



Mekong RBM IEC Project News

May 2005



In this issue of the newsletter Dr Phoupasong, Head of Provincial Malaria Station in Attapeu reports the results of using the malaria pictorial cards, and Dr Boukheng Thavrin, Chief of IEC Unit, National Malaria Centre (CNM), Cambodia gives us an update on the national malaria control programme in Koh Kong Province.

During the review and planning workshop in malaria control at the end of April 2005 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, Dr Phoupasong reported that the provincial and district malaria stations have distributed malaria pictorial cards in conjunction with village training on ACT and village visits by mobile health teams. All districts staff have been trained by the provincial team in how to use the card sets. The district teams distributed three sets of cards to each village along with a short training session for village heads and village volunteers. Here is some feedback from district malaria staff and health mobile teams.

- People really like the malaria pictorial cards. They have drawn people's attention.
- People can relate to the photo use in the cards. Photos make it more real to them.
- The cards encourage people to engage in discussion.
- The pictorial cards can be used before starting a village meeting, which is a good time to disseminate malaria information. They can also draw people in for a meeting.
- Children have great interest in the pictorial cards. They have spread messages on malaria to their friends and family members.
- These card sets are easily used compared to other malaria educational materials that were received earlier.
- Training in the use of these cards is easy with simple instructions. It takes around half an hour to practice and learn how to use them.

Dr Phoupasong told the IEC development team that she would like them to develop the card concept for other malaria control issues, for example ACT and RDT. She said it would help people to understand about these issues better.



Dr Phoupasong likes malaria pictorial card sets, as they are easily used and encourage people's participation in malaria education

Koh Kong is a province in the southwest of Cambodia, sharing a border with Thailand. It is a hyper-endemic area for malaria. Many Cambodians who live in this province like to go into the forest to hunt wild animals and to cut down trees to clear land for farming. CNM selected 2,000 village health volunteers (VHVs) among 1,000 villages from 15 provinces, including Koh Kong, to train in malaria prevention and control. About 1,700 of these VHVs had already been trained in malaria health education by Malaria Provincial Supervisors and they have been serving their communities.



Forest in Koh Kong Province



In the training session, VHVs learned about the cause, prevention and treatment of malaria, how to do impregnate bednets and how to educate their community members. Results from the post-test have shown that VHVs have better knowledge of malaria prevention and control. They have also gained skills in bednet impregnation and in conducting health education. Dr Thavrin stressed the importance of impregnating bednets properly so that the insecticide will remain effective.



Dr. Suth Thong Phan from IEC Unit, CNM is conducting a training session with VHVs in Munkulkiri.

There are many diseases prevalent during the wet season. Dengue Fever is one that puts many people in hospital. This year there have been many cases reported in Thailand, with 12 deaths. In Lao PDR there have been 550 cases with 6 deaths, including a serious outbreak in Champasak Province (Vientiane Times, May 18, 2005).

Dengue fever is an urban problem while malaria is a rural problem. Bednets are an effective prevention method for both diseases. Whether you live in the city or in the country, you should use a bednet every time you go to sleep.

