**Sleeping under an insecticide treated mosquito net as a pregnant woman in SSA should not be debatable**

By Rachael Nagaddya, 21st August 2025.

Malaria remains endemic across entire populations in most SSA countries but disproportionately affects pregnant women, making it a significant public health problem. Malaria in pregnancy is one of the causes of negative birth outcomes such as low birth weight, fetal loss, retarded growth, maternal anaemia and premature births. To control the adverse effects of malaria, the WHO recommends intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancy with sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine, use of insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs), and effective case management of clinical malaria and anaemia.

However, sleeping under an ITN remains the primary vector control tool in most malaria endemic countries yet, latest data shows the percentage of pregnant women in several SSA who sleep under these nets remains critically below 80 percent. This leaves the odds of contracting malaria higher among pregnant women who do not sleep under an ITN and the benefits to the health of pregnant women and their unborn children not tapped into.