

USAID-NetMark in Ghana: Progress Toward Building a Sustainable Market for ITNs

The USAID-NetMark Project was launched in Ghana in November 2002 and has consistently been a major player in the RBM partnership in Ghana. The project currently convenes the ITN sub-committee which aims to coordinate all ITN programs to maximize public health impact and minimize clashes between subsidized and commercial efforts.

USAID's NetMark Program in Ghana

The overall goal of the NetMark Project in Ghana is to contribute to a reduction in malaria through the creation of a sustainable, national market for ITNs that makes them accessible and affordable to all. To achieve this goal, NetMark's efforts have included:

- Expanding public knowledge and use of ITNs (particularly long lasting ITNs) through a multi-media campaign.
- Supporting commercial partners in making their products widely available through retail outlets at reasonable prices.
- Implementing innovative strategies for targeted subsidies that help the most vulnerable citizens—pregnant women and children under five. An example is the ITN voucher program.
- Evaluating progress and measuring impact through on-going monitoring and periodic household surveys.

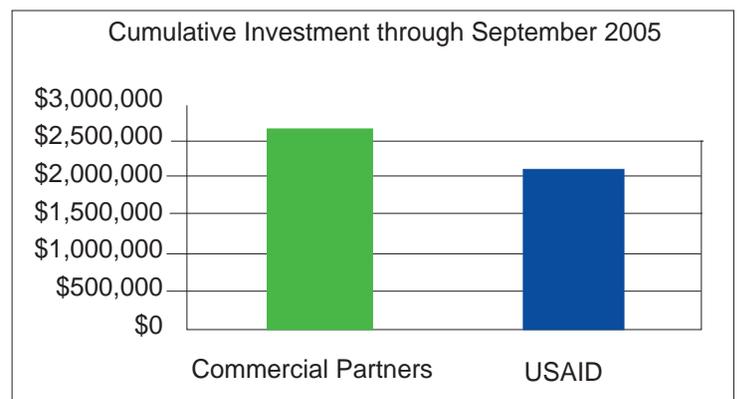
Achievements to Date

NetMark has made important contributions toward building a sustainable market for ITNs. The following summarizes the achievements of the program:

- Since NetMark's launch it is estimated that the commercial sector has sold 1,117,000 nets and more than 560,549 retreatment kits.¹
- NetMark has enhanced equity in ITN distribution through targeted subsidy programs, using the innovative commercial discount voucher approach:
 - NetMark collaboration with Exxon Mobil to run an ITN voucher program for pregnant women and children under-five in Ashanti, Greater Accra and Brong Ahafo regions. This collaboration delivered about 100,000 ITNs to pregnant women at subsidized price.
 - An additional 70,000 ITNs have been purchased at discounted prices by pregnant women and mothers with children under five through voucher programs in the Eastern and Volta regions. Due to the success of this approach, the model has been adopted by the National Malaria Control Program and is currently being scaled up with funding from the Global Fund.

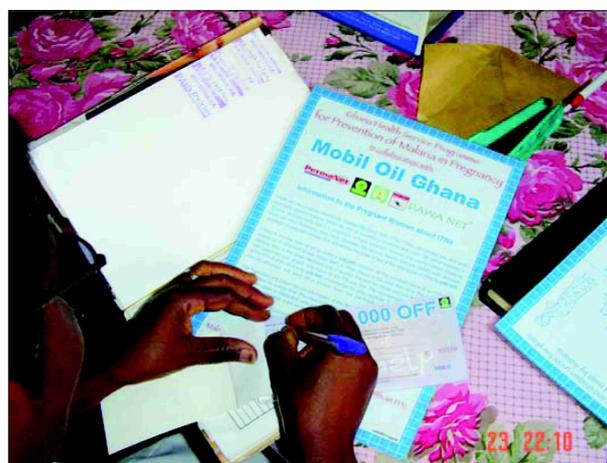


- ITN awareness is currently 91% (NetMark 2004 Household Survey) as a direct result of NetMark generic communication activities. The 2003 DHS Survey reported ITN awareness as 56%.
- Net ownership is 38% (NetMark 2004 HH survey) and ITN ownership is 19%. The 2003 DHS reported ITN ownership at 3.3%.
- The private commercial sector's participation in the ITN business has steadily grown.
 - Cumulative partner investment (cost share) through September 2005 was \$2,646,186, which is equal to \$1.25 for each \$1.00 of USAID's investment.
 - Currently there are four formal NetMark distributors compared to two when NetMark first began activities in Ghana.
- The engagement of the private commercial sector and the increased demand for ITNs has resulted in sustainable employment generation:
 - Distributors have increased their sales forces from six representatives (in November 2002) to 13 (in December 2005).
 - Distributors also appointed several sub-distributors in their efforts to ensure effective and efficient distribution of their products. The number of these sub-distributors increased from three (in November 2002 to 14 (in December 2005).
 - Thirty (30) young women entrepreneurs have taken advantage of the increased demand for ITNs and have set up their own table top retail points under umbrellas to sell ITNs, especially in voucher areas.



¹ NetMark's Formal Commercial Partners have sold over 829,880 ITNs and 560,549 retreatment kits. Formal partners are partners with whom NetMark has a formal agreement for joint investment based on their commitment to improve business practices, coordinate with public sector partners, and set annual objectives with NetMark. All companies using WHO approved insecticides are eligible to become formal partners. Additional commercial sales are estimated based on retail audits, customs information, etc. All commercial and public sector net distribution is supported by NetMark's public education and promotion of ITNs.

- Commercial availability of ITNs has increased. Currently there are about 2,000 active retail outlets in the country selling ITNs compared to 500 in 2003.
- Prices of ITNs have dropped largely due to NetMark's efforts to bring new brands into the market and remove taxes, tariffs and VAT.
- With NetMark's support, Vestergaard-Frandsen has set up a regional warehouse in Tema, an industrial town outside of Accra that has the largest harbor in Ghana. The warehouse holds a buffer stock of PermaNets[®] so that the transit time for the supply of products to distributors is greatly reduced and ultimately the persistent stock out situations experienced in the past have been eliminated.
- Policy and advocacy activities have greatly contributed to the removal of taxes and tariffs and the implementation of these changes at the ports of entry.



PRODUCT	PRICES IN 2002	CURRENT PRICES
ITN (Bundled)	\$6.00-\$15.00	\$3.50-\$7.00
Mosquito Nets (untreated)	\$3.00-\$13.00	\$3.00-\$13.00
Pre-treated net / LLIN	\$15.00	\$6.00-\$10.00

Note that sampling methodology was different for the two surveys. NetMark surveys were conducted in urban and surrounding rural areas of Accra, Keta, Kumasi, Wa, and Tamale. The DHS Survey is nationally representative

NetMark Partners

In addition to the Ministry of Health and the National Malaria Control Program, NetMark has partnered with several private organizations to achieve these results. These partners are described below:

International Manufacturers	Local Distributors	Products and Brands	Description
Bayer Environmental Sciences	Agrimat	K-O Tab [®] 123	A longer lasting home treatment kit
		K-O Net [®] 	A package containing a mosquito net and a K-O Tab [®] treatment kit
		K-O Tab [®]	A home treatment kit
		K-Othrine [®]	A liquid permethrin product for bulk treatment of nets
Siamdutch	Agrimat	Dawa Net [®] 	Pre-treated net
Tana Netting	Agrimat	Dawa Plus [®]	New longer lasting ITN that incorporates Bayer K-O Tab [®] 123 technology using an end-of-line treatment process
Syngenta	Reiss and Company	Iconet [®] 	A bundled net with Iconet [®] treatment
		Iconet [®] Treatment	A home treatment kit
Vestergaard-Frandsen	Transcol West Africa, Ltd. Netco Rockville Ltd.	PermaNet [®] 	Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Net (LLIN)

Summary

The USAID-NetMark Project has revolutionized the ITN business in Ghana and made ITNs widely available to all segments of the population, including those most vulnerable to malaria. The remarkable success of this endeavor attests to the potential impact that can be achieved when the public and private sectors bring their complementary strengths together to solve important national health problems. It is hoped that this project can become a model for other such partnerships in the future.