarking on a mass distribution exercise for long lasting insecticidal nets free of charge. So she went and registered her family.



For Maria, the correct and consistent use of LLINs ensures protection against bites from the female anopheles mosquito that transmit malaria thereby keeping them healthy and happy

Maria's family was one of those benefitting from the most recent campaign, receiving two nets - one for herself and husband and another for their two children.

In 2012, support from the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), enabled PSI/Zimbabwe and the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare distribute 457,000 nets to families just like Maria's in 7 of the most malaria-prone districts of Zimbabwe. During the distribution 2,595 community leaders and 865 village health workers were trained on the correct and consistent use of LLINs. A total of 250,468 household heads like Maria were reached with messages on correct and consistent use of LLINs during the net hang up campaigns.

Maria grins broadly "my children and I can now sleep peacefully with no mosquito bites and this will protect us from contracting malaria. The mosquito net is also killing and repelling mosquitoes that enter my house." She went on to say "The recent net hang up campaigns had made it easier for me to use and maintain the mosquito net without any difficulties." The nets have become treasured household possessions and Maria has vowed to take just as much care of them as she does her family.