Zambia National Malaria Indicator Survey 2015: Data collection, processing, and results

Objectives
The specific objectives of the 2015 Zambia National Malaria Indicator Survey (MIS) were:

- To assess malaria parasite prevalence among children under five years of age.
- To assess the status of anaemia among the target populations (in particular, children 6–36 months and women 15–49 years).
- To assess disparities in malaria intervention coverage, malaria parasite prevalence, and anaemia prevalence among the surveyed population by location and other background characteristics.

Sampling plan
- Two-stage stratified cluster sampling was used to select the sample.
- Clusters from the 2010 Census selected by design characteristics.
- Rural/urban strata with an oversample in Luapula Province.
- Households in selected clusters were listed and then randomly selected.
- Total sample size ~3,875 households.

Findings
Notable progress has been made in the distribution and use of ITNs, as well as the scale-up of IRS and IPTp. As malaria has become a lesser contributor to fevers, the use of anti-malarials has declined slightly.

Conclusions
- The 2015 MIS reflected the benefits of the 2014 mass distribution of ITNs. However, sufficient ITNs were still not available to ensure full coverage of all sleeping spaces.
- Despite the high coverage of ITNs, there was not a drop in malaria prevalence by microscopy.
- Most provinces could further expand IRS and successes in Eastern and Southern Province show the advantage of this strategy.
- IPTp coverage of two and three doses continued to improve between 2012 and 2015 and Zambia remains exceptional in this area.
- More nuanced, informative, and appealing messaging is needed to communicate the advantages of sleeping under nets.
- Further interventions are needed to reduce prevalence in the highest burden areas and drive towards elimination in other areas.