



Mekong RBM IEC Project News

October 2005



In this issue, we will update the IEC activities from Lao PDR and Cambodia and provide some website access into information related to malaria control and prevention.

Lao IEC team are finalizing the production of the IEC materials for malaria control supported by GFATM round 1. In collaboration with Lao National Radio, the production team translated the audio malaria educational material that was developed with the Brau and Taliang ethnic groups in Attapeu Province into the Khmu and Hmong ethnic languages. The main messages in this audio CD/cassette are promoting the use of ITN, encouraging people to have their bednets impregnated annually and seeking treatment from village health volunteers or local health personnel when fever persists. In addition to the original version, the team developed malaria songs in Khmu and Hmong languages by using traditional rhythms. These songs will help people learn about malaria prevention in more active and enjoyable ways. CMPE is planning to distribute these audio CD/cassettes to all communities in project areas and to local radio stations and mass organizations.

Audio material has proved to be a popular educational and entertainment medium in many setting and communities. It is a cheap form of entertainment, to which many people have access. Local radio stations and the village public loudspeaker system are willing to collaborate in disseminating the information. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam IEC teams have all developed audio cassettes and CDs.

The team has designed two new posters to reinforce and encourage people to use ITN and seek early treatment (using RDT and ACT). These two posters use photographs of real people. These people live in a village where malaria

was very common. Although malaria has decreased since the introduction of ITN five years ago, the villagers are still very active and put focus on malaria prevention. There is annual bednet impregnation, which takes place before Lao New Year, around mid April.



The results from pre-testing of these two posters with communities in three provinces are very positive. Villagers can relate to the pictures and messages, and see themselves in the posters. The posters are interesting and attractive, and they grab people's attention. The CMPE is planning to distribute them to all villages in the control areas.

The pictorial card set is one of the main educational materials. The experience from three southern provinces (Attapeu, Xekong and Salavanh) shows that local health staff and village health volunteers find the cards easy to use. They have also found that the pictorial cards give people a better understanding of malaria prevention. NMCP



Pictorial card during a training session

is planning to produce them in quantity and distribute them to all village health volunteers.

Before distribution, all village health volunteers will be trained in how to use them effectively.

We have received an update from Dr Thavrin, Cambodia. All of the village health volunteers in the target areas are attending three-day training courses in malaria health education and communication skills. At the same time, the central IEC team is developing a comprehensive system to monitor progress.



Here is some malaria information that you may be interested in. You can get further information by visiting the websites listed below.

Fighting Malaria with DDT in South Africa

Reported by Mahlatse Gallens, BBC News
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4264374.stm>

In Dzumeri in Limpopo province, men in blue overalls are readying themselves for the malaria season. Armed for battle against one of Africa's deadly diseases, they brandish canisters filled with the deadly insecticide DDT.

At first, the people were apprehensive

about having their walls sprayed and locked their doors every time the men in blue appeared. But nowadays they get a 90% coverage rate.

Their success is pinned on educational drives that include radio talk shows, posters and brochures in local languages and door-to-door campaigning.

Despite the use of the chemical being banned in many countries over the damage it can cause to the environment and health concerns, South Africa says it has enabled it to drastically reduce malaria incidents in the past four years.

Double Standards on Disease Control

by Paul Driessen

<http://www.renewamerica.us/columns/hughes/050923>

Did you know that in 2004 alone, malaria sent more African children to shallow graves than any other infectious disease – three times as many as HIV/AIDS, according to UNICEF. Year after year, this silent, vicious executioner infects 400 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, kills up to 2 million (half of them children), leaves tens of thousands with permanent brain damage, and costs the region \$12 billion in lost economic production. It sickens 100 million more in Asian and Latin American nations.

"From colonial times until the 1940s, malaria was the American disease," says Dr. Robert Desowitz, professor of tropical medicine at the University of North Carolina. At the dawn of the twentieth century, it thrived from New York to Florida, from North Carolina to California. Up to 7 million Americans were stricken by it every year until the mid-1920s, and 3,900 died in 1936. For centuries, it struck down people of all ages in England, Holland, Italy and other parts of Europe. But by the early 1950s, it was gone, and all but forgotten. How was this possible? We used DDT, window screens and other measures to gradually eradicate the malaria parasite from its human and insect hosts. Today, we still spray pesticides (mostly by airplanes) to control mosquitoes and the West Nile virus that some carry. But we apply a vastly different standard when it comes to poor developing countries that are still wracked by malaria."

It's time to see this for what it actually is – a human rights atrocity of vast proportions. Only World War II killed more people than malaria has since 1972, when EPA Administrator William Ruckelshaus ignored the findings of his own scientific panel, banned DDT in the United States and began this tragedy.

