

# Protecting homes with netting window screens can reduce malaria parasite infection

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A typical example of improved housing beside a mosquito-producing rice field in rural Tanzania, constructed using bricks, timber and iron sheeting plus netting screens fitted over the windows. Credit: IHI

In an article published in *Lancet Planetary Health*, a team from Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) and the Ifakara Health Institute (IHI), provides evidence that even window screens with no insecticide suppressed mosquito populations and dramatically reduced malaria prevalence in the Tanzanian city of Dar es Salaam.

Led by LSTM's Dr. Gerry Killeen, the study team has also worked with local and national government partners for over a decade to develop

practical affordable implementation systems for community-based application of environmentally-friendly biological insecticides that selectively kill mosquito larvae in puddles, drains, river fringes, ponds and other sundry stagnant water bodies.

Dr. Prosper Chaki, who co-led the study, said "We are pleased that our efforts over all these years have culminated in government-funded scale up of larviciding, first across all of Dar es Salaam, and then to all major urban centres in Tanzania. Also, our government has invested domestic treasury funding into construction of a manufacturing plant for biological control products in Kibaha, just outside the city, which is now fully operational." However, previous external analyses of the first large-scale pilot in Dar es Salaam indicated that larviciding only reduced malaria prevalence by 21%. Furthermore, this previous analysis provided no explanation for the much larger reductions of malaria prevalence that occurred over the study period, which steadily declined from >28% in 2004 to

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