

Community-based Infectious Disease Control and Applied Research on Malaria and Dengue

Aims:

Ensure that people in areas where malaria and dengue are major health problems know how they can help to prevent these mosquito-borne diseases in their communities.

Vietnamese malaria researchers have reached a detailed understanding of the malaria epidemiology in Vietnam, especially 'forest malaria', and have a good field-work facility to develop and test new control methods (the Khánh Phú Research Centre).



Objectives:

To improve the popularity and availability of insecticide-treated bed nets (ITN) and repellents for personal and community protection from malaria

To improve the capacity of preventive health services and village health workers to mobilize community action for dengue mosquito control (breeding source reduction and biological control with *Mesocyclops*).



To clarify transmission and effects of forest malaria, its epidemiology and possible control methods.

Main Activities:

Malaria:

- 1978-1985: Provision of all material needs of the VN National Malaria Control program

- 1990-2001: District-scale ITN trials followed by support to strengthen health promotion capacities and expand ITN distribution in Vietnam

- 1994 - now: Strengthening research capacity and research on ITN and forest malaria.

Dengue:

1991 - 2007: Support preventive health services and people for testing and applying community-based dengue control in six different areas in Vietnam.

Background:

Malaria and dengue are endemic diseases in Vietnam. Malaria surged to very high levels of burden in 1985-1993 but has now come under impressive control. But the disease remains a concern in forested mountain areas among ethnic minorities and could return on a larger scale if not controlled.

Dengue is caused by a mosquito common in and around houses, especially in urban and rural areas in the southern part of Vietnam. The disease is still on the increase with major epidemics every 4 - 6 years. There is no cure and prevention has high priority.



Achievements:

Sleeping under ITN has become the standard method for malaria prevention for more than 8 million people in Vietnam. The understanding of local (forest) malaria epidemiology and the effect of different control methods has increased.

The value of *Mesocyclops* in practical community-level dengue control has been documented. More than 100,000 people now have the awareness, knowledge and tools to keep their houses and yards free from mosquito larvae.