

UNIT 4:

Lesson 2: Role-Play — A Community Makes Decisions about Bed Nets

Suggested Class Time: 90 Minutes

Objectives:

- To understand how bed net distribution decisions are made at the community level;
- To write and present a role-play about a community meeting in which important decisions about distributing bed nets are made.

Session Plan:

- Creating a Script: 45 Minutes
- Role-play Presentation and Discussion: 30 Minutes
- Wrapping Up: 15 Minutes

Materials Needed:

- Handout 5: Malaria Prevention For Sale: Malawi (*distributed previously*)
- Handout 6: Free Malaria Prevention: Congo (*distributed previously*)
- Handout 7: Role-play — Community Health Meeting

Creating a Script:

Directions

1. Distribute Handout 7 and review it with the class. Note on a chalkboard or white board students' responses to the question: What will each member of the community listed on page 1 of Handout 7 bring to the meeting about malaria prevention?
2. Divide students into two groups to develop a role-play. Work closely with each group as students assign roles and work collaboratively on a script for the meeting. Both groups should present responses to the **Analyze** and **Assess** sections of Handout 7, but assign one group **Action 1** and the other group **Action 2**.

Role-play Presentation and Discussion:

Directions

1. Ask each group to present its role-play.

2. Use the following questions to facilitate a discussion following each group's role-play:
 - What impressed you most about this role-play?
 - How was community participation illustrated in the role-play?
 - Was the information presented about malaria correct?
 - What challenges do you think each community will have in carrying out its distribution and education plans?
 - Why is it important for each community to assess its bed-net distribution program?

Wrapping Up:

1. Ask students to summarize the value of insecticide-treated bed nets in preventing the spread of malaria.
2. Discuss how the role-plays showed the importance of involving community members in decisions that affect their lives.

Extension Activity: Take It on the Road

Have interested students combine the best aspects of the two role-play scripts and create a short play they and their classmates can present to the school and to parents. Consider adding a Narrator part to explain some of the facts about malaria in asides to the audience. Students can create fliers to hand out at the performance explaining the importance of insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs) and how, through UNICEF's partner, Malaria No More, audience members can make contributions.

Malaria Prevention For Sale: Malawi

In a small district hospital of Kasungu, central Malawi, Kate is wrapping her three-day-old son in a yellow blanket. She smiles at her baby, not noticing the green mosquito net that hangs above her bed, a colorful detail in the white room. This detail could save her son's life.

Malaria kills an African child every 30 seconds....

"I have had malaria and everybody I know has had malaria," says Kate. "During my pregnancy I came several times to the hospital for...checkups and the staff told me about mosquito nets. I will buy a net from the hospital when I go home. I want to protect my baby." Kate is one of the 2,500 women who delivered their infants at the Kasungu hospital in 2002 and bought a mosquito net for 50 kwacha (less than 20 US cents). (The price of the mosquito net, which is sold with an insecticide treatment kit, is heavily subsidized by UNICEF.) Kate lives in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world. During the rainy season, when the risk of malaria is the highest, the Kasungu Hospital sells up to 450 nets a day.

UNICEF supports anti-malaria programs.

UNICEF and its partners focus on children under the age of five and pregnant women in all Sub-Saharan countries. In 2002 alone, UNICEF provided over 4.4 million mosquito nets to 25 African countries, for a total value of \$9.5 million, making it the largest mosquito net buyer in the world. This represents a 175 per cent increase since 2001. In addition, UNICEF purchased \$3 million worth of insecticide used to treat the mosquito nets.

In Malawi, nets are not given away for free.

Even the poorest families have to pay to ensure that they consider the net a valuable item. Communities themselves were consulted on the cost of the mosquito nets and agreed on the price of 50 kwacha. However small, this money contributes to the recovery of cost.

Village health committees sell mosquito nets and receive 20 percent of the price to use for health-related activities in the village.

In a village near Kasungu, the community sold enough nets to be able to afford electricity for the local health facility. "We bought 120 mosquito nets.... We sold all of them, and tomorrow I'll buy another 70 nets," says the chairman of the Kanin'ga village health committee in Kasungu district. "People have already paid for them. Some of our committee members were trained on the use and treatment of nets with insecticide, so that they can inform families who buy them."

Source: UNICEF: Malawi, Real Lives http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/malawi_2430.html

HANDOUT 6

Free Malaria Prevention: Congo

Free treatment to save lives

In the Republic of Congo, 21,000 children die from malaria every year. It is the main cause of death among children under five. To improve this situation, the Government of the Republic of Congo is now funding a new policy authorizing free malaria treatment for children under the age of 15 and women who are pregnant.

In 2007, 545,000 children here received free mosquito nets produced by UNICEF and financed by the Government of Japan and the United Nations Foundation. Pregnant women also received free intermittent preventive treatment of malaria.

“Mother and Child Week”

To promote awareness of the new policy, a “Mother and Child Week” was held across the country, providing children with free vaccines and mosquito nets. Malaria treatment for pregnant women was available as well. “[This new policy] has the potential to save the lives of 14,000 Congolese children under five every year,” said Dr. Koenraad Vanormelingen, the UNICEF Representative in Congo-Brazzaville.

UNICEF and Malaria Prevention

How Does UNICEF Help Prevent Malaria?

UNICEF is a founding partner, with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the World Bank of the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) initiative, whose goal is to halve the world’s malaria burden by 2010. UNICEF has recently entered into partnership with Malaria No More, an umbrella organization with the goal of providing an insecticide-treated bed net (ITN) to every family that needs one in Sub-Saharan Africa. Together with its partners, UNICEF distributes ITNs, working with Ministries of Health and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as community and village health workers.

How many bed nets has UNICEF distributed?

UNICEF is the single largest purchaser of insecticide-treated bed nets in the world, having bought more than 25 million in 2006 alone.

Does UNICEF charge for bed nets?

No, UNICEF does not charge for the bed nets it supplies to governments or partner organizations. UNICEF is a prominent and consistent advocate for free bed nets for all children under the age of five and pregnant women.

Sources:

UNICEF: Malawi, Real Lives http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/malawi_2430.html; Spread the Net: Frequently Asked Questions cms.spreadthenet.org/cmsdocs/FinalFAQ.doc; UNICEF At a Glance: Congo http://www.unicef.org/doublepublish/congo_44876.html

HANDOUT 7

Role-Play — Community Health Meeting: Defending Our Children Against Malaria!

Directions: Follow your teacher’s directions for role-playing the different points of view in this urgent community health meeting.

Place: Rural Village in Sub-Saharan Africa

Setting: Community Health Meeting

Situation: A community meeting is being held to discuss the increasing cases of malaria in the village. Young children and pregnant women are the most vulnerable. The rainy season is coming and there is a concern that malaria cases will increase even more. The good news is that insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs) will now be made available to the community with support from UNICEF. However, before the bed nets can be distributed, the community has been asked to decide the best way to distribute the nets to villagers.

Participants:

Leaders	Members of the Village Health Committee
Village Leader	Women’s Group Representative
UNICEF Representative	Religious Leader
Doctor	Primary School Education Officer
Community Health Workers	Representative of Local Shopkeepers Parent/Family Representatives

Background:

The following are facts about the imaginary Sub-Saharan African country where your rural village is located. (The facts are consistent with other countries in the region.) Keep these facts in mind as you prepare for the role play.

- 86% of the population lives in areas at risk for malaria.
- 28% of households have at least one bed net.
- 12% of households have at least one insecticide treated net (ITN).
- 10% of children under five sleep under ITNs.
- 6% of pregnant women sleep under ITNs.

Meeting Agenda:

Refer to Handouts 4, 5, and 6 to help you develop responses to the Meeting Agenda questions.

- Why is malaria such a big problem in the village?
- How should a shipment of anti-malaria bed nets from national health authorities and UNICEF be distributed in the village?
- How can people be educated to use bed nets?
- How can we determine if the program is working?

Role-Play Procedure

Analyze: Why is malaria a problem in our village?

The doctor and community health workers will lead a discussion trying to help villagers understand how malaria spreads and how sleeping under treated bed nets can help to prevent its spread.

Things to consider: Villagers hold traditional beliefs about diseases such as malaria and some resist change. Poor communication can lead to misunderstanding.

Action 1: Determine the best way to distribute the bed nets.

The UNICEF Representative will raise questions about bed-net usage, such as: Who will educate villagers in bed net use? Are families that already have bed nets using them?

Other villagers will raise questions and contribute answers: Who should receive bed nets? Should people pay for them or will they be free? How should they be distributed? Who will coordinate and manage the program?

Things to consider: Possible distribution points: homes, market, health center. Poorly maintained roads and lack of transportation could make distribution of bed nets harder to accomplish. Bed-net distribution could be combined with other programs (such as immunization).

Action 2: Decide on a way to educate the community to ensure that bed nets are used.

Members of the Village Health Committee can raise and answer the following questions: Do we need to develop an educational campaign to increase our villagers' use of bed nets? What's the best way to educate people? How will we develop the materials? Who will present the educational campaign?

Things to consider: What is the level of literacy among villagers? Do villagers have access to TV? Radio? Can most villagers read?

Assess: How will we evaluate progress?

UNICEF Representative and Members of the Village Health Committee discuss: How will we assess and monitor our efforts? What data do we need to collect? Who will collect it and send it on?

Things to consider: Who will pay for the assessment? Will people be honest about bed net use? Collect data on community members who get malaria.