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Network (APMEN)

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Welcome to issue four of the APMEN newsletter. In these pages, you will receive news about APMEN and *P. vivax* malaria elimination efforts in the Asia Pacific region. We encourage you to circulate this publication to colleagues.

### WHO WPRO Malaria Managers Meeting

On August 10-12, 2011, the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific hosted the 'Regional Meeting of Malaria Programme Managers: Progress towards Malaria Elimination in the Western Pacific', in Manila, Philippines.

The meeting brought together Directors of Communicable Diseases and Vectorborne Disease Control departments of the Ministries of Health, National Malaria Programme Managers and key malaria control personnel, WHO Regional and Country Offices, and partners from the Western Pacific Region and beyond. Meeting objectives included reviewing the progress and challenges faced in the implementation of national malaria control strategies and the Regional Action Plan for Malaria Control and Elimination in the Western Pacific (2010-2015); Sharing information and updates on malaria priority issues in the Region; and reviewing and revising country plans for quality assurance in malaria diagnosis. Dr. Roly Gosling and Ms. Cara Smith Gueye attended the meeting as representatives from the APMEN Secretariat.

Malaria elimination was featured on the first day. Dr. Eva Christophel, WHO WPRO, gave an overview of progress towards malaria elimination in the region, followed by a technical session with country updates on national and phased elimination. APMEN was invited to present on the role of networks in elimination. The presentation was given on behalf of APMEN by Malaysian Country Partner representative, Dr. Chong Chee Khong. Dr. Chong gave examples of how networks can contribute to malaria elimination goals, with examples of APMEN's activities. Dr. Gosling, APMEN Secretariat Co-Coordinator, felt that "it was great to see the countries share their experiences and progress. This meeting provided an opportunity for countries and global and regional partners to discuss the critical elements of malaria control and elimination."

### Country Partner Consultation Meeting

An APMEN Country Partner consultation meeting and dinner was held on the evening of August 12, 2011 to coincide with the World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office (WHO WPRO) Malaria Managers Meeting in Manila, Philippines. The meeting was attended by APMEN Country Partner representatives from participating WPRO countries (China, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and Thailand, and Dr. Eva Christophel from WHO WPRO. The purpose of the meeting originated from

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APMEN Country Partner Consultation Meeting



Marvi Rebueno, Dr. Chong Chee Khong  
and Dr. Junaiden Mohamad Zain  
at the APMEN Country Partner  
Consultation Meeting

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a request from Country Partners at APMEN III for an additional opportunity to meet and discuss the Network's direction, priorities and activities outside of the annual Network meeting.

The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Roly Gosling and Ms. Cara Smith Gueye from the APMEN Secretariat and included a brief report on the progress made towards the 2011 APMEN work plan activities, then commenced discussion on the 2012 work plan proposed activities. There was a vibrant exchange on the 2012 Work Plan, in particular about the network objectives of advocacy, capacity building and cross border and regional collaborations. New potential work plan activities were identified by participants and proposed activities were further clarified and refined. The feedback received from this meeting will be incorporated by the Secretariat into a draft work plan to be circulated to the Country Partners and Network for further consultation in late 2011. A similar consultation meeting on the work plan with the remaining APMEN Country Partners from the SEARO region is being planned to occur at an opportune time in the coming months.

The APMEN Secretariat would like to extend a note of appreciation to Dr. Eva Christophel who provided the opportunity for the APMEN Country Partners to meet at the WPRO malaria meeting, and for APMEN to share its experiences as a network in the WPRO meeting.

## APMEN 2010 Fellowship Recipient Update

Pema Samdrup is the Programme Officer with the Vector-Borne Disease Control Programme (VDCP), and works for the Malaria Programme under the Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Bhutan. Mr Samdrup was awarded a 2010 APMEN Fellowship which he undertook at Department of Tropical Hygiene, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand, under the guidance of Dr Irwin Chavez.

The focus of Mr Samdrup's Fellowship was Geographical Information System (GIS) mapping. The aim of the Fellowship was for Mr Samdrup to further his skills and knowledge in GIS techniques and software in order to provide greater technical support in the design, management and utilization of epidemiologic data within a GIS structure in the health sector in Bhutan. Mr Samdrup's Fellowship involved an intensive training course in GIS software and lessons in various applications to mapping, as well as undertaking field work in the Ratchaburi Province in Thailand where he was involved in collecting data from households and possible breeding sites.

Since undertaking his APMEN Fellowship, Mr Samdrup has been extensively involved in increasing the capacity of local district programme staff in Bhutan to both collect and apply GIS data to their malaria work.

One way he has done this is through developing and implementing GIS training courses with the VDCP in Bhutan and in coordination with Department of Land and Survey Department. In June 2011, Mr Samdrup conducted two GIS training

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**Pema Samdrup** undertaking his APMEN Fellowship at the Department of Tropical Hygiene, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand



Participants attending a GIS training course in Bhutan

courses with funding support from The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Bhutan. The short-courses were provided to local health workers and programme Entomology staff and covered data collection, software training, integration of data into maps and the application and relevance of data use in the National Malaria Programme. The course aims to streamline GIS in all malaria endemic districts in Bhutan and to improve GPS data collections for malaria cases and vector breeding places. Participants from the course are also expected to contribute to the generation and integration of maps in their respective districts from the data collected.

A second key task of Mr Samdrup's has been the development of a GIS training manual. Mr Samdrup is currently in the process of monitoring and evaluating the GIS capacity of Programme staff in a number of districts in Bhutan. Once the current GIS capacity of the district's has been analysed, the training manual will be developed for GIS data analysis and also collection of points for Malaria cases, breeding points and also mapping of follow up of Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax cases within the districts.

Mr Samdrup sees his APMEN Fellowship experience as an important contribution to the development and application of GIS technology for use malaria elimination in Bhutan. *"The APMEN Fellowship has improved my knowledge and skills capacity in analysis of information and data. The trainings knowledge is new to me as well as to our Programme. The training has benefitted... our Programme and Government so that many of the communities will be benefit in the long term".* Mr Pema Samdrup speaking about his APMEN Fellowship experience.

## GIS Committee and Survey

Following APMEN III in Kota Kinabalu, a call was made to the Network for members of the APMEN GIS Committee which will guide the Secretariat in the development of GIS capacity building activities on behalf of the Network. In July we were pleased to announce the following committee members who will work closely with all stakeholders including MAP in this APMEN endeavor:

- Professor Xiao-Nong Zhou, Director National Institute of Parasitic Diseases - **APMEN Country Partner, China**
- Mr. Jirapat Ketkaew, Bureau of Vector Borne Disease, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health - **APMEN Country Partner, Thailand**
- Mr. Eric Hale, Chief Monitoring Officer (currently Acting Programme Manager for monitoring National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme) - **APMEN Country Partner, Solomon Islands**
- Dr. Jon Cox, Senior Lecturer London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine - **APMEN Partner Institution**
- Dr. Archie Clements, Associate Professor in Infectious Diseases University of Queensland/Malaria Atlas Project - **APMEN Partner Institution**

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## Date Claimer

The 2011 APMEN **GIS Training Program** is a 5-7 day program expected to be conducted from the 7th November 2011. APMEN would like to acknowledge the host for this year's program the National Institute of Parasitic Diseases, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NIPD, China CDC).

It is planned that this program may be continued and expanded in the future to include more advanced training at different APMEN Country Partner or Partner Institutions locations.

The APMEN Secretariat will be shortly asking the 11 APMEN Country Partners National Malaria Program Managers to nominate 2 representatives from each country to attend the training program.



Dr. Simon I. Hay introducing the MAP (Malaria Atlas Project) to Prof. ZHOU Shuisen.

Left to right: Ms. Katherine Battle, Dr. Simon I. Hay and Prof. ZHOU Shuisen.

Picture was taken by ZHANG Shaosen.

## Vivax Working Group Research Grant Update

As part of the Vivax Working Group 2010 Research Grant Round, Professor Zhou Shuisen and Mr. Zhang Shaosen from China's National Institute of Parasitic Disease (NIPD) were awarded funds to further develop their proposal in 'Targeting Malaria Elimination Interventions in China using Spatial-Temporal Distribution Analysis'. The funds were used for Prof Zhou and Mr. Zhang to travel to Oxford University to work with Dr Simon I. Hay co-founder of Malaria Atlas Project (MAP) and his team to review their global geospatial mapping program and discuss study design and analytical processes.

The People's Republic of China launched its Malaria Elimination Program in July 2010. This program sets out to eliminate local malaria transmission by 2015 and to reach the WHO standard for malaria elimination certification by 2020. To date a lack of accurate and contemporary maps of malaria have made it difficult to guide and direct malaria elimination initiatives conducted by the national Malaria Elimination Program. Whilst in Oxford Professor Zhou and Mr. Zhang made a number of steps towards updating and improving the information that will be available to Malaria Elimination Program.

Using data gathered by the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention they reviewed and modified the national malaria prevalence map that has been developed by MAP, classifying counties into three difference categories; higher, lower and potential malaria incidences. They also took the opportunity to work with MAP to review the data process of the Annual Parasite Index, develop a sample database and to map the history of the malaria in China.

During this visit MAP and NIPD also developed a protocol and proposal for further collaborations that will focus on developing the ability to use Annual Parasite Index (API) data and GIS spatial tracking systems to act as a guide for monitoring and evaluation. Through this collaboration the national Malaria Elimination Program will have annually updated maps tracking malaria incidence that will be accompanied by information on national policies to help guide its interventions.

*"This is a good example of how we can bring together resources and expertise to guide national efforts in working towards the eradication of malaria."*

*Dr Lorenz van Seidlein, Clinical Coordinator VxWG*

## Ross Day Commemoration

Discovery That Mosquitoes Transmit Malaria Parasites (1897-1898).

On August 20th, 1897, in Secunderabad, India, Ronald Ross, a British officer in the Indian Medical Service, was the first to demonstrate that malaria parasites could be transmitted from infected patients to mosquitoes. In further work with bird malaria, Ross showed that mosquitoes could transmit malaria parasites from bird to bird. This necessitated a sporogonic cycle (the time interval during which the parasite developed in the mosquito). Thus, the problem of malaria transmission was solved. For his discovery, Ross was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1902.

In 1926 the Ross Institute and Hospital for Tropical Diseases was opened as a memorial to and in recognition of Ross' work. The main focus of the Institute was the study of the nature and treatment, propagation, and prevention of tropical diseases. Ross was the Director in Chief until his death in 1932. The Institute was incorporated into the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine in 1934.

*"The proper policy is not the protection policy, nor the mosquito reduction policy, nor the quinine policy, but an opportunistic policy that uses any weapon it can."*

*Ronald Ross, The Prevention of Malaria, 1911*

Text contributed by the Archivist, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

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