Rick Mercer & Plan Canada's Spread the Net campaign urge Canadians to join the global fight against malaria

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Spread the Net

Toronto, ON (rushPRnews) 04/25/14 — You would think the world's deadliest creature would be larger than a paper clip. It's not, according to Plan Canada. This World Malaria Day, Plan Canada's Spread the Net campaign is educating Canadians on the deadly nature of the mosquito and the global fight against malaria.

"We're all terrified of shark attacks, grizzly bears and snakes," says Rick Mercer, Plan Canada's Spread the Net ambassador and co-founder of the campaign. "But the mosquito is actually the deadliest creature in the world. Each year, fatal diseases spread by mosquitoes kill 2 million people across the globe. Over 627,000 of these deaths are due to malaria, a deadly but preventable disease that kills one child every 60 seconds."

Malaria is a preventable disease transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. 90% of malaria-related deaths occur in Africa, mostly among children under the age of five. An insecticide-treated bed net is the most effective way of preventing malaria, and one bed net can protect two

people for up to three years. Since 2007, Spread the Net has provided over 563,000 long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets to children and their families across Africa, protecting the lives of some 2.5 million children and adults.

“We’ve made remarkable progress in the global fight against malaria,” says Rosemary McCarney, Plan Canada President and CEO. “Since 2000, the number of people dying from malaria around the world has fallen by 42%, saving an estimated 3.3 million lives. 90% of those lives saved, 3 million, were children under the age of five. That’s a global success story that speaks to the effectiveness of bed nets and other malaria prevention activities. And yet, each minute, a child is *still* dying from this preventable disease, so we need to keep fighting.”

April 25th is World Malaria Day. On this day each year, people around the world take part in a wide range of activities to draw attention to the deadly nature of malaria and call for action to prevent the disease.

Canadians are urged to join the global fight against malaria and to take action by donating a $10 bed net to a family in Africa. Visit Plan Canada’s Spread the Net campaign at **spreadthenet.ca** or join the conversation online at **#spreadthenet**

About Plan

Founded in 1937, Plan is one of the world’s oldest and largest international development agencies, working in partnership with millions of people around the world to end global poverty. Not for profit, independent and inclusive of all faiths and cultures, Plan has only one agenda: to improve the lives of children. **Because I am a Girl** is Plan’s global initiative to end gender inequality, promote girls’ rights and lift millions of girls – and everyone around them – out of poverty. Visit plancanada.ca and becauseiamagirl.ca for more information.

About Spread the Net

Spread the Net is a grassroots campaign led by Plan Canada designed to motivate, educate and inspire Canadians to help end preventable malaria deaths by raising funds and awareness to support the distribution of bed nets to children and families in Africa.*Spread the Net* was founded in 2006 by Belinda Stronach, P.C., and Rick Mercer. Visit spreadthenet.ca for more information.

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