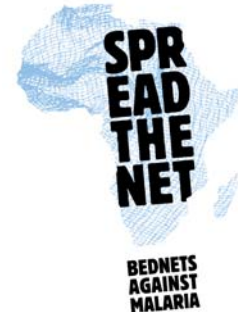


Spread the Net **Frequently Asked Questions**



About Spread the Net

What is *Spread the Net*?

Spread the Net is a campaign, a movement and a manifesto which was founded by Belinda Stronach and Rick Mercer following their trip to Africa in 2005. Designed in partnership with UNICEF Canada, *Spread the Net* aims to provide 500,000 bed nets to children and families in Africa in an effort to prevent malaria-related deaths.

How many bed nets has *Spread the Net* raised money for to date? As of August 2009, the *Spread the Net* campaign has raised money for over 393, 800 (which is \$3.9 million) long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets (LLINs) for Liberia and Rwanda, a significant step toward the total campaign target of 500,000 or \$5million.

What does one \$10 *Spread the Net* donation pay for?

A \$10 donation to *Spread the Net* covers the purchase of one bed net; transportation and distribution of the net to families; community education about how to use the bed net properly; monitoring and evaluation of bed net use; administrative costs and UNICEF's global policy and programming on malaria. Please refer to the Journey of a Bed Net document for greater detail on bed net.

Why is *Spread the Net* concentrating on Liberia and Rwanda only?

All malaria-endemic countries are in need of bed nets to help control malaria, and UNICEF is actively working around the world to provide bed nets and malaria-treatment drugs. Liberia and Rwanda were chosen as the beneficiaries of the *Spread the Net* campaign because of the great need in both countries, their histories of civil strife, and a desire on the part of Canadians to support them as they rebuild.

About bed nets

How many types of bed nets are there?

There are three types of bed nets; pre-treated nets, insecticide-treated nets and long-lasting insecticide treated nets. The use of pre-treated nets is **NOT** recommended because concentrations of insecticide in the nets are extremely variable and would be rejected under normal quality controls. Insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) consist of an untreated net and an insecticide treatment kit. A long lasting net is a ready-to-use pre-treated mosquito net, which requires no further treatment during its expected life span¹.

¹ <http://www.unicef.org/supply/files/CommodityEnglish.pdf>

The nets we procure for *Spread the Net* are long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets that have insecticide woven into the net fibres during production. These nets not only protect children from night-biting mosquitoes, they also kill the mosquito on contact, further reducing the spread of malaria. These nets retain their mosquito-killing ability for up to five years without retreatment.

What type of insecticide is used on the nets?

UNICEF procures a synthetic pyrethroid called Premethrin, approved by the World Health Organization (WHO), for treatment of insecticide treated nets. This insecticide has an excellent safety profile. Unlike early insecticides such as DDT, pyrethroids are derived from a naturally occurring substance, pyrethrum, which is found in chrysanthemums. It's toxicity to mammals is very low, it is poorly absorbed through the skin, and it is rapidly inactivated by the body. Once dried on fabric, it is bound tightly to the fibres; the probability of its leaching into the environment and the potential for absorption through the skin is negligible.

UNICEF trains the community health workers who distribute the bed nets to educate the people who receive them on how to use the nets properly.

About malaria

What is malaria?

Malaria is a parasitic disease caused by a one-celled parasite called Plasmodium. The parasite is transmitted through the bite of an infected female Anopheles mosquito.

Where does malaria occur?

The disease occurs in countries in South and Central America, the Caribbean, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, the Western Pacific, the Middle East and throughout Africa. The burden of malaria is considered highest in sub-Saharan Africa.

How serious is malaria?

Malaria is responsible for at least 300 million² cases of illness each year and kills more than 1 million people every year. A severe infection can kill a child within a matter of hours of the first sign of fever³. Ninety percent of those deaths occur in Africa and most are among children under five years of age.

If children survive, malaria can undermine their development and leave them with persistent anaemia, lifelong brain damage or paralysis. In severe cases of cerebral malaria, surviving children can be left with epilepsy, spasticity, speech disorders and blindness.

² http://rbm.who.int/cmc_upload/0/000/015/370/RBMInfosheet_3.htm

³ http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/amd2003/report_e.pdf

Malaria infection during pregnancy is associated with severe anaemia and other illness in the mother and contributes to low birth weight among newborn infants — one of the leading risk factors for infant mortality and poor growth and development. It is also estimated to cause up to 15 per cent of maternal anaemia cases, which puts women at risk of severe haemorrhage and death.

Is there malaria in Canada?

Malaria was virtually eradicated in Canada by the early 1950s. There are still incidents of malaria in Canada among people who have contracted the disease in their travels to malaria-endemic countries.

What is the difference between the West Nile virus and malaria?

West Nile is a virus; malaria is caused by a parasite. West Nile virus most severely affects people over the age of 50. Malaria is most severe in children and pregnant women; . A bite from a mosquito that has fed on the blood of an infected bird spreads the West Nile virus. Malaria is spread by a female, night-biting Anopheles mosquito infected with the Plasmodium parasite.

Why can't malaria be eradicated in endemic countries the way it was in North America?

The Global Malaria Eradication Program in 1955 succeeded in eliminating malaria from Europe, North America, the Caribbean and parts of Asia and South-Central America.² But no major success occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, mainly due to technical challenges of executing the strategy especially in Africa.⁴

About Malaria Control and Insecticide-treated Bed Nets

Are there ways to prevent malaria transmission?

Sleeping under a long-lasting insecticide-treated bed net is the most effective and inexpensive way to prevent mosquitoes from biting and transmitting the parasite that causes malaria. Properly used, they can reduce malaria transmission by at least 50 per cent and child deaths by 20 per cent.

Does UNICEF charge people for bed nets?

No, UNICEF does not charge for the bed nets it supplies to governments or partner organizations.

Why do some governments in developing countries charge for bed nets?

Some governments are not able to fully fund their national health systems and have policies to charge service fees for health care delivery. In some situations, governments may charge for a bed net because of the additional cost it presents to regular health service delivery. UNICEF is a prominent and consistent

⁴ <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/2/07-050633/en/index.html>

advocate for free bed nets for all children under the age of five and pregnant women.

How many bed nets has UNICEF distributed?

UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of mosquito nets in the world, delivering over 19 million long-lasting insecticide nets (LLINs) (one third of the world's total) to 48 countries in 2008⁵.

From where does UNICEF purchase its nets?

UNICEF's Supply Division works with manufacturers and suppliers promoting initiatives to secure the supply of quality nets and encourages technology-sharing. The scale up of production includes technology transfers, notably from Japan to Africa⁶.

What is UNICEF doing to increase the use of bed nets?

Bed net distribution is an essential part of UNICEF's health programming for children and mothers. UNICEF supports community education campaigns to empower communities and families by improving their knowledge of the importance of malaria prevention and the proper use of bed nets. UNICEF distributes bed nets through health centers and antenatal clinics, through projects it is supporting, such as recovery centers for children formerly involved with armed groups, and during National Immunization Days.

About World Malaria Day

What is the significance of World Malaria Day?

25 April is a day of unified commemoration of the global effort to provide effective control of malaria around the world. World Malaria Day represents a chance for all of us to make a difference. Whether you are a government, a company, a charity or an individual, you can roll back malaria and help generate broad gains in multiple areas of health and human development. Reducing the impact of malaria would significantly propel efforts to achieve the [Millennium Development Goals](#), agreed by every United Nations member state. These include not only the goal of combating the disease itself, but also goals related to women's and children's rights and health, access to education and the reduction of extreme poverty⁷.

About the economic toll of malaria

What is the economic and development toll of malaria?

⁵ http://www.unicef.org/supply/index_39977.html

⁶ <http://www.unicef.org/supply/files/CommodityEnglish.pdf>;
http://www.unicef.org/supply/index_39977.html

⁷ <http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/worldmaliaday/>

Malaria has serious economic impacts in Africa, slowing economic growth and development and perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty. Malaria is truly a disease of poverty — afflicting primarily the poor who tend to live in malaria-prone rural areas in poorly-constructed dwellings that offer few, if any, barriers against mosquitoes. It has been estimated that malaria costs Africa \$12 billion every year in lost Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Malaria also accounts for approximately 40 per cent of all public health expenditures in Africa. It is estimated that malaria has slowed economic growth in some African countries by 1.3 per cent per year.

How much is needed annually to support malaria programmes in Africa?

- In 2009, **roughly \$5.3 billion** will be needed for malaria control worldwide
- In 2010, **\$6.2 billion** will be needed
- From 2011 to 2020, **roughly \$5 billion** per year will be needed to sustain the gains of control measures.
- In addition, **about \$1 billion** per year will be needed for research and development of new prevention and treatment tools ⁸

About receiving bed nets for non-UNICEF programmes

I support/know of an orphanage/school/institution that needs bed nets.

How can I apply to *Spread the Net* to receive bed nets for this organization?

Unfortunately, we cannot supply your group with bed nets. *Spread the Net* supports UNICEF's purchase and distribution of bed nets in Liberia and Rwanda to benefit children under the age of five and pregnant women. In these countries, UNICEF works through its implementing partners, primarily the respective Ministries of Health, to distribute bed nets. We suggest that the organization you support consider discussing its needs with its local Ministry of Health.

I have a net that I purchased for a trip. Can I donate it to *Spread the Net*?

While your offer is definitely appreciated, unfortunately we cannot accept your net. UNICEF Canada does not send donated bed nets from Canada to UNICEF offices in other countries due to high transportation costs, logistical constraints and quality-control concerns. In partnership with UNICEF Canada, *Spread the Net* is raising funds in Canada to purchase and distribute long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets for Liberia and Rwanda. Funds raised by *Spread the Net* are being used by UNICEF to purchase bed nets as part of large UNICEF orders, allowing UNICEF to buy the nets at the lowest possible cost.

⁸ <http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/worldmaliaday/keyfigures>

About the *Spread the Net Student Challenge*

What is the *Spread the Net Student Challenge*?

The *Spread the Net Student Challenge* is a nationwide challenge to high schools, colleges and universities to raise funds to purchase long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets for families in Liberia and Rwanda. Championed by *Spread the Net* co-founder and comedian Rick Mercer, a top fundraising high school, college and university from eastern and western Canada will be eligible to win a visit from Rick Mercer.

Is the *Spread the Net Student Challenge* a new initiative?

In 2007/08, Canadian schools began fundraising for *Spread the Net* through the *Beat the Mosquitoes Challenge* (for high schools) and the *Campus Challenge* (for colleges and universities). The *Spread the Net Student Challenge* is a streamlined continuation of these efforts under one name, open to all high schools, colleges and universities in Canada.

Who participates in the *Spread the Net Student Challenge*?

All students, staff and faculty at Canadian schools are welcome to raise funds for *Spread the Net*. The *Spread the Net Student Challenge* and Rick Mercer prize are targeted only to schools at the secondary and post-secondary level (high schools, colleges and universities), but all schools can get involved.

Which schools are eligible to win a visit from Rick Mercer?

Top fundraising high schools (or schools with Grade 9 classes or higher), colleges and universities from any region in Canada whose funds are received at UNICEF Canada by February 28th 2010 are eligible to win a visit from Rick Mercer.

For the 2009/2010 challenge year, Rick is calling on schools in the West (B.C., Yukon, Alberta, Nunavut, N.W.T., Sask., and Manitoba) to take on schools in the East (Ont. to NL)! Two top fundraising high schools, colleges or university (one from **each** area) will receive personal visits from Rick and will be featured on an episode of The Rick Mercer Report in March 2010!

When does the *Spread the Net Student Challenge* start and finish?

The *Spread the Net Student Challenge* officially launches in September 10, 2009 and will wrap up on February 28, 2010. To be considered for the prize, funds must be received at UNICEF Canada by February 28, 2010. Otherwise schools may wish to continue fundraising until June 2010.

How can my school get involved?

Starting September 10, schools can register on-line at www.spreadthenet.org by clicking on the *Spread the Net Student Challenge-Students Get Involved* button. Interested schools can also contact the UNICEF Canada regional office in their area for more information, or email spreadthenet@unicef.ca.

How much did schools raise for *Spread the Net* in the 2008/09 school year?

In 2008/09, Canadian schools raised more than \$350,000 — an incredible achievement that is helping to provide more than 35,000 long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets to children and pregnant women in Liberia and Rwanda.

What kinds of fundraising activities have schools been doing to raise money for *Spread the Net*? Students have shown incredible creativity in organizing fundraising initiatives for *Spread the Net*, some amazing school fundraisers included:

- Benefit concert and DVD sales
- T-shirt sales
- *Spread the Net* dances
- Sports tournaments
- Bake sales and candy sales
- Bowl-a-thons

In addition, many students and staff took advantage of our on-line fundraising tools to collect donations from family and friends. This is one of the simplest and most effective ways to raise funds!

What kinds of fundraising tools are available to my school?

Registered schools will receive posters, stickers, a sample untreated bed net (optional), pledge form and a remittance package.

Additional tools are available on-line. School leaders can access a downloadable fundraising toolkit, slideshow presentation and speaking points, media release template, community service hours tracking sheet, video clips and more. Educators can also access a comprehensive malaria lesson plan that can be incorporated into science classes at the secondary-school level.

Why do you send schools sample untreated bed nets? Where do they come from?

Sample nets can be a great visual prop to display at school or on campus to raise awareness of your fundraising efforts and help your school community learn more about bed nets and malaria. Schools that fundraised for *Spread the Net* last year loved this item and found it to be an extremely beneficial visual aid. School leaders can opt to receive a sample untreated bed net when registering their school.

This year's sample untreated bed nets have been generously donated by Sunpack Canada (<http://www.esunpack.com/contact.asp>). Most nets are available in bright pink.