GlaxoSmithKline is a science-led global health-care company that researches and develops a broad range of innovative medicines, vaccines and consumer healthcare products used by millions of people around the world.

ABOUT THE WINNING PROGRAM
GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) is partnering with FHI 360, a global health nonprofit, to mobilize communities in two districts of Ghana to improve malaria prevention. The program works with local partners to train community health workers to improve their ability to save lives through early identification of malaria. The project also supplies thousands of bed nets and promotes health-seeking behaviors at the community level, working in tandem with national malaria control programs and non-governmental organizations to harness their local knowledge and expertise.

GSK and FHI 360 work with community-based groups such as Mothers against Malaria Clubs, which conduct door-to-door advocacy campaigns. The program has also built capacity among Licensed Chemical Sellers (LCSs)—often the first port of call for rural populations—to help identify and refer serious malaria cases. The program has strengthened links between the community and health facilities by creating a referral system.

GSK’s and FHI 360’s efforts contributed to an increase in health-seeking behavior among the population of the two districts. Hospital attendance increased by 26.8% and 17.1% in the two districts. The availability of malaria treatment drugs increased from 39.1% to over 90% among trained LCSs. Through the program’s capacity-building activities, 130 community health workers received refresher health trainings and previously unavailable health data is now being integrated into national health system interventions.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH
• 10,000 mosquito nets were distributed to pregnant women and children, but GSK and FHI 360 recognized that nets alone were not enough.
• Net distribution was preceded by malaria-related advocacy and education at schools, religious centers and health centers. This led to greater awareness of symptoms, preventive measures and how/where to seek treatment.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP
• The emphasis on community ownership is crucial to the program’s sustainability. Through technical training and peer education about health-seeking behavior, local stakeholders—such as chiefs, women’s groups and health workers—have been empowered to implement the program beyond the funding period.
• The Ghanaian government was involved in the design and planning of the program every step of the way. Health data collected by local partners has helped to enhance the Ghana Health Service’s policy and programming decision-making in order to benefit particularly vulnerable populations such as women and children.