

## Integrated Community-based Interventions for Malaria Services

SUCCESS STORY

Ethiopia | May 2017

# Students and teachers join together to fight malaria



Integrated Community-based Interventions for Malaria Services (ICIMS) is a three-year project, funded by the James Percy Foundation to improve the use and effectiveness of community-based health services for over 507,000 people in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia. The ICIMS project focuses on increasing the uptake of healthcare services and positively changing behaviours towards malaria prevention interventions in the Boloso Sore and Halaba woredas (districts). This case study highlights the power of knowledge in the fight against malaria.

*“Malaria Consortium has contributed a lot for the prevention and control of malaria in our region, especially in Halaba and Boloso Sore region. The number of malaria cases has declined in the past two years. The contribution of the project is important. In the future, we need to strengthen and extend to other districts because other districts have high number of malaria cases”*

- Nigatu Tarekega, Disease Promotion and Health Prevention (DPHP) Officer from the SNNPR Health

Three years ago, the small, southern Ethiopian farming community of Boloso Sore was well-known for having high prevalence of malaria. Effective interventions, such as long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) and indoor residual insecticide spraying, diagnosis and treatment

were provided for free by the Ethiopian government. Despite access to these interventions, members of the community lacked awareness of the link between mosquitos and malaria and the importance of seeking early care.



Tigist Sadamu is a Biology Teacher at Hembecto High School where she leads one of the anti-malaria school clubs.

*"I teach students about environmental management, using nets properly and that they must all inform family members at home about prevention and seeking early healthcare when danger signs are present."*

In an effort to close gaps in health service delivery at the community level, Malaria Consortium worked closely with district health and education offices to promote malaria awareness and improve health seeking behaviour through the introduction of anti-malaria school clubs. Selected schools were equipped with billboards illustrating malaria prevention messages and mini-media kits, consisting of a cassette stereo, an amplifier, loudspeaker and microphone, to share key malaria prevention messages throughout the school day.

Twice a year, students in the anti-malaria school clubs also put on plays for parents and other local members of the community to show what symptoms to look for, demonstrate how to use and care for LLINs and teach them about other interventions, such as drying out mosquito breeding sites. Parents gain from the knowledge their children bring home and have shared this



Zinagh Medlinn, 18, became a student at Hembecto High School two years earlier.

*"Before I came here I knew very little about malaria. I joined the school club and now I share with my family about what I know to keep them free of malaria. I show them how to hang nets properly and that they must use them every night and keep our home clear of breeding sites. My family really appreciate and are happy about my activities here at school. I am respected by my family because of it. Now we are not seeing malaria cases a lot. It is because of this project. We are using nets properly and do environmental control. We must maintain high awareness to keep this situation and keep everyone healthy."*

information with neighbours. They have also requested for the plays to be performed in villages so that more people can watch them as the school is a two-hour walk away for many.

The impact anti-malaria school clubs have had in the community clearly show how knowledge greatly contributes to the fight against malaria.

Tesfanesh Terecho, a Health Extension Worker at the Chama Hembecho Health Post near the school says:

*"There have been no cases of malaria for a couple of months. This is because of the intervention of the ICIMS project changing peoples' behaviours in how they prevent and seek care."*

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Malaria Consortium is one of the world's leading specialist non-profit organisations. Our mission is to improve lives in Africa and Asia through sustainable, evidence-based programmes that combat targeted disease and promote child and maternal health.

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