

Within the framework of the “[Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative](#)“, there are hopes a communication and information event held in Burkina Faso, thanks to a public-private partnership, could be the first of many that will help to reduce the country’s concerning malaria transmission rates.

## **Educating communities on bed net usage and malaria prevention**

One late July day, residents of Baskuy health district in the heart of Ouagadougou gathered for *La Caravane de Sensibilisation sur le Paludisme* (Malaria Awareness Roadshow) to learn about optimal bed net usage as part of a behaviour change campaign (BCC). Under the patronage of the Permanent Secretary (SP-Palu Burkina) dedicated to malaria elimination, the event was organised by Vestergaard in collaboration with the medico-technical agency [ARCOA](#) Burkina and advocacy groups [Speak-Up Africa](#), [Sante en Entreprise \(SEE\)](#) and [Association Vision Nouvelle](#).









Vestergaard, in collaboration with ARCOA Burkina, Speak-Up Africa, SEE, and Association Vision Nouvelle, organised a malaria control event under SP-Palu Burkina's patronage.

Marc Sawadogo at ARCOA said the day had two primary objectives: educating people on the correct use of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs), and how to care for them to ensure their longevity.

"Many people in Burkina Faso are not aware of how to use mosquito nets correctly," Mr Sawadogo explained. "Often, they serve unintended purposes like protecting livestock from flies, fencing chickens or safeguarding plants from pests."

Even if used correctly, many people fail to use their LLIN year-round.

“Over 70% of participants thought they should use their LLIN only during the rainy season and only late at night, not realising that malaria and dengue fever transmission is continuous.

“Others were even keeping mosquito nets for 10 or 15 years, unaware that they need to be replaced every three years.

“There’s a clear lack of information on malaria transmission.”

While improved treatment access has been reducing malaria mortality rates in Burkina Faso, transmission rates and incidence remain high.

[The 2023 World Malaria Report](#) identifies [Burkina Faso as one of the 12 High Burden to High Impact \(HBHI\) countries, accounting for 67% of all cases and 73% of deaths globally.](#)

“That’s why we’re focusing on prevention through optimal bed net usage,” Mr Sawadogo stated.

Participants were queried about their knowledge of malaria and dengue fever prevention, allowing experts to address any gaps. Each attendee received a medical check-up and a malaria kit containing a PermaNet® mosquito net, a locally-made mosquito repellent and an informational booklet. In total, 150 kits were distributed, covering 200 households.



The malaria prevention kit distributed to attendees, featuring a PermaNet® mosquito net, locally-made mosquito repellent, and an informational booklet on malaria prevention and bed net care to ensure longevity.

Mr Sawadogo said two-thirds of the participants were women, who are crucial in spreading the messages.

“Teaching one woman helps protect two or three children since she oversees the household’s health. It’s like hitting three birds with one stone.”

However, Mr Sawadogo believes that knowledge alone isn’t enough.

## **Leveraging public-private partnerships to combat malaria**





Marc Sawadogo of [ARCOA Burkina](#) leads efforts to educate communities on proper bed net usage, aiming to reduce malaria transmission rates in Burkina Faso.

“It’s essential to have a partnership between the public and private sectors and civil society. We need to involve various societal levels,” he said.

He added that the event acted as a “pilot”, showcasing the potential achievements and drawing interest from private organisations – even those not directly involved in malaria – in Burkina Faso’s national malaria control program.

“The event showed malaria stakeholders and the private sector that even with minimal resources, we can make a significant impact, provided that the approach embodies user-centred, integrated and participatory activities. With effective strategies, we can garner more private funding, generate broader interest and reach more districts.



“Our goal is to eliminate malaria in Burkina Faso for good.”