

Conversation with Rob Mather and Peter Sherratt, February 28, 2016

Participants

- Rob Mather – Founder and CEO, Against Malaria Foundation (AMF)
- Peter Sherratt – Executive Chairman, AMF
- Milan Griffes – Research Analyst, GiveWell

Note: These notes were compiled by GiveWell and give an overview of the major points made by Mr. Mather and Mr. Sherratt.

Summary

GiveWell spoke with Mr. Mather and Mr. Sherratt of the Against Malaria Foundation (AMF). Conversation topics included how AMF learns about net gaps, the challenge of obtaining accurate estimates of net needs, and AMF's current capacity.

How AMF learns about net gaps

AMF learns about net gaps and receives funding requests through its network in the malaria control community, particularly through the Alliance for Malaria Prevention and the African Leaders Malaria Alliance.

As it becomes involved in larger distributions, AMF is receiving a growing number of funding requests. As its funding increases, AMF aims to make more strategic investments by engaging in the planning cycles of countries where it has strong connections and experience.

The challenge of obtaining accurate net need estimates

Some countries have funding for a net distribution but run out of nets partway through, often due to an underestimate of the country's net needs. This can leave a significant number of individuals unprotected.

Coverage targets

AMF was one of a number of funders to support distributions aimed at universal coverage; targeting universal coverage is now considered the standard by the malaria control community.

Ratio of persons per net

Net need estimates used to be based on the assumption that most sleeping spaces are shared by 2 people, and so 1 net is needed to cover 2 people. Recognizing that a significant number of people do not share their sleeping space, AMF and others now typically use 1.8 people per net.

Pre-distribution surveys

In order to ensure accurate net need estimates, AMF distributions include comprehensive household-level pre-distribution surveys. Without these surveys, estimates might be based on an out-of-date or incomplete population census.

What happens when AMF does not fund a distribution it was considering

When AMF does not end up funding a distribution it had planned to fund, the gap is not necessarily immediately filled by another funder. For example, the funding gap might be only partially filled, resulting in a smaller distribution. AMF is aware of distributions being delayed by 6-12 months or more, or not taking place, depending on the funding schedules of potential funders.

A one-year delay occurring at the end of a country's three-year distribution cycle can leave a significant number of individuals unprotected, because by that point many nets from the previous distribution are unusable due to wear.

AMF does not systematically track the outcomes of distributions it does not end up funding. This information can be difficult to find; AMF suggested contacting the relevant NMCP to follow up on specific distributions.

Current capacity

AMF does not foresee any capacity constraints in the near future. It approaches discussions and negotiations proactively.

AMF has hired a consultant to increase its capacity in Ghana. The consultant has a significant amount of experience in Ghana.

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