

# Tony Blair Faith Foundation

## Newsroom

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### **Tony Blair Visits Pioneering Interfaith Malaria Initiative in Nigeria**



Tony Blair, ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo, and Nigerian religious leaders demonstrate use of bednets against malaria in Kuje, Nigeria with a volunteer and her child

On Saturday 20 February Tony Blair participated first hand, in the work of the largest Muslim and Christian alliance in Africa led by the Nigerian Inter-Faith Action Association (NIFAA), with funding support from the Nigerian government, the World Bank, the Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty, (CIFA) and other international funders. NIFAA will train 300,000 Muslim and Christian faith leaders to support the Nigerian government's malaria eradication efforts.

He also met with Alhaji Muhammed Sa'ad Abubakar III, the Sultan of Sokoto and with his Grace, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, John Onaiyekan NIFAA's two co-Chairs.

At Kuje Town Hall, Mr. Blair engaged in the first state training for 200 Nigerian religious leaders from the Federal Capital Territory. The training of the faith leaders focused on the causes and prevention of malaria and the role of faith leaders in working with their congregants to deliver key malaria prevention messages about how to turn net ownership into net use to their congregants. The training session was led by NIFAA in partnership with the National Malaria Control Programme, the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) and CIFA. Tony Blair took the time to support this pioneering initiative because his Faith Foundation shares its goals for systematic action and results

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“It is fantastic to see the great training work being carried out by NIFAA. It is the work of Muslim and Christian faith leaders on the ground in Nigeria - multi-faith collaboration about shared goals - that is at the heart of the work of my Faith Foundation. When faith communities collaborate and work together for justice and human development there is a double pay off: things get done and respect and understanding between them grows. I hope that this work will be replicated in other parts of the developing world.

“This model of inter-faith action can be readily adopted to join the faith and public sectors in other developing countries, if governments and funders are willing to provide external support to make this a reality. Thank you to CIFA and its partner organisations for all your efforts to make this event such a success,” said Tony Blair

To date, NIFAA represents the most systematic engagement of the faith community anywhere in the world working in coordinated action against poverty and disease and is a powerful example of how all faith communities can work together on a common health goal beginning with malaria. The model illustrates the enormous potential for faith communities’ integration into national healthcare systems across the world.

