



Meeting targets and maintaining epidemic control — EpiC

Supporting continuity of life-saving malaria services and cross-border surveillance in six high-risk provinces in Cambodia

Background

Cambodia has made significant progress towards its national goal of eliminating malaria by 2025.^[1] However, recent shifts in donor funding have placed this progress at risk. In early 2025, the abrupt termination of the Cambodia Malaria Elimination Project Phase 2 (CMEP2), which had supported six provinces and accounted for roughly 12 percent of national malaria testing, created a critical gap in surveillance and community case management. High-risk mobile and migrant populations in forested and border areas remain particularly vulnerable to malaria, and weakened surveillance could lead to setbacks in detecting, treating and preventing transmission.

Additional challenges include the growing proportion of detected *Plasmodium vivax* cases, requiring strong follow-up systems to ensure complete cure. Sustaining early detection, consistent treatment, case investigation and rapid response remain essential to prevent re-establishment of transmission.

To address these urgent gaps, the Meeting Targets and Maintaining Epidemic Control (EpiC) project has allocated funding to sustain surveillance, support the National Center for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control (CNM) and ensure continuity of life-saving services in six priority provinces.

Country

Cambodia

Funder

US Department of State through FHI 360

Length of project

22 October 2025 – 28 February 2026

Partners

FHI 360

Local community networks of village and mobile malaria workers

National Center for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control

Operational districts

Provincial health departments

Project outline and objectives

Malaria Consortium is delivering a short but high-impact malaria programme in the provinces of Battambang, Kampong Speu, Koh Kong, Pailin and Pursat to ensure uninterrupted life-saving services in areas formerly supported by CMEP2. Working in close partnership with CNM, provincial health departments (PHDs), operational districts (ODs) and community volunteers, the project reinforces community-based surveillance, strengthens case management and supports rapid response systems across 14 operational districts in the target provinces.

The project also focuses on preventing the re-establishment of malaria transmission in four provinces bordering Thailand — Battambang, Koh Kong, Pailin and Pursat — where imported cases pose an ongoing threat. Building on Malaria Consortium's long-standing role in malaria elimination in Cambodia, the project complements the ongoing Bridge Initiative, which is providing interim operational support to CNM and PHDs to sustain malaria service delivery, surveillance and reporting until longer-term funding can be secured.

Project objectives:

- Sustain malaria services, including case detection, treatment, follow-up and response to prevent further transmission in target provinces.
- Prevent re-establishment of malaria through targeted cross-border screening and management of imported cases.
- Strengthen supervision, coordination and logistics to ensure that CNM, PHDs and ODs maintain robust surveillance and reporting systems.

Activities

Project implementation relies on Cambodia's extensive network of village and mobile malaria workers (VMWs/MMWs), supported by health facility, district and provincial authorities. Community-level activities include outreach to high-risk populations, malaria testing, treatment, directly observed therapy, follow-up for *Plasmodium vivax* cases, and timely reporting. Malaria rapid response teams conduct case confirmation and classification, foci investigations and response.

References

1. Malaria Consortium Cambodia. Capacity statement. Malaria Consortium; 2024. Available from: www.malariaconsortium.org/resources/malaria-consortium-cambodia-2024

To prevent re-establishment of malaria, VMWs/MMWs conduct screening and prevention along formal and informal border crossing points, distribute insecticide-treated nets and repellents, provide preventive treatment and contribute to cross-border data-sharing mechanisms. The project further supports regular supervision meetings, joint planning fora (Provincial and District Special Malaria Elimination Task Forces), and capacity-strengthening visits led by CNM and subnational authorities, to ensure that project activities align with national strategies and complement partner activities.

Outcomes and impact

Maintained momentum toward malaria elimination in Cambodia. By sustaining essential malaria operations in previously unsupported regions, this project is preventing service disruption among vulnerable communities.

Strengthened surveillance and consistent follow-up will help ensure that confirmed cases receive timely diagnosis and appropriate treatment, critical for managing drug-resistant strains and reducing onward transmission. Enhanced monitoring of *Plasmodium vivax* radical cure will help to reduce relapse rates.

Sustainable prevention and control measures that securely bridge funding gaps. Cross-border interventions will reduce the risk of imported cases seeding new outbreaks, while improvements in data exchange, coordination and supervision will reinforce long-term systems for malaria prevention and control. At national and subnational levels, the project will support better-informed decision-making, strengthen operational capacity, and maintain continuity of elimination activities during a period of donor transition.

Effective approaches for surveillance and response in contexts approaching elimination. EpiC will provide insights relevant to Cambodia's upcoming 'preventing re-establishment' phase and other countries approaching elimination. The project is expected to generate learning on rapid, cost-effective approaches for sustaining surveillance and response in low-transmission environments.

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

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Cover image: An outreach intervention at a camp for internally displaced people providing malaria testing, distribution of insecticide-treated nets and repellents, as well as malaria health education, Pramoy Health Centre, Veal Veng District, Pursat Province, Cambodia.

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