

Malaria Awareness ▶ The Battle Plan ▶ Joined-up thinking



PHOTO: THE MENTOR INITIATIVE

# Joined-up thinking

**THE BATTLE PLAN** The main weapons used to combat malaria are the relatively new rapid diagnostic test (RTD) as well as the highly effective artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT) and injectable artesunate to identify and treat confirmed cases, however severe they may be.

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For prevention, insecticide-treated mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying of insecticides are used. Generally though, emergency programmes are designed to only last a year, although they can often last longer. After a year, the hope is for a region to have stabilised and become more self-sufficient or for other NGOs to roll out longer-term support and more developmental programmes, though this is not always the case, or possible, as some conflict zones remain too insecure.

### Holistic approach

In addition to working with other agencies, where it can, the Mentor Initiative takes a wider stance on improving health conditions and so does not combat malaria in isolation. Instead, its teams tackle other conditions that are linked to mosquitoes and flies. Where possible it rolls out a package of integrated vector control. Alongside spraying campaigns and net distributions, it also applies larvicide to the types of open surface water in which malaria-transmitting mosquitoes breed and the water tanks, old tyres, cans and other waste tins in towns where mosquitoes that transmit dengue fever and other haemorrhagic diseases, lay their eggs.

### Integration

In areas of poor sanitation, the teams also treat open sewers, pit latrines and areas where humans and animals defecate in the open, with sand granules treated with chemicals that interrupt the development of insect larval development, to prevent flies breeding and spreading trachoma, a leading cause of blindness. Using specially insecticide-treated nets, developed with Tana netting, with mesh size small enough to prevent the tiny sand flies from entering and feeding off humans, the team are able to protect vulnerable people from malaria mosquitoes and Leishmaniasis, a disease transmitted by sand flies.

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Allan believes that by carefully integrating available tools and strategies, these extra touches can make all the difference in offering the greatest level of support to people caught up in conflicts and often displaced and in

#WorldMalariaDay Tweets



## New test revolutionises fight against malaria

In order to successfully eradicate malaria, you need to know where to find it. New technology could hold the key to identifying the hidden enemy and stopping it in its tracks.

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## The hardest task is yet to come

The fight against malaria is far from over. There are still an astonishing 214 million cases of malaria each year and more than 400,000 deaths as result.

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