



## **Procuring Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs) or Bundled-Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs)?**

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The benefits of ITNs have been clearly shown in terms of reduction in child mortality and morbidity from malaria. There are 3 critical determinants of ITN effectiveness: 1) having all sleeping units in the household covered with a net; 2) having these nets treated with insecticide to transform them into ITNs; 3) having these ITNs regularly used by household members during their sleep.

The insecticide-treatment of the nets has major benefits, especially in the context of high population coverage. LLINs present an obvious benefit of not requiring regular re-treatment with insecticide. In the setting where LLINs and bundled ITNs are equally available, there is clear benefit in procuring and distributing LLINs. However, the LLIN demand currently exceeds the supply such that the waiting period may be upwards of 6-8 months, which may compromise the first premise that all households need mosquito nets.

In the current environment in most African countries where some mosquito nets are without recent treatment, some are ITNs but not LLINs, and some are LLINs, many families and programme staff may not know the status of a given net unless it can be identified at a glance as a LLIN. In the event that a LLIN will not be identified as such, it would need to be redipped in order to assure that it is sufficiently insecticide-treated.

This need will persist long since a number of nets purchased locally will not be LLINs. Although it is expected that most vulnerable groups in Africa will benefit from a LLIN protection in the reasonable future, regular treatment of all nets that are not LLINs will remain a priority for national programmes. Meanwhile, industry should ensure that LLINs can easily be identified from other nets.

Programme decisions should focus on coverage as opposed to net type when faced with ITN or LLIN procurement decisions (especially) close to transmission seasons. Better yet, procurement planning in respect of LLIN purchases should be done well enough in advance so that production can be better adjusted to demand and delivery delays shortened or altogether removed.