

NetMark News



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Contents

Page 2

- New LLIN factory opened in Thailand
- New LLIN technology introduced in Africa

Page 3

- Ghana's National Malaria Control Program Manager Lauds NetMark's Contributions in Ghana
- Public-Private Sector Partnership Success

Page 4

- Market Place Corner

NetMark Project

Headquarters:

1825 Connecticut Ave, NW 800

Washington, DC 20009 USA

Tel: 202-884-8071

Fax: 202-884-8844

NetMark Regional Office:

Post Net Box 92

Private Bag X11

Halfway House 1685

Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel: 27 11 466 9972

Fax: 27 11 466 0579

www.netmarkafrica.org

NetMark is a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Academy for Educational Development.



Academy for Educational Development

Public-Private Partnership Leads to Breakthrough in Production of LLINs

The USAID-NetMark Program has joined forces with private sector partners SiamDutch Mosquito Netting Company, Bayer Environmental Sciences and Anovotek, LLC to develop a new process for mass treatment of mosquito nets at the factory level. Based on initial trials the new treatment process binds insecticide to the net for more than 20 washes, resulting in the first-ever mass factory treatment of finished nets with long-lasting insecticide. The first product to come out of the new production facility is DawaPlus®.

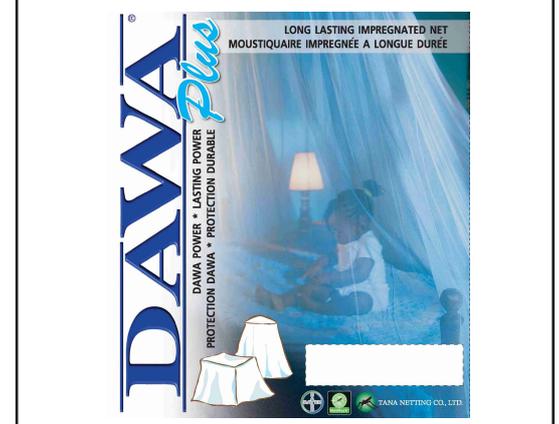
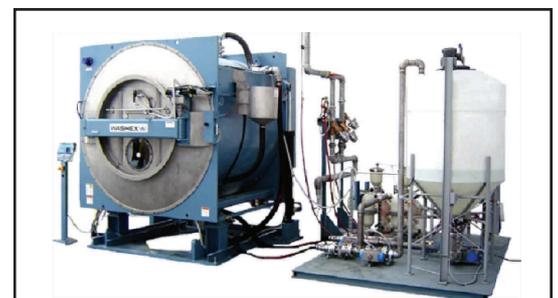
The partnership that led to the development of this new technology began in 2003 when USAID and NetMark met with SiamDutch and Bayer to discuss their common interest in solving the problem of inadequate supply of LLINs in Africa and developing a new process for manufacturing LLINs that would be economically feasible for African manufacturers to install, with minimum human exposure to chemicals or impact on the environment.

For more than a year now the partners have worked together to refine the technology and build machinery that could be easily transferred to net manufacturers throughout the world.

SiamDutch has invested more than \$4 million USD in this effort, and Bayer made a similar investment in the insecticide product development. USAID-NetMark paid for technical assistance from Anovotek, a US based company with extensive experience in the application of chemical treatments to textiles. Anovotek developed the mechanized process for applying the insecticide at the end of the line. Because of a NetMark-SiamDutch agreement to encourage technology transfer, the new mechanized process will be available to any net manufacturer.

“The major advance offered by this new process technology is its ability to be transferred to other existing net manufacturers, thereby exponentially increasing the availability of LLINs, for which there is currently a shortage of supply, particularly in Africa” said David McGuire, Director of NetMark. “This is a breakthrough that has the potential to save millions of African lives.” added McGuire. “We’ll also continue to test this process with other LLIN treatment products as they become available.”

“USAID’s willingness to work with commercial companies and invest in new technologies will result in many more people, including the most vulnerable, having access to life-saving nets,” said Nicolaas Pierson, founder and CEO of SiamDutch & Tana Netting. “I believe this new technology will make a big difference in malaria control and prevention.”



New LLIN Technology Introduced at Nairobi Technical Meeting



Eighty-seven representatives from African net manufacturers, LLIN technology holders, and agencies promoting the use of LLINs in Africa came together in Nairobi September 26 to 29 to learn about a new mechanized process for mass LLIN treatment of mosquito nets at the factory level. In addition to unveiling this new technology, the meeting also reviewed other LLIN technologies currently available or under development, identified potential sources of

international financing and technical assistance to help the technology transfer process, and discussed potential markets for LLIN products. In very open and dynamic deliberations, the participants discussed issues related to quality assurance, quality control processes, WHO specifications for LLINs as well as the process for WHOPES recommendation for LLINs.

New Factory Opened in Thailand

The first factory equipped with the new machinery for mass treatment of mosquito nets at the end of the manufacturing process is Tana Netting Company Ltd. which opened September 15 in Bangkok, Thailand. About 200 people attended the opening, including members of the Roll Back Malaria partnership. SiamDutch Mosquito Netting has incorporated the new company, in order to produce an LLIN marketed under the name DawaPlus®. Tana Netting Company will focus solely on the production and marketing of long-lasting nets at its new 16,000 square meter manufacturing plant in Amata, Thailand.



Opening of Tana Netting Company Ltd.

Participants also analyzed the implications of current LLIN needs by public sector programs as well as projections of the private sector market. Participants exchanged views with representatives from the international organizations that procure large quantities of LLINs, and African manufacturers requested that donor agencies take into account their capabilities as they procure nets for their programs. During breaks and the evening hours, innumerable meetings took place between companies exploring potential partnerships. The NetMark technical team also held confidential meetings with individual African companies to discuss the feasibility of utilizing one of the LLIN technologies.

Following these private meetings, several companies expressed a strong desire to move ahead to add an LLIN capability to their businesses. One manufacturer noted "I came to this meeting thinking that I would never have an LLIN technology. Now I find I am shopping among different options." After the in-depth review of the new mechanized process, a Nigerian participant exclaimed "I *must* have this LLIN technology and I *will* have it!"

Post meeting comments from participants included:

"We write to express our appreciation to you for the successful hosting of the above workshop. The federation of mosquito net makers of Nigeria appreciates the gesture you gave to us/our president Mr. Boniface Ogwo at the Kenya IV Workshop. In fact, we have never had it like this, even from Governments. Thanks a lot for honouring us and bringing us to the global focus, as far as malaria and insecticide treated net issues are concerned. The exposure you have given to us will definitely boost our efforts in the malaria battle and the Insecticide Treated Net business. Once again we pledge our total cooperation with you, while at the same time looking forward to receiving more assistance to increase our production capacity. Your good works shall be rewarded." Federation of Mosquito Net Makers of Nigeria

"May I thank you NetMark for a superb meeting which brought together all the key players in the bednet business from a commercial perspective; In the almost 20 years being involved in this sector, this meeting ranks in the top 3. The assistance NetMark has provided us so far - also in conjunction with their in-country managers - will no doubt assist us to better penetrate the bednet market of the respective countries." Bednet Manufacturer

"From the bottom of our hearts and especially for the poor of Ethiopia, we thank NetMark for organizing such a fantastic meeting." Seife Bashaye, MOH/Ethiopia

The workshop was organized by NetMark and held at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. The NetMark technical team for the development of the new mechanized technology included SiamDutch/Tana and Bayer Environmental Science who funded all insecticide and equipment purchases; and textile engineers from Anovotek LLC and Texchine of the USA. Presentations on other LLIN technologies were made by Vestergaard Frandsen, Syngenta, BASF, Sumitomo, and A-Z Textiles, and invaluable contributions were made by international organizations promoting the use of LLINs and ITNs (e.g., UNICEF, M2S2, WHO, WHO/Afro, IDA, IFC, etc.). Financial support for the workshop was provided through NetMark by the USAID office for East and Southern Africa (REDSO), and the USAID office for West Africa (WARP).

African Nets Manufacturers Association Launched in Nairobi

The idea of creating an association of African nets manufacturers arose from the 10 net companies that participated in NetMark's Quality Control Workshop in late 2004. A small group was appointed to explore the concept, and they did so over the ensuing month, resulting in the following announcement made at the LLIN Technical Meeting by the provisional chairman of the new association, Subhash Sonigra of Polo Industries of Kenya: "We have created the African Nets Manufacturers' Association (ANMA). We have an interim committee which has been set up. Our aims and objectives are to: 1) create more jobs for the local community; 2) educate and understand the killer disease of malaria; 3) uplift the standard of the environment of our employees; 4) advise the MOH to have standard regional policies; 5) work closely with donor agencies about buying nets from Africa for Africa; 6) maintain quality control standards set by the association; 7) enhance relations among members; 8) monitor new products in ITNs and LLINs for the African market and pass on information to the African manufacturers to help identify and facilitate technology transfer to African nets manufacturers. We, as an association, would like to thank NetMark, USAID, and Dr. Will Shaw for giving us this opportunity to actually form an association".

Ghana's National Malaria Control Program Manager Lauds NetMark's Contributions in Ghana

An Interview with Dr. Constance Bart-Plange

Dr. Bart-Plange, can you tell us about the malaria situation in Ghana?

Malaria accounts for about 40% of all OPD (outpatient department) cases and 13% of all recorded deaths. Its cost is estimated at 1% of the Country's GDP and the case fatality rate for children under 5 stands at 2.8%. Bed net culture is virtually non-existent, making the task of building one Herculean. ITN usage is still low as it is below the Abuja target. Patient compliance to prescribed dosage of drugs is also another hurdle we face.

Can you tell us about some of the successes of the malaria control program to date?

ITN usage has increased from 3.3% to 35%. IPT compliance has increased from 0% to 4%. There has also been a successful drug policy change, so that Ghana has now moved from the use of chloroquine to artesunate-Amodiaquin as first line treatment. Malaria cases have dropped from 180 per 1000 in 2003 to 160 per 1000 in 2004.

What has been the role of NetMark in the fight against malaria in Ghana?

NetMark has been a great partner in this fight. Their role in this fight has completely changed the ITN activities in Ghana. NetMark's participation in our program has resulted in a strengthened relationship between the private and public sectors. NetMark has brought in more players (Siam Dutch, Vestergaard Frandsen, Bayer, Syngenta,

Transcol, Netco Rockville, Agrimat, Reiss & Co.) which has in turn helped to ensure increased availability of different brands of ITNs. They have increased behavior change communication activities which have built demand for the ITNs.

Their innovative commercial ITN voucher scheme to reach the desired target groups effectively and efficiently has been adopted for scaling up under the Global Fund Round 4 activities. NetMark's role in the RBM program is just superb. They partnered with us to ensure the successful removal of taxes and tariffs. They led the way to ensure that Customs implements the VAT exemption for all ITNs. They convene the ITN subcommittee meetings and they are being run smoothly; this sub-committee has ensured effective co-ordination of ITN activities in the country.

They have helped to pull the private sector to partner with the public sector in the fight against malaria. It is just great to see the private sector partnering with the MOH to bring malaria preventive care to the doorstep of the hard to reach and the vulnerable.

How is the targeted subsidies program going?

The voucher scheme is doing very well. It is being run currently in three regions and the fourth region is starting next month. The success of the pilot program has motivated us and we will be scaling it up further.



Dr. Constance Bart-Plange

The TS program has created a lot of retail outlets for ITNs, consequently increasing the commercial availability in the scheme areas. However the program has had its peculiar difficulties. Key amongst these is the periodic stock outs and supply to very remote areas.

Do you think that free nets should be made widely available in Ghana?

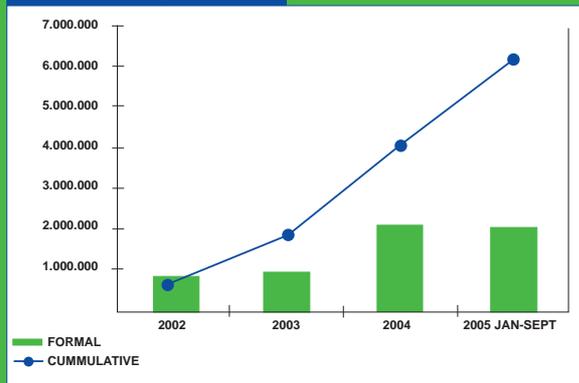
We agree that a certain section of the population (very poor) may never be able to afford nets. They should be targeted and helped. But the culture of net use is lost when nets are made free because people do not value these nets. Free nets in Ghana are looked at with suspicion and sometimes their intended use is abused.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS

NetMark Formal Partner Sales Surpass 6 Million!!

NetMark works with 28 formal partners, as well as 12 informal partners, in eight countries to support sustainable commercial markets for ITNs while targeting subsidies to vulnerable populations. NetMark partners include international organizations, NGOs, small-to-medium-sized African enterprises and multi-national corporations. NetMark's Full Market Impact™ approach increases sales and use of ITNs across all sectors of society, stimulating ITN demand through public education campaigns, improving distribution networks, and supporting the development and transfer of new manufacturing and treatment technologies to African businesses. While cumulative ITN sales by NetMark's formal partners reached 6.1 million in September 2005, it is estimated that total commercial sales of ITNs since 2002 were close to six million units, thus the total commercial cumulative sales between 2002 and August 2005 is estimated to be over twelve million units. Meanwhile sales of untreated nets may almost double that figure for a total close to twenty five million units. In addition to selling ITNs, NetMark partners also sell re-treatment kits and promote mass treatment interventions to convert existing nets into ITNs.

NetMark Sales Update



Umbrella Sales Ladies from Ghana Make Money Doing a Job They Like

Recently NetMark interviewed Esther Frimpomaa and Paulina Boateng at their umbrella sales outlets in Eastern Region, Ghana. Below are their comments about the voucher program and their businesses.

Esther Frimpomaa: “I work as a volunteer at the Osino Reproductive and Child Health clinic. This is a non-salaried job. I come to the ANC on days they have sessions to give a helping hand. I one day came to help and the Midwife informed me about the voucher scheme and the fact that some mosquito net suppliers will need retailers to sell their nets for them. I kept looking out for the day the net suppliers will show up. One fine afternoon PermaNet® distributors paid a courtesy call on the Midwife to inform her about the fact that they will be appointing somebody in the vicinity to sell nets so she could direct the pregnant women to them. Just when they were leaving I approached them and told them of my intention of becoming a retailer for them. They took me to the midwife and did the introduction. They also took me through a training session on the use of the nets and the process of selling it to the pregnant women. Immediately they told me about the commission I agreed deal. I have got a table on which I display the nets on the ANC days. I sell both PermaNet®, DawaNet and currently I have added Iconet. The Midwife has allowed me to keep my table in the clinic so I do not have to be carrying it about. I make some margins from the sales which keep me going. It's now a good source of income to me and as such I always call the suppliers when I run out of stock. I am saving the profits that I make from the sales.

Apart from selling the nets, I have also gained some knowledge in malaria prevention and I also take the pregnant women who come to buy the net though the treatment and hanging process. I am very happy with what I am doing and I hope this program will continue.”



Paulina Boateng: “I am Paulina Boateng. I am 48 years and married with 6 children. I used to sell used-clothes which I move from house to house to prospect buyers. There were days that I could walk for several kilometers without making a single sale. My day of relief came when a midwife who stays in the same compound with me and my family told me about the voucher scheme and the selling of different types of mosquito nets near the ANC five months ago. I gave it a thorough thought and realized it was going to be a good alternative for me. I was happy to know that I would not have to walk for long distances. I am growing old and the stress of walking such long distances was not good for my health.

I started the very first day the suppliers of nets brought a consignment. Now I sell DawaNet, Iconet and PermaNet®. I get very good margins on the nets that I sell which would have taken me long tedious days of walking just to sell a few used-clothes which clients sometimes buy on credit. With the nets no one buys it on credit so I don't have to chase people about. The nets also sell faster. Currently I have stopped selling the used clothes and I am concentrating on the sale of nets.



I am very happy with the work I am doing because I do not have to exert myself too much to make some profit. Also with the net business as long as there are pregnant women I will always make some profit from sales. To tell you the truth mosquito net is a fast moving good. I have sold over 400 mosquito nets.

Before starting this business, the suppliers gave me a training session on how to use the various types of nets and also how to treat the bundled nets and dry them. I sometimes treat the net in the hospital compound under this tree for those who request. One of the pregnant women gave me hers to treat for her, which I have dried right beside me. Since she has not come for it I will use it as a demonstration for those who come to buy nets today. “

