



*Mass screening and treatment for malaria is carried out on the Thai-Cambodia border
Photo: WHO/Hari Anenden*

PROJECT BRIEF

The Containment Project

The aim of the containment project in Thailand and Cambodia was to mount a coordinated response to contain and ultimately eliminate artemisinin resistant malaria parasites

COUNTRY

Thailand
Cambodia

DONOR

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with contributions from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and the United States Agency for International Development

LENGTH OF PROJECT

Two and a half years (completed)

PARTNERS

World Health Organisation (WHO); WHO South East Asia and Western Pacific Regional Offices; WHO Mekong Malaria Programme; Cambodia and Thailand WHO Country Offices; National Centre for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control, Cambodia; the Bureau of Vector-Borne Diseases Thailand; Wellcome Trust/Mahidol-Oxford Tropical Research Unit; Institut Pasteur Cambodia; Center of Excellence for Biomedical and Public Health Informatics, Faculty of Tropical Medicine Mahidol University

PROJECT OUTLINE

Malaria Consortium, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Cambodian and Thai Malaria Programmes, and other partners have been working together with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to implement a strategy to contain artemisinin resistant malaria parasites in Southeast Asia.

Artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) is currently the most effective combination of drugs for treating malaria. This emergency project is responding rapidly to evidence of artemisinin resistant malaria parasites along the Thai-Cambodia border in a coordinated inter-country and multi-partner strategy and mobilising of longer-term resources to combat this global public health issue.

This goal was achieved through the detection and effective treatment of all malaria cases in the target areas, reducing drug pressure for the selection of resistant parasites and transmission of malaria, with particular efforts among mobile and migrant

populations who are most at risk of spreading the resistant parasites.

To enable real-time reporting of cases of potential artemisinin resistance, Malaria Consortium has developed a pilot reporting model using Short Message Service (SMS). Health facility staff in the containment zone are able to text case details to a central database. The database then automatically notifies Provincial and National staff by SMS to arrange appropriate follow up. The novel use of technology is ensuring staff engagement and a sense of urgency when it comes to acting on cases of potential artemisinin resistance.

The Containment Project also works to ensure that preventive methods such as distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets and hammock nets for mobile and migrant populations and forest-goers are increased to reach universal coverage in target areas. To support this, Malaria Consortium is facilitating development of harmonised



Cases of potential artemisinin resistance are mapped in real-time on Google Earth (in collaboration with University Research Co.)

This project had a direct impact upon efforts to:

- ✓ Combat malaria
- ✓ Strengthen health systems
- ✓ Behaviour change communication and information, education and communication
- ✓ Provide operational research outputs
- ✓ Provide monitoring and evaluation
- ✓ Provide health support to marginalised populations

Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)/Information Education and Communication (IEC) strategies so that consistent messages reach migrant workers on both sides of the border.

Other innovative BCC/IEC strategies deployed include Positive Deviance. Community members and migrants who are exhibiting uniquely positive malaria prevention or treatment practices are identified as role models. These champions are encouraged to influence their community to adopt their easy to follow practices. In this way, messages are tailored to the circumstances of the community and more likely to be accepted.

The Containment Project is undertaking operational research to fill knowledge gaps and to ensure that strategies applied are evidence-based. Malaria Consortium has the overall monitoring and evaluation role and provides technical support for strengthening surveillance and coordination to enable rapid and high quality implementation of the strategy.

PROJECT AIMS WERE

- To eliminate artemisinin resistant parasites by detecting all malaria cases in target areas and ensuring effective treatment and parasite clearance
- To reduce drug selection pressure by curbing the use of artemisinin monotherapies, fake drugs and inappropriate treatment through the private sector
- To prevent transmission of artemisinin resistant malaria parasites through mosquito control and personal protection methods
- To limit the spread of artemisinin resistant malaria parasites by
 - mobile and migrant populations
- To support containment/elimination of artemisinin resistant parasites through comprehensive and harmonised behaviour change communication, community mobilisation and advocacy
- To undertake operational research to fill knowledge gaps and ensure that strategies applied are evidence-based
- To provide an effective management system, including surveillance, monitoring and evaluation and coordination.

For more information about the Containment Project, please visit

www.malariaconsortium.org/resistance