



Mekong RBM IEC Project News

August 2004



Participatory Approach - All the IEC country teams said that a participatory approach is a good method to develop IEC strategy and materials. It allows them to get to know the needs of their target population better. Involving the target population in the development process, including producing the materials, will help them to come up with appropriate and friendly educational materials that can be utilized well in the communities.

Most of the country IEC teams are in the final stage of IEC materials production and are spending most of their time in the field working with target populations to produce and pre-test the educational materials. We would like to give you a quick update on each country's IEC materials development.

Thailand has finished their production phase and the materials are now being field-tested with the target population. The malaria education materials that the team developed aim to increase the knowledge and awareness of the target population in malaria prevention and encourage them to seek early and appropriate treatment. The materials also aim to increase number of target population sleeping under bednets. The evaluation of field testing will be conducted around September 2004.

In Yunnan, China, draft versions of materials have been produced. Ximeng County Health Department played an important role in the materials production. The Wa people have been involved in the development and production of educational video and other materials. Schoolteachers have provided many ideas for the development of the school "buddy system", which is a method of educating school children and using them to disseminate malaria information to their families and communities. Local health staff actively participated in the development of a malaria educational flipchart. All the people who were involved in the IEC development said that this is the first time that their need and ideas are being listened to and taken into account in the development of educational tools. The IEC materials that are being



A Wa lady is giving useful information for IEC materia. development during a workshop.

developed could be easily adapted for use with other ethnic groups and rural communities in Yunnan and other international border counties.

Cambodia is in the final stage of the materials production. The target population, the Kreung, has been strongly involved in the production. Video, songs, a flipchart and a booklet for health educators have been pre-tested, revised and edited a few times to make sure that the content and format of the materials can be easily understood and encourages the audience to take appropriate action.

Vietnam is in the middle stage of the IEC materials production. The National Institute of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology (NIMPE) is taking a leading role in development of the materials. The Provincial Malaria Centre and Radio and Television Broadcasting Department in Khanh Hoa Province are also strongly involved in the production of the malaria education materials. Materials production workshops are being organized with target population to gather more ideas and produce draft materials. Technical staff in each field will then edit the draft, pre-test, revise, pre-test and finalize the materials accordingly.



In Myanmar, Dr Maung Maung Lin, the national IEC specialist has been leading the central and district team members in the production of malaria educational materials. Basic health staff, primary school teachers, local pharmacies, local mass media and communities have been participating in the production of the materials. The district administrative authority has also given good support to the team when going to work in the field. All the people involved in the IEC development and production have said that it is the first time that they have been involved in development and have had a say in the production of health educational materials. These will be good materials to use in their area.

In Lao PDR, all of the educational materials have been pretested, revised, pretested and finalized. The final touches are now being added. This is the first time that malaria IEC materials have taken the step to involve target populations in the development and

production of the materials. The Brau and Taliang people that were involved in the production have given a lot of useful information to help the IEC team to come up with appropriate materials. The Mekong RBM IEC Initiative is also part of the national malaria control strategy to focus on ethnic and rural communities, so the IEC materials that are being developed will also be adopted for other geographical areas according to their needs.



A Taliang lady is demonstrating appropriate way to repair bednet that has holes.

The Mekong RBM Initiative was launched in March 1999. Many malaria partners and representatives from the Greater Mekong Sub-region countries participated and discussed malaria prevention and control. During the meeting, participants also discussed how to improve the control coverage by reaching ethnic groups, hard to reach communities, and how to increase the population's knowledge of malaria prevention and control and how to mobilize the community to take action. The MK RBM IEC Initiative was launched in October 2002 with the support by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The first phase of the MK RBM IEC will end in December 2004 with IEC strategy and educational packages, and with skilled staff that can take it into the second phase to implement and evaluation the impact. We expect the second phase of the MK RBM IEC Initiative to start in the beginning of 2005 to ensure continuity.

