

SCRIPT BED NET DISTRIBUTION SOUTHERN SUDAN

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PRESENTATION

To distribute 3 millions bed nets across 5 states in 2 years time, and to save people from malaria. It's the biggest operation ever about to start in Southern Sudan.

In this country in Africa malaria is still the biggest killer of under 5 children.

Southern Sudan remains ravaged after 21 years of civil war, and never had the chance to develop a good strategy against malaria.

The whole bednet operation is costing 72 million Dollars, which is paid by the GlobalFund against malaria.

The disease is endemic in many developing countries.

On world scale it kills over 3,000 children per day, meaning that every 20 seconds a child dies of malaria.

The disease is spread by mosquito bites, and by sleeping under a bed net the chance of contracting it has to come down with 60 per cent.

The biggest challenge is to get the nets to the people. The area is bigger than Spain (or Pennsylvania), and there are hardly any roads.

Also the use of nets is not common among the people who are hardly educated, and sometimes totally isolated from the outer world.

A report from correspondent Ruud Elmendorp from the heart of Southern Sudan.

Length: 5'14"

BETA

This is a health post in the remote village Tereteka in the heart of Southern Sudan.

It's in the early afternoon, and the babies of these ladies sitting under this tree are not feeling well.

They suffer from fever, or a cough that refuses to go.

Magdalena Logun came with her 3-years old boy.

QUOTE MAGDALINA LOGUN

His body is paining, and he is vomiting.

Also he has fever.

The doctor cannot see him yet.

He is busy with an emergency.

The ladies wait for their turn.

According to the head of the health post most of the cases are malaria.

QUOTE

PAULINO PITIA

head of health post

Now we have 65 people in the clinic, and 47 have malaria.

This patient is slowly recovering, meanwhile being visited by her relatives.

It's the dry season now.

During the rainy season the malaria cases can easily double.

This health post then is too small to handle that.
Patients flee to hospitals in other places.
Like in the regional capital Juba.
That's a few days walk, and not easy when you're feeling ill.
On the children's ward of the main hospital one third of the patients have malaria.
The 9-months old Yasha just received medication.
Her mother is 20-years old, and a single parent.

QUOTE BEHU PITA

It's malaria.

- How did you discover?

Through the vomiting, and then the diarrhoea.

With a bit of luck Yasha might recover within a week.
But medication is not always available in Southern Sudan.
So prevention is what the government and international organizations are pursuing.

SOUNDBITE ZIP

With money of the GlobalFund the country will be receiving 3 million bed nets.
They are treated with insecticides, and are of Swiss origin.
The distribution is a huge task in an area with the size of Spain.
And where the few roads can be hard to access.

SOUNDBITE COWS BLOCKING THE ROAD

In the area some communities live in isolation.
Where people survive on selling peanuts.

SOUNDBITE OLD LADY CRUSHING GROUND NUTS

Many people are not even aware of the existence of malaria.
Their children and other family members just die of strange fevers.
Still Southern Sudan has some experience in bringing nets to the people.
1 million were distributed last year.
Like in this village in the West of Southern Sudan.
40-years old Berah Debid since then sleeps under a net.

QUOTE BERAH DEBID

Everybody here is using nets since there are a lot of mosquitoes.

They bite us, and that's even how my sister died.

Amalia Faulini in a nearby village is also happy with the net.
She shows how to fix it to a bed.
It wasn't in use because of the dry season.
When mosquitoes are few.
Her intention is to use it when the rains come in May.
Her children rarely have malaria since they sleep under a net.

QUOTE AMALIA FAULINI

The children of my neighbors don't sleep under a net.

They have more often malaria than my children.

A large group of people don't use a net at all.
They were not told why.
or so poor they had to sell it on the market.
The government in Southern Sudan tries to stop that.

QUOTE

SOLOMON ANUGUE

director of Health Care

The system we put in place is to minimize the number of nets that are going to the market or to the wrong places.

Through health education, community meetings, and so on.

- But you cannot prevent it.

Yes, that is very difficult yes.

The 3 millions nets go to 5 states.

There are 1,800 distribution point, and 16,000 volunteers.

Marcie Cook is from the American Population Services International.

She co-ordinates the operation.

and acknowledges it will take long before people start to use the nets.

QUOTE MARCIE COOK, Population Services International

Mentality change, or behavior change like we call it, takes a number of years. It's often generational.

A child that grows up sleeping under a bed net now will be more likely to ensure that their families sleeps under a bednet in the future.

It means that people will continue to suffer from malaria.

In Tereteka they can't wait for the nets to come.

The head of the health post would be happy to receive them.

QUOTE PAULINO PITIA

Yes it's the most protective material. They are wanted.

- You're waiting for them?

We're waiting now.

Magdalena surely will let her son sleep under it.

QUOTE MAGDALENA LUNGA

Yes, just give me one.

The first nets have to be delivered before the rainy season in May.

The distribution of all the 3 million nets will take 2 years.