



Mekong RBM IEC Project News

March 2005



The Malaria control programme has been moving forward as ever with support from different agencies, for example, Global Fund for Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNICEF, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Non Governmental Organizations and World Health Organization. With all this support, and through the efforts of National Malaria Control Programmes, malaria incidence decreased through global and regional approaches promoting the use of insecticide treated bednets, and encouraging early diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Despite the success, malaria remains a major public health problem in the hill and forest areas. This is due to lack of effective preventive and curative care strategies for people who live and work in those areas. These are the priority groups for the Mekong RBM Initiative.

In this month's Mekong RBM News, Xu Jianwei, Technical Officer and IEC Specialist from Yunnan Institute of Parasitic Disease provides some information from the GFATM supervision visit from 17 February to 7 March. He had discussions with the Directors of all CDC Counties about appropriate malaria educational tools to use with ethnic communities.

Nguyen Ngoc Thuy, in an update from Vietnam, gives us an account of the workshop organized by the Khan Hoa Provincial Health Department, NIMPE and WHO, to disseminate malaria educational materials and update project implementation. Representatives from as far as Ho Chi Minh City and Quy Nhon IMPEs also participated in the workshop.

VCD, a Cost-effective Educational Tool for Malaria Education among Ethnic Minorities in China

by Xu Jianwei

After the Chinese Lunar New Year, the Greatest Festival in China, the GFATM-supported programme conducted a field supervision visit to all counties along the China-Vietnam, Sino-Lao and Sino-Myanmar borders. Mr XU Jianwei, Technical Officer and IEC Specialist from YIPD was also a member of the GFATM team. The field supervision team travelled for more than 3,600 kilometres between 17 February and 3 March 2005.



Student excise books and brochures developed by GFATM supported control programme team



Health education is one of the strategies in the GFATM-supported project in China, where children, community members and migrant workers are the target groups. A set of messages and illustrations were developed by the National Office of the Global Fund Malaria Project and printed on student exercise books, brochures and posters. Up to now, the National office and Yunnan Provincial office have delivered 600,000 copies of these materials to the target communities. The supervision team has found that many of these printed materials were put up on the walls of village houses, village health posts, township hospitals and County CDC offices.



Posters are put on the wall of a house to remind people about malaria prevention

The project provides anti-malarial drugs free of charge to poor malaria patients. It is a new initiative to encourage people to come for appropriate treatment. The message that free anti-malaria drugs are available for the poor is also being delivered to the target populations.



In Funing County, which shares a border with Guangxi Province and Vietnam, Dr Deng Jiaxiang, who is responsible for GF malaria project, said that training village health workers and giving health education to villagers by using the video compact disc (VCD) would work well. It is better to use the malaria VCD, developed by Mekong RBM IEC project in Ximeng, than to give lectures and talks. He will make enough copies of the malaria VCD and dub them into the appropriate ethnic language for distribution to target communities.

At the China-Myanmar border, Dr Xu Hao, the Deputy Director of Menghai County Health Bureau, attended the IEC dissemination workshop in January 2005. He said that they liked the malaria video developed by the RBM IEC team.

He requested collaboration from YIPD to dub the video into the ethnic languages so that they could use it in their county. Dr. Xu Hao said, “We have used our own budget to dub the malaria VCD into Hani and Dai ethnical languages so that we can educate ethnic communities on malaria issues. We used some of our funds to pay for the dubbing, but copying a VCD is only about US\$ 1 per disc. This video can be played again and again on different occasions. The video draws people’s attention as it combines sound, pictures and words.” He also said using VCD for health education would be very cost-effective.

Most malaria counties in Yunnan like the VCD developed by the IEC project and want to make copies for use. In Mengla County at the China-Lao border, Dr Jiang Yingchun, the director would like a copy of the VCD in Hani and Dai ethnic languages so that he can arrange for the county TV station to broadcast it.



The Wa people in remote mountainous villages use small generators to power TV, VCD players and household lighting.

In the countryside of China, after a hard day’s work in the field, watching TV or video is the principle amusement for villagers. TV sets and VCD players are not expensive in China: a second-hand TV set or a small new one costs less than US\$100, a VCD player costs US\$30-40, and a VCD disc is only about a dollar.

That’s why VCD players and TV sets are always available in every village. Even in a very remote village, with no TV signals and no electricity supply, you can still find 2 or 3 VCD players and TV sets. People in remote areas also need entertainment as well as food and clothes. If there is no electricity, they buy a generator, and if there is no TV signal, they play video instead. After dinner, many people sit together to watch a video again and again. The video, with its combination of sound, pictures and words, would grab people’s attention. It provides essential malaria information and entertains people at the same time. That is why using video for health education with ethnic minorities is not just feasible, but is also cost-effective in China.

IEC Dissemination Workshop in Khanh Hoa

By Nguyen Ngoc Thuy, WHO- VTV

“The malaria IEC materials produced in Khanh Hoa are appreciated as culturally appropriate and understood by the locals”.

This was the consensus among participants to the IEC dissemination workshop held in Nha Trang, 24 February 2005. The workshop also marked the end of the first phase of the IEC RBM project funded by ADB and executed by WHO and NIMPE in two communes in Khanh Vinh district, Khanh Hoa province. The project team had produced a number of IEC materials for the Raglai, an ethnic group with a total population of 72,000 people living in the South Central coastal provinces of Khanh Hoa and Ninh Thuan.

The participants include representatives of Khanh Phu and Khanh Trung communes, the project area, the district of Khanh Vinh, the provincial centre for control of malaria and iodine-deficiency disorders, Quy Nhon IMPE, Ho Chi Minh City IMPE and NIMPE, Khanh Hoa radio and television station and the Malaria research station in Khanh Phu.

Speaking at the workshop, Dr. Le Xuan Hung, head of the Epidemiological Department of NIMPE reviewed the activities conducted within the framework of the project and steps leading to the production of IEC materials. He appreciated the efforts of the project by adopting a participatory approach (bottom up approach) for IEC strategy and educational materials development, which he said could be applied to work with other ethnic groups here in Vietnam.

Dr. Tran Cong Dai from WHO/VTN pointed to the important role of IEC in malaria control in Vietnam particularly among the ethnic groups living on the fringes of the forests. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Thuy, reviewed some materials produced by the Mekong-rim countries such as flipcharts, posters and video programme produced for the Wa group by the Yunnan team. The TV and Radio spots produced by the Khanh Hoa radio and television in Raglai, the advocacy Radio spots made by the National Radio The Voice of Vietnam, the flipcharts entitled "*The story of Xumia*" and "*The story of two families*" were presented to the workshop. Earlier, 10,000 posters complete with 2005 calendar have been printed and distributed to Raglai families in the province of Khanh Hoa.



IEC Dissemination workshop- Khanh Hoa 24 February 2005

Dr. Trieu Nguyen Trung, Director of Quy Nhon IMPE stressed the need to focus also on the message about fever. He said that the selection of the

Raglai group, which has a medium-sized population and a high level of poverty, is a good choice. For his part, Dr. Nguyen Quoc Hung, Director of Ho Chi Minh City IMPE welcomed the innovative approach in the making of IEC materials. He said he was impressed with the steps in the production process. He proposed to change the existing message “women and children are vulnerable to malaria” into “all people can get malaria, particularly women and children”. Dr. Quang, from the Malaria Research Station noted that the project team had done “a commendable job”. Quang, who has been working in Khanh Phu for more than 10 years, told of his experiences of spending the nights with the forest goers. He said usually the sleeping place of a forest-goer is a flat big stone in a stream. Therefore, in his opinion, telling people to bring along bednets when going to the fields on the forestfringes is correct but it would be very difficult to ask the forest goers to sleep in bednets. Assistant doctor Nguyen Van Luy, from Khanh Vinh Health Centre pointed to the importance of having people who command respect from others to disseminate health messages.

Other participants also took the occasions to comment on the TV and Radio spots produced by the Khanh Hoa Radio and TV stations. They all agreed that finishing touches are necessary to perfect these materials before they could be put on air. They also pointed to the difficulties confronting IEC activities in the communities. They include low level of allowances for the hamlet health workers who perform a lot of duties required by the health programmes. The participants shared the views on lessons learnt. They are:

- Traditional cultural values should be respected in the development of IEC materials for ethnic groups.
- IEC is a key factor for successful malaria control, particular for long-term success.
- A participatory approach for IEC material development by this project is highly appreciated.
- The outcome from this project can be applied for IEC Strategy of National Programme on Malaria Control and GFATM
- At provincial level, development of IEC for malaria control is a challenge task and satisfied result is not easy to expected.

We have received updated information and recommendation for planning malaria control activities and grant proposals from the Roll Back Malaria Department. You can access this information through the websites below.

Malaria Control Today - Working document - March 2005 - Issued on 10 March 2005 to respond to increasing demands from health authorities in endemic countries and Roll Back Malaria partners for a user-friendly compilation of WHO's recommendations on malaria control. Although it does not pretend to cover all the knowledge required, it is expected that it

will be useful for those planning malaria control activities and grant proposals at national and sub-national levels by identifying current WHO recommendations and their sources.

It can be found through the homepage of WHO's RBM Department <http://who.int/malariacontrol> , and directly on the link http://mosquito.who.int/docs/MCT_workingpaper.pdf . It supplements the "Guidelines for malaria control recommended by RBM Department, WHO, January 2004", which is a list of published WHO documents on malaria control also accessible on our homepage.

