



# PRESS STATEMENT

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## MALARIA: TREATED BED NETS DECREASE MALARIA IN PNG

Malaria prevalence has decreased dramatically in PNG following the nationwide distribution of insecticide treated mosquito nets as part of the Global Fund supported National Malaria Control Program.

The decrease in malaria prevalence was recorded by a team of researchers from the PNG Institute of Medical Research after conducting two cross-sectional countrywide household surveys between 2008 and 2011.

Dr Justin Pulford, co-investigator on the Malaria Control Program Evaluation, said that the surveys were conducted in villages throughout PNG to investigate changes in malaria control intervention coverage and prevalence of malaria infection.

“Results from these surveys revealed that household ownership of treated nets has increased from more than 10% prior to the distribution campaign in 2008 to 65% in 2009 and over 80% in 2011,” Dr Pulford said.

“Usage in the target group of children under five years increased from more than 10% to 40% and 50% in the respective years. Simultaneously, the malaria prevalence in the general population has also decreased from 14% in 2009 to below 7% in 2011,” he said.

“This significant decrease was also noted in malaria cases in sentinel health facilities where the proportion of fever cases with a positive Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) dropped from 56% to 18%.

“With no other malaria control interventions introduced on a large scale during these periods, this indication suggested that mass distribution of treated mosquito nets and widespread usage of these nets has notably decreased malaria prevalence in PNG.

“Maintaining this impressive reduction in malaria prevalence will present a challenge in future years, especially as current Global Fund support for the National Malaria Control Program is due to cease in late 2014” he said.

**Symposium Paper:** Dramatic decrease in malaria after repeated rounds of mosquito net distribution in Papua New Guinea.

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