



AFRICA/NIGER - Prevention against malaria for more than 180,000 children

Niamey (Agenzia Fides) - For the first time in Niger a prevention campaign has started against malaria which involves the treatment of children between three months and 5 years of age with a specific treatment called chemio prevention. The therapy was recommended in 2012 by WHO for seasonal malaria as an additional strategy for the prevention of malaria in areas of the sub-Sahel region of Africa during the season of intense transmission, before the arrival of the rainy season which causes the re-production of mosquitoes in stagnant water. To date, over 184,000 children have received the administration of the first of the three planned doses. In addition, nearly 2,000 municipal workers who collaborate with the NGO Doctors Without Borders, promoters of the campaign, visit the villages in the area, trying to raise awareness about the importance to protect themselves from the disease, dispense the medicine and encourage parents so that their children receive the necessary 12 doses.

Already last year, DWB carried out a pilot program similar to that of Niger in Mali, where over 200,000 healthy children received treatment with promising results. A 65% decline in the number of malaria cases was in fact recorded.

However, even if this strategy reduces both mortality and the number of infections, the priority is to continue to increase the dose of mosquito nets and insecticide, diagnosis and treatment of the pandemic. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 05/09/2013)