



Tana Netting Co., Ltd.

14 May 2007

Philip Coticelli
Africa Fighting Malaria
1050 Seventeenth Street, NW Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036 USA

Dear Mr. Coticelli:

Tana Netting Co., Ltd., the manufacturer of DawaPlus® LNs, has been following with interest the recent debate prompted by AFM's paper, "WHOPES and Its Impact on Long-Lasting Insecticidal Net Availability." We applaud AFM's willingness to raise these important issues affecting the malaria community and look forward to participating in a constructive dialogue with all partners to come up with a solution that is in the best interests of the community. Specifically, Tana Netting would like to make the following observations:

"Oversupply" One argument being floated is that an oversupply of LNs currently exists and that no new products are needed. Although limited availability of LLINs attracts discussion among consumers about ways to increase supply, excess supply hardly nurtures the same concern. In other industries such as electronics or automobiles, excess supply results in generating benefits for consumers as products are improved and tailored to suit changing tastes, needs and technology. Excess supply is never a valid economic reason to keep competitors out of a market. The same holds true for public health goods like medicines; if a perceived "oversupply" of the market discouraged pharmaceutical companies from introducing new HIV/AIDS or malaria medicines existing products would remain extremely expensive and quickly become vulnerable to resistance.

The "oversupply" argument misses the point, and the international community should focus more on the real issue: improving access to vital public health goods through increased competition. Encouraging competition in this industry is more than just about access to supply, it is the promotion and development of new livelihoods for thousands of people worldwide, the constant improvement of tools for public health professionals and the protection of vulnerable groups in developing nations.

Procurement agencies should take action Tana Netting fully supports the role of WHOPES in developing standards to help governments and organizations that lack adequate testing capacity to make informed procurement decisions. We commend WHO's reminder to the community that it is "*not a regulatory agency*" and that "the absence of WHO recommendations should not be a constraint for the procurement of [LNs undergoing evaluation] by national programmes, provided their safety and efficacy have been adequately assessed by national authorities."¹

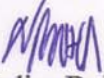
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Major international donors and procurement agencies do have access to the technical capacity and financial resources to test and evaluate the safety and efficacy of LNs. The onus, therefore is on these organizations to make informed decisions that will result in the best use of taxpayer and donor funds. We believe that the potential cost savings and improvements to service and delivery times that would result from increased competition greatly outweigh any outlays these organizations would have to make to evaluate new LN products, as illustrated by the Uganda example in your paper

In fact, two agencies – USAID and UNICEF – have decided to procure DawaPlus® on the basis of third-party trials² conducted by reputable testing centers. As a result, the organizations have benefited from price savings and improved delivery terms.

We call on more organizations to follow USAID and UNICEF's suit and allow LN manufacturers who are undergoing the WHOPES evaluation process and who can demonstrate the safety and efficacy of their products to participate in procurement tenders.

Sincerely,



Nadim B. Mohr
Director



¹ http://www.fightingmalaria.org/pdfs/WHOPES_Response.pdf

² See test results at <http://www.tananetting.com/products/documentation.htm>