

A conversation with Marcy Erskine on September 18, 2013

Participants:

- Marcy Erskine, Senior Health Officer – Malaria, International Federation of the Red Cross; Core Group – Alliance for Malaria Prevention
- Josh Rosenberg, Research Analyst, GiveWell
- Elie Hassenfeld, Co-Executive Director, GiveWell

Note: This set of notes was compiled by GiveWell and gives an overview of the major points made by Dr. Erskine.

Summary

GiveWell spoke with Dr. Erskine to determine the current size of the global funding gap for malaria nets.

Current net gap

Our best estimate is that we have the following gaps for nets:

- 2013: 22,049,149
- 2014: 71,219,977
- 2015: 118,362,677
- 2016: 163,443,589

Note:

- The net gap is less accurate for years that are further out because gaps close as donors make commitments.
- The numbers above do not include nets from "flexible" funders (i.e., organizations like the UN Foundation, UMCOR, AMF, and the Red Cross) that can fill small pressing gaps. The numbers above also do not include funds from donors, such as DfID, that are able to fill large gaps (e.g., in the millions of nets) in particular countries after the gaps are known to exist.
- Gaps vary by countries. Some countries (known as "orphan countries" because they are not consistently supported by an in-country partner such as the President's Malaria Initiative or a DfID-funded organization) typically have a harder time closing funding and technical support gaps. Togo, Chad, and Cameroon are examples of orphan countries.

Changes in net gaps over time

Pre-2010-2011, net gaps were regularly filled. In 2011, the Global Fund (the major worldwide funder of nets) had some problems that significantly reduced the funding it could allocate. This led to significant net gaps in 2011, 2012, and most of 2013 in specific countries that do not have a broad base of partner support.

In 2011, the Harmonization Working Group began consistently working on the country gap analysis (it had always been a priority, but now brought countries together with a clear template to identify LLIN and other commodity and programmatic gaps). In 2011 – 2012, the Global Fund began using the HWG gap analysis as a major tool for determining funding allocations through looking at the gaps and prioritizing the funding available. This was a major shift and led to increased LLIN allocations as an intervention with a proven strategy for large-scale distribution in order to ensure sustained coverage following initial scale up efforts that achieved high household coverage.

The gap analysis tool will be a major benefit for allocating funding for LLINs and other commodities under the GF New Funding Model for malaria grants, particularly given the financial crisis that has hampered funding since the last GF round.

Production capacity

When Global Fund funding reduced, many producers scaled down their production capacity. Thus, even though additional funding for nets is now becoming available, nets will not reach their pre-2011 peak anytime soon because net suppliers will not be able to produce nets quickly enough. For context, in the countries in which Dr. Erskine is working, it seems that nets ordered today may take 6 to 12 months to be delivered (production + shipping and arrival in country). This estimate has not been confirmed with net suppliers.

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