



Happy New Year. Hope you had a nice holiday.

Following the IEC participatory development training workshop in early November 2003, all of the IEC teams have started to conduct IEC production workshops with target populations. Here is an update of what have been happening among IEC country teams. Mr Prayuth Sudathip, IEC team leader for Thailand, reported that the team has organized a workshop with villagers, village volunteers, local health staff, school teachers and school children to produce IEC materials. The participants worked in groups and have come up with materials that suit the needs of the communities. The participants produced drafts in both Karen and Thai languages for posters, calendars and leaflets for communities and jigsaw puzzle for school children.

Mr Un Bunphoeun and Dr Thavrin Buakheng, Chief of CNM IEC unit are now in Rattanakiri Province working with target communities to develop IEC materials. The IEC team is working with the populations by discussing their malaria situation then letting them come up with different scenarios by doing role-plays. The role-plays are being recorded and will be transformed into printed and audiovisual materials. The IEC team members feel that by involving target population in producing materials, they have a much better understanding of how the community perceive and manage malaria issue in their villages. More information will be provided in the February project news.

The Lao IEC team has just finished collecting additional data from two more Lave villages in Attapeu. One of the villages is situated in a remote area and the other is not very far from the district town, but has no road access and so is hard to reach during the wet season. Dr Sudsady from CMPE, the focal person for the IEC project, has provided preliminary findings. They have found that there is good bednet coverage and the majority have purchased bednets from the market. Villagers have basic knowledge of malaria, which they learned from village volunteers and health staff. Village elders have a strong influence on village decision-making. VHV normally give health education during village meetings by using posters and health staff talks about malaria during bednet dipping. The team has found that many people in these two villages have radio receivers and they like to listen to early morning news programme before going out to the fields.

In December 2003, the Project Coordinator facilitated an IEC participatory development training workshop that was organized for IEC project team members by Yunnan Institute of Parasitic Diseases. A 4-day workshop was organized in Ximeng County where members of





Mr Luo Hongbo, (center front row) Deputy Director of Ximeng County Administrative Office and workshop participants

the IEC team from YIPD, Ximeng Country CDC, Zhongke Township Hospital, and staff from the Health Unlimited East Asia Office participated. The aims of the training workshop were to increase IEC team members' knowledge of participatory IEC development; to identify main messages, appropriate IEC materials and communication channels based on situation analysis and field research; and to develop a plan of action for IEC materials development.

The Yunnan IEC team members gained a better understanding of stages and steps of behaviour development, setting specific communication objectives, steps in message development, the importance of pre-testing materials, and monitoring and evaluation. Based on the field research findings, the male labour-aged population, along with family members, was identified as a main target population. Team members identified village chiefs and village health volunteers as the main channels to educate and mobilize the population for malaria prevention and control. As the majority of villages have electricity, and 60% of village chiefs have received TVs and VCD players from the government to be used for village administrative purposes, the IEC team decided to develop inter-active video to be used to educate and mobilize villagers to take action to improve their own health.

Mr Xu Jianwei, the IEC team leader, received feedback from the participants, who said that this was the first time for all team members to learn about the participatory approach to involving target populations in the IEC development programme. This was also the first time that they were able to participate by giving opinions and comments during the workshop, rather than being passive listeners and having to memorize the whole thing. They appreciated their opinions and comments being taken into account in programme development.



Participants are identifying target populations, communication channels and appropriate material.

Ms Xia Min, the focal malaria person from YIPD commented, "Through the training, we gained a lot of knowledge about IEC materials development. We identified main messages for IEC materials and appropriate IEC channels. The workshop increased our knowledge of

participatory IEC materials development. It is a good idea to work with target population to develop materials. It also strengthened our capacity to develop and conduct IEC pre-testing. We have gained more knowledge on how to develop IEC materials appropriate to the identified target populations in Ximeng, Yunnan, China. Finally, we developed an implementation plan for IEC materials development.”

Xu Jianwei has informed us that the Chinese Journal of Tropical Medicine has accepted three articles from the IEC team for publication. The article “Surveys on Potential Partners of IEC for Malaria Control and Perceptions toward Malaria in Wa and Hani ethnic groups” will be published in the February 2004 issue. In April 2004, they will publish “Wa people’s perception of malaria in Ximeng, Yunnan” and in June 2004 they will publish “Current situation, attitude and scaling up obstacles toward usage of bednets in Wa ethnic communities”.

We have been working with different ethnic groups, which have different languages, customs and costumes, and different beliefs and practices relating to malaria prevention. But they also have many things in common such as living in remote areas with no easy access to public health services. Nevertheless, all of them want to have a healthy life. Many of them, however, do not really know or understand what they can do to improve their health situation. We hope the RBM IEC Project is contributing to improving their well being by educating and mobilizing them. Here are some pictures of people we are working with to develop IEC materials and guidelines. You may be able to spot who is who.



Raglai
Kreung
Wa
Karen
Lave



During 2-4 February 2004, there will be a technical consultation meeting. The objectives of the meeting are: bringing all country teams together to share their field IEC development experience and learn from each other ways to improve quality of the materials; increasing the IEC country teams' knowledge of how to design appropriate artwork for their print materials; and improving and finalizing their draft materials for field-testing with target populations.

As the festive season continues with Chinese and Vietnamese New Year celebrations, the Mekong RBM IEC Project team wishes you a Happy, Healthy and Wealthy New Year.

Chúc Mừng Năm Mới



新春快乐

