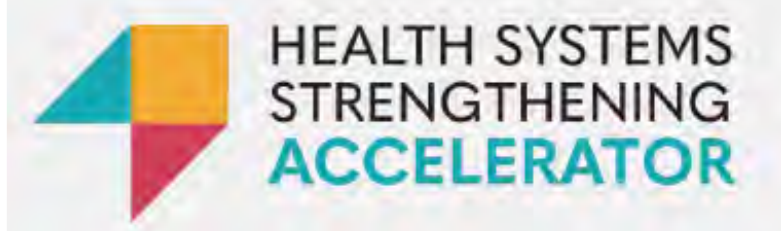


Building Sustainable Malaria Prevention through Community Engagement and Leadership: The Budaka Experience in Malaria Prevention and Control.



Authors: Mary Achen¹, Steven Kikomeko¹, Betty Atai¹, Thomas Maina¹, Immaculate Ddumba² and Erisa Mulwani³
 Organizations: USAID/Uganda Health Systems Strengthening (UHSS) Activity¹, USAID-Uganda², District Health Officer (DHO) – Budaka District³

Context

- Uganda is ranked 3rd in global malaria burden with over 12 million cases reported annually (World Malaria Report 2022). WHO estimates that on average, 87 people died of malaria each day in Uganda in 2021, further highlighting the severity of this issue as a major public health problem in the country.
- Since September 2022, Uganda has experienced a sustained malaria outbreak affecting 45 districts, with 17 districts classified as response districts with a high positivity rates in the country and Budaka is one of the districts that has been hit particularly by the outbreak
- Since then, GoU has declared malaria as an epidemic, and is taking comprehensive measures. UHSS is now working with the districts local governments and other partners to implement a comprehensive malaria epidemic response.

Activity Impact

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- 01** District-wide community engagements, IRS, and case management in Budaka resulted in a 22 percent decline in the malaria positivity rate from 75 percent in October 2022 to 53 percent in March 2023.
- 02** By engaging with key influencers and community leaders, UHSS was able to create a sustainable, cost-effective solution to the high malaria burden in Budaka District.
- 03** In total, 1,220 participants were engaged and oriented on their roles to support and lead actions on Mass Action Against Malaria and Household Action Against Malaria.
- 04** Increased community awareness and knowledge on malaria prevention and control by the household members themselves.

Facilitators



Collaborations and engagement with stakeholders

- Ministry of Health** – National Malaria Control Division
- District Leadership** - full participation and support from the district leaders at all levels including political leaders.
- VectorLink** - Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) supported by PMI in Feb/Mach 2023
- Utilization of malaria champions (innovators and early adopter)
- Data utilization to inform targeted community dialogues and household visits and assessments

Activity Description

- To combat the malaria epidemic, the Uganda Health Systems Strengthening (UHSS) Activity, with funding from the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), implemented interventions to strengthen community health systems and engage local leaders in the fight against malaria.
- To address the high incidence of malaria in Budaka District, UHSS implemented a data driven district-wide community engagement approach that utilized heat maps, line-listing to select vulnerable households that have had severe malaria cases, severe anemia and death due to malaria, community dialogues in a given time period, orientation of leaders on the Mass Action Against Malaria (MAAM) and aims to identify champions at districts, sub-counties, parishes, households, and individual levels.
- The interventions include orientation sessions on the MAAM and Household Action Against Malaria (HAAM) for district, sub-county, parish, and village leadership, including District Health Teams (DHTs), Health Facility Teams, Health Unit Management Committees (HUMCs), parish chiefs, the Local Council II Chairperson, Local Council 1, and Village Health Teams (VHTs) who play a critical role in the community health arena.
- The UHSS approach utilized the innovation-diffusion model to profile and identify malaria champions, innovators, early adopters, and key influencers. The goal is to establish malaria smart homes as nuclei of influence to inspire and motivate change agents using practical examples that are easily accessible within the communities to drive desired change.

Evidence

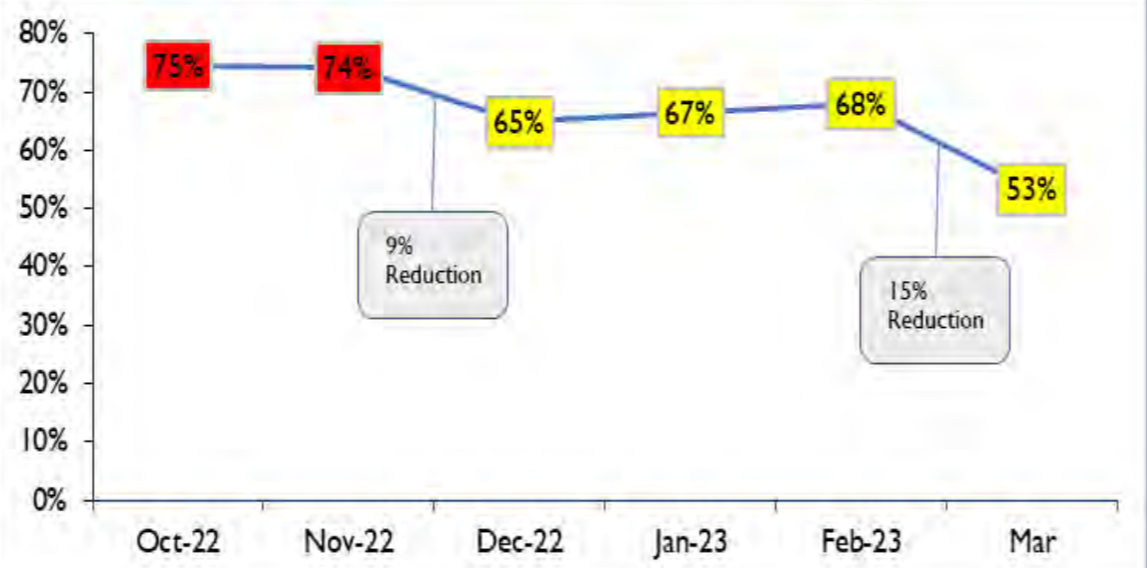


Figure 1: Budaka District Malaria Positivity Rates



Photo 1: DHT facilitating community dialogue discussion in a village within Kabula Parish, Budaka District. (Credit: UHSS Activity)

Access link to the DHIS2 malaria positivity: [Data Visualizer | DHIS2 \(health.go.ug\)](#).

Quote 1: "As a district, we will collaborate with UHSS to scale up the intervention to all sub-counties. We are also open to working with any other implementing partner to support the scale-up of community engagement." -Dr. Erisa, District Health Officer

Quote 2: Budaka, adds, "We are committed to ensuring that every household in our community is free from malaria. By working together and implementing these strategies, we can make this a reality." -Victoria, District Health Educator

Challenges

- Stock-out of essential malaria commodities hence imparting on gains from the CEs
- Limited knowledge on malaria prevention and control in the community members

Lessons Learned

- Community engagements and dialogues have potential of significantly reducing the malaria burden by having household member promote their own health or avoid illness
- Community engagements were an effective way to mobilize leaders all levels to know and act on their roles and responsibilities in the fight against malaria
- Close coordination with the MoH and organizations implanting other components of malaria prevention and control

