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UGANDA RED CROSS IN MALARIA CAMPAIGN, DISTRIBUTES 35, 137 MOSQUITO NETS

Mbale: The Uganda Red Cross Society has embarked on a sh539m malaria campaign whereby communities are tasked to value mosquito nets and utilize them at all times in a move to reduce malaria incidences.

These interventions are funded by USAID/PMI through the American Red Cross and International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The project also involves the distribution of mosquito nets to vulnerable groups like children below 5 years, pregnant mothers and the elderly.

Implemented in 26 sub counties of Mbale, Kaberamaido and Manafwa, the project, dubbed **Post Long Lasting Insecticide Mosquito Net “Hang Up”** is aimed at improving household knowledge and practices for malaria prevention among vulnerable groups.

A total of 526, 000 households (891, 000 people) are benefiting from this interventions.

URCS has so far distributed 35, 137 mosquito nets provided by Uganda Health Marketing Group (UHMG).

The Uganda Red Cross Society has deployed 1, 392 trained volunteers in Mbale, Manafwa and Kaberamaido to conduct house-house visits and sensitise communities on the need to keep the mosquito nets hanged always. So far 155, 739 house-house visits have been conducted. In situations where the communities members do not know how to hang the mosquito nets, the URCS volunteers provide the necessary support.

The Secretary General Mr. Michael Richard Nataka said that whereas URCS has been supplementing government efforts in fighting malaria across the country, some beneficiaries have not been valuing the mosquito nets distributed.

“Our focus this time is to educate communities that a mosquito net is vital and important in preventing malaria incidences. Some community members receive the mosquito nets but they do not hang them. Others sell them while others just keep them without using them,” Nataka explained.

The one year project will also see URCS strengthen its capacity to implement malaria prevention programs in Eastern Uganda.

During the home visits, URCS volunteers discovered that:

- 74% of households have an insecticide treated mosquito net (ITN) hanging at time of visit
- 64% of children less than five year of age slept under an ITN the previous night
- 67% of pregnant women slept under an ITN the previous night
- 78% of respondents identify an ITN as one of the most effective ways to prevent malaria
- 93% of respondents know the cause of malaria

Ends

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Uganda Red Cross Society is an auxiliary body to government operating across the country through its wide network of 51 branches.