




# Leaving No One Behind

## The First Nigerian Integrated Insecticide-Treated Nets and Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention Campaign

Photo shows Zainab on her tricycle

Amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the United States Government through the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) supported the Zamfara State Government to distribute Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN) to all households and Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) medicines to children aged 3 – 59 months in the State. This was the first combined ITN/SMC campaign in Nigeria and a daunting task in the face of the pandemic. The Government of Zamfara with support from PMI, successfully administered SMC medicine to over one million eligible children and distributed three million LLINs to households in Zamfara State.



**Life as a person living with a disability is tough for Zainab Umar, who lives in the Yandoto Daji community.**

Falling ill with malaria made her weak and unable to care for herself, further complicating her already difficult situation.



Maimuna Shehu, a mother of four children, lives in Baichen Gabas community. When her children get sick, it can be a challenge to pay for their care. Especially since her only source of income is selling groundnut cakes at the local market.

The integrated LLIN and SMC campaign aimed to reduce the malaria burden in the state and protect the most vulnerable people. To do this, two PMI-funded projects worked hand in hand with the Zamfara State Ministry of Health: Global Health Supply Chain-Procurement Supply Management who supported logistics and supply chain management of malaria commodities and Breakthrough ACTION-Nigeria project who led all social and behavior change (SBC) efforts.

SBC activities are critical to help community members understand the importance of the SMC medications, and the consistent and correct use of LLINs in malaria prevention. To achieve this, the project trained 30 media journalists, 1,124 health educators, 447 town announcers and 1,326 local lead mothers who interacted with community members over the radio and innovative community engagement sessions to reach a critical mass of Zamfara's 5-million-strong population. This took place despite the COVID-19 restrictions.

This maiden integrated LLIN and SMC campaign achieved the following:

Distribution of **2,957,848** mosquito nets to Zamfara state residents in all 14 LGAs. This meant Zainab and Maimuna had nets to protect themselves and their families.

**91%**

coverage of SMC medicine among eligible children. Maimuna's four children were among 1,030,000 children under five years who received complete doses of SMC medicines, protecting them against malaria.

**83%**

of households hung their nets over their sleeping spaces; 90% of children under five and 74% of the population used their nets after receiving them.

Unprecedented commitments and funding were made with the State government and others contributing 20% of the **\$2 million investment** made by PMI as complementary funding.

The Government of Zamfara State released **N125 million (\$348,000)** for various components of the campaign: micro-planning, logistics, the flag-off and assessment of distribution points.

Two government-owned radio stations donated free airtime to radio spots and radio program discussions about the campaign, broadcasting one-minute radio spots 711 times and valued at N2 million (\$5,925).

Local Government Area Chairmen contributed **N1.9 million (\$5,500)** for face masks and local government-level activities.



I suffered from malaria some years back. I lay in bed and had to rely on family members to carry me around because I was [very] weak...

— Zainab Umar, a residence of Yandoto Daji Community in Zamfara State

Thank God for PMI, my four children [under five years] have started taking the malaria medicine, and we received new nets, which we have used to replace the old ones. Now our protection is complete.

— Maimuna Shehu



Through this campaign, all Zamfara State residents and families were protected from malaria, leaving no-one left behind despite COVID-19 complexities.