

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Vietnam To Tackle Ending Malaria with Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network**

In an important step toward achieving malaria elimination, Vietnam officially joins the [Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network \(APMEN\)](#) today. APMEN brings together countries in the Asia Pacific that have adopted a national or sub-national goal for malaria elimination, and connects them with a broad range of regional and global malaria partners to develop best practices for eliminating malaria and to efficiently address region-specific challenges, like *Plasmodium vivax*.

Vietnam has made great strides in improving the health of its citizens, which includes reducing the risk of malaria throughout the country. Malaria deaths have plummeted by 91% in the last decade, from 71 deaths in 2000 to 14 in 2011. Reported cases of malaria have also dropped by 85%, declining from 300,000 cases to 45,000 in 2011. However, similar to other countries in the Asia Pacific region, Vietnam faces substantial challenges to eliminating malaria, which include the increasing spread of drug-resistant malaria parasites and continuous movement of populations between malaria-free and malaria-endemic areas. The most malarious regions in Vietnam – remote, forested areas - are also the country's hardest places to reach, and require more responsive surveillance systems to effectively track down and treat malaria cases. By joining APMEN, Vietnam aims to harness the region's collective experience, research findings and program recommendations to take on the final – and perhaps most difficult – steps to eliminating malaria.

Vietnam's malaria program, the National Institute for Malariology, Parasitology, and Entomology (NIMPE), recently completed its [National Strategy for Malaria Control, Prevention and Elimination 2011-2015](#). With this strategic plan, Vietnam outlined its goals of controlling and reducing malaria in higher burden areas, and the implementation of a spatially progressive malaria elimination strategy in low transmission regions.

APMEN is a country-led network focused on generating and disseminating evidence-based information on what works to drive down malaria and achieve elimination in the Asia Pacific. APMEN was developed in 2009 in response to a call to action by countries in the region to tackle malaria elimination. With Vietnam as the newest addition, APMEN connects its 12 other network countries— Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vanuatu— in an effort to learn from each other's malaria program approaches, translate research into action and consider optimal program implementation. APMEN country partners work together to sustain the gains made in malaria control and ensure financial and political support for malaria elimination in the region.

Further information regarding APMEN can be viewed at [www.apmen.org](http://www.apmen.org).

More reading about [eliminating malaria in Vietnam can be found through the UCSF Global Health Group's country profiles](#).

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## About the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network

The Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) was established in 2009 to bring attention and support to the under-appreciated and little-known work of malaria elimination in Asia Pacific, with a particular focus on *Plasmodium vivax*.

APMEN is composed of 13 Asia Pacific countries (Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu and Vietnam) that are pursuing malaria elimination, as well as leaders and experts from key multilateral and academic agencies. The mission of this diverse but cohesive network is to collaboratively address the unique challenges of malaria elimination in the region through leadership, advocacy, capacity building, knowledge exchange and building the evidence base.

Development of APMEN took place in 2008 through the leadership of the Global Health Group at University of California, San Francisco and the School of Population Health, University of Queensland. APMEN collaborates closely with the World Health Organization and is supported by the Australian Government through its international aid agency (AusAID) with a commitment of nearly \$7 million for ongoing support to the network. This complements Australia's overall support for malaria control and elimination in the Asia Pacific and globally.

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