

In 2022, the world saw [an estimated 249 million cases of malaria and 608,000 deaths from the disease](#). These are staggering statistics, as are those around the manufacture, shipping and delivery of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) on the battle frontline.

Vestergaard manufactures about 60 million nets per year, which fluctuates based on need and funding and requires around 1,500 containers. Each week, 30 containers are loaded onto different ships bound for ports around the globe.

Shipping from our manufacturing facility in Vietnam to East Africa takes 30 to 40 days; to West Africa, 50 to 60 days.

It's an exemplary operation of logistics, organisation and communication.

"Every little detail on every order needs to align," explains Key Account and Customer Service Manager Henriette Fuglsang Lauridsen. "With the fast-moving production in Vietnam, we must book inspectors in advance, pack containers swiftly, and match the order with the vessel departure date."

Before shipment, Henriette and her team ensure customers are prepared for the nets' arrival.

"Once we receive notification of an order placement, we immediately begin planning the logistics. This involves determining the readiness schedule for the nets to meet the in-country delivery deadline, calculating the number of containers required for shipping, coordinating with the customer and their freight forwarder, and devising the best strategy to ensure the nets arrive according to the final distribution plan. Our customer service team collaborates closely with the customer and their appointed freight forwarder to ensure a seamless delivery process," she explains.

"Delays can hinder net distribution campaigns tied to the rainy season, directly impacting lives, making timely deliveries a matter of life or death. Being protected by a mosquito net during malaria season is crucial," she adds.

“And excellent service and strong relationships across the supply chain are essential for success.”

A dedicated customer service unit

Five years ago, Henriette and Global Customer Service Specialist Divya Nigam created a dedicated customer service unit to assist donors and procurement agents working on behalf of donors – to enhance delivery performance and order management.

Along with Sales Support Specialist Sonali Rawat, they bring years of experience that their customers can benefit from, such as understanding vessels’ container capacities plus different countries’ storage capacities and logistics intricacies, for example which ports close their warehouses over the Christmas period.







(Left to right) Sonali, Henriette and Divya form Vestergaard's dedicated customer service unit committed to assisting donors and procurement agents

From major organisations to small NGOs, the unit nurtures relationships with customers through weekly meetings to make sure they're aligned on orders, discuss any challenges and find solutions.

"This dedicated customer service unit provides a comfort zone for our customers in which we can help them plan ahead and ensure the nets are delivered as quickly and efficiently as possible," says Henriette.

Proactive planning is key, adds Sonali. "We try to optimise production capacity so that we meet customer demands effectively and efficiently."

Helping in an emergency

However, even the most efficient forward planning must remain flexible to accommodate Vestergaard's humanitarian customers and NGOs, who may require bed nets urgently for people impacted by emergencies such as conflicts or natural disasters.

"Our commitment extends beyond mere transactional relationships," explains Sonali. "Our humanitarian customers are very special to us because they save lives, so we prioritise them and support them with the utmost care, respect and dedication."

After understanding their requirements, the customer service unit quickly integrates their orders into Vestergaard's production schedule, provides logistics support to meet their requested delivery timelines, and resolves any issues that arise.

"We support them to meet their noble objectives. Last year we did a special project for displaced populations without permanent housing, so we strive to tailor our solutions and accommodate their requirements as much as possible."

Sonali cherishes the opportunity to help customers find solutions, especially when assisting those serving the most vulnerable populations.

"Working in customer service helps me to understand people, which enables me to solve their problems and improve their experiences," she says. "This helps me grow both professionally and personally."

"Seeing customers satisfied and knowing I have made a positive difference with the service or product is highly rewarding."

Divya agrees. "I enjoy finding innovative solutions and seeing the results of my work contribute to the company's and our customers' success," she adds. "I have a passion for excellence, and it gives me immense gratification knowing that my work matters."

The unit also works closely with Vestergaard's regulatory team to ensure smooth customs processing by adhering to local requirements for packaging and labelling, preventing costly hold-ups at borders.

Optimising packaging and enhancing traceability

Since 2022, Vestergaard has adhered to global standards for product identification, using labels and barcodes on every bag, bale and container.



Vestergaard uses global-standard labels and barcodes while reducing environmental impact by optimising packing and minimising plastic.

We also aim to reduce the environmental footprint and costs by optimising net packing and minimising individual plastic packaging. In 2023, 44% of nets were ordered without individual plastic packaging, a decrease from 64% in 2021.

In addition, we help customers streamline logistics with district-specific markings, explains Henriette.

“Sometimes our customers can compile districts so we can use fewer containers. Sometimes, we help them by marking the bales of the container with a district, local language information or even colours so they can organise their load as quickly as possible.

“We consider each specific customer’s needs. It’s not only about the packing; it’s also about recommending cost solutions. It’s saving space, it’s saving the environment, and it’s also saving donor money.”

Labelling also enables customers to trace the bed nets throughout their journey to the end user, and even after their end of life.

‘The whole package’

Offering impressive customer service means listening to feedback and Vestergaard consistently scores 95% to 99% on delivery performance.

“Prioritising our customers shows them that Vestergaard provides both a quality product and exceptional service,” says Henriette, “and we confidently deliver on-time, pass quality inspections, and consistently meet performance expectations.”