



Press Release

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DISTRIBUTION OF ITNs SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR PERSONAL GAIN

Public leaders responsible for distributing insecticide treated mosquito nets (ITNs) under the government-rolled *Malaria Haikubaliki* programme should make sure that the nets reach the intended targets. The abuse and misuse of resources and programmes aimed at benefiting the public should stop and government must leave no stone unturned in taking legal action towards those involved, for the betterment of the country.

This comes amid reports that some leaders might have misused nets meant to be distributed free of charge and benefit children under the age of five years. Sikika condemns such behavior as it deprives the most vulnerable groups within the society of protection from the number one killer disease that claims 291 lives, mostly children, in Tanzania every day. In other words 10 people die of malaria, in this country, every hour. Malaria is preventable and treatable but continues to kill such a large number of people especially children, while the use of ITNs has been proved as one of the most effective way of reducing malaria cases in Africa.

- Sikika feels that the government should severely punish those found abusing their offices or their authority by profiteering from the nets that are supposed to be used to save lives.
- Sikika hails the responsible authorities for bankrolling a national exercise of issuing mosquito nets to mothers with children under the age of five. This will go a long way in serving life if the nets are properly used. It is vital that the responsible authorities, especially those involved in the *Malaria Haikubaliki* programme, educate the general public on proper use of nets and make follow ups to make sure that the nets are not misused.
- Sikika is also urging all the recipients of these nets to use them and stop compromising their health by either selling them or turning them into fishing nets. We urge all citizens to adhere to the user guidelines which will provide best results.
- Finally, Sikika takes this opportunity to inform the general public that they have the right to information when such distributions are taking place and also to monitor public resources.

Issued by Sikika
P.O.Box 12183 Dar es Salaam,
Tel: +255 222 666355/57,
Fax:2668015,
Email:info@sikika.or.tz ,
Website: www.sikika.or.tz

