



## *Promoting Policy Dialogue in East, Central and Southern Africa*

### **Advocacy on the removal of taxes & tariffs on Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs) and insecticide treatments September 2005 Bujumbura, Burundi**

#### **Background:**

Market research has demonstrated that more than half of household nets owned were purchased from local markets and that the price at which ITNs are sold greatly affects the number of people purchasing them. A retail price above US\$4.00 per ITN places them in the realm of unaffordable luxury items. Consequently, policies that increase the price of ITNs can significantly reduce their acquisition. A combination of tariffs and other taxes on ITNs can increase the price by 20% to 100%. This makes a relatively low-cost item too expensive for most households to afford and creates a strong disincentive for the commercial sector to invest in the product. The retail price of an ITN often takes a significant share of a low-income household's disposable income, and further costs are incurred for re-treating the net every six months. Making ITNs affordable to most African households is necessary if widespread use of ITNs is to be established.

#### **Taxes and tariffs hamper the supply of ITNs:**

The case for reducing tax and tariff barriers is clear: cumulative taxes and tariffs on ITNs, untreated nets and insecticides range from 5% to 100% in most African countries. This is a substantial barrier to the acquisition of ITNs by low-income households. To address this problem and in collaboration with the Burundi Ministry of Public Health and the WHO, and with financial support from USAID-REDSO, the workshop/training on taxes and tariffs on ITNs was organized by AED/NetMark Africa Malaria Program and the East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) Health Community.

#### **Seeking solutions:**

The workshop aimed at reviewing the progress achieved toward the implementation of the Abuja Summit resolution on taxes and tariffs in Burundi and to train participants on advocacy and using MoreNets computer model, an advocacy tool developed by NetMark with support from REDSO. The workshop involved parliamentarians, officials from the ministries of health, commerce and industry, finance, planning and reconstruction, National solidarity, human rights and gender, delegates from UN agencies (WHO and UNICEF); delegates from NGOs National and International including AED NetMark, September 2005 at the Source du Nil in Bujumbura.



The workshop consisted of two sessions: the first day was an advocacy workshop and the last three days were devoted to workshop training in advocacy skills to selected officials using the MoreNets spreadsheet model developed by NetMark. The Advocacy Workshop was attended by over 88 participants including the Minister of Public Health; Members of Parliament (MP) from Burundi; Representatives from the Ministry of Public Health; National Malaria Control Programme; Burundi ITNs Advocacy Committee; Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industry, Planning and Reconstruction, National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender; WHO; UNICEF; NGOs; private sector and the media.

The Training Workshop was attended by over 34 selected participants from the Burundi ITNs Advocacy Committee and others from stakeholder organisations. This training was a follow-up to the Johannesburg Regional Workshop on Taxes and Tariffs on ITNs, which was organized by ECSA-HC/NetMark in November 2004. The regional workshop was attended by representatives from various countries including Burundi.



### **Workshop Outputs**

- Presentations and discussions on the status of taxes and tariffs on ITNs in Burundi including opportunities and challenges of removing taxes and tariffs.
- Presentations and discussions on the experiences, lessons and process of reducing or removing taxes and tariffs on ITNs.
- Participants were introduced to the MoreNets advocacy spreadsheet model, to be used for advocating the removal and reduction of taxes and tariffs.
- Skills and knowledge were acquired on how to formulate an advocacy strategy and presentation for the reduction or removal of taxes and tariffs on ITNs using information generated from the MoreNets model.
- The Burundi ITNs advocacy implementation work plan was reviewed and revised