

A-29: Bed-nets, sleeping behaviour and malaria incidence in a malarious area

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This paper is based on data collected through a test and control experiment on the use of bed-nets for malaria control in a malarious population in Kataragama. The experiment was carried out in three sets of test and control villages comprising 3,964 population dispersed in 930 families. The bed-nets were introduced following an ethnographic survey on the type of sleeping unit (i.e. bed, floor or a hut outside the house) and a house-to-house survey on the number of sleeping units per each type. Following the intervention the incidence of malaria in the test areas was drastically reduced, and the pre-intervention high incidence of malaria among the males has been reduced showing no significant difference in malaria incidence between the sexes. The analysis of age and sex categories in relation to malaria incidence and sleeping behaviours over the six months since the introduction of bed-nets indicates that (a) there has been a change in sleeping patterns in the test households consequent to the introduction of bed-nets, and (b) these changes are positively correlated with patterns of change in malaria incidence at the

These results suggest that a further, significant degree of malaria control can be achieved in Sri Lanka, if impregnated bed-nets are used.