



Community Engagement for Vector Control: Key learning from APMEN VCWG Workshop

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A recent global review found that community engagement is often misunderstood by malaria professionals as community-based interventions or social and behaviour change communication (SBCC.) Whereas community engagement refers to a more holistic and integrated approach to **jointly designing, delivering and assessing malaria programs together with meaningful participation from communities at risk.**

[Implementing effective community engagement for malaria control and elimination: Opportunities and challenges](#)

UCSF, May 2020

Issues we need to address

- **Sub-optimal coverage/underutilization of LLINs** : coverage-utilization gaps among key populations as a result of weaknesses in program planning and coordination
- **LLINs durability** largely depends on self-efficacy of users
- Communities participate in a way in which they are **pass-receiver of solutions** handed by health authorities
- **Disconnect between users and product developers**: what do they like and dislike about the products
- **Ineffective communication, educations tools and practices**: language and cultural barriers
- Tools that are designed for indoor protection **irrelevant for MMPs and forest-goers** who spend most of the time outdoors

Background

- Virtual Workshop organized in July 2020
- Participants were representatives from NMCP (India, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines), Private sector, community civil society organizations, research/academic organizations

Objectives

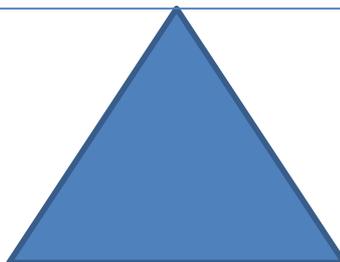
1. **Understanding** the needs and preferences of communities at risk for vector control products, information and delivery channels;
2. **Generating demand** consistent use of vector control products using approaches, terms and formats that resonate with communities at risk;
3. **Distributing** vector control interventions through channels that are conveniently accessible to communities at risk;
4. **Monitoring, evaluating and refining** vector control programming to best suit the needs of specific communities at risk.

The balance

The universal **coverage** & **use** of vector control tools

Supply side

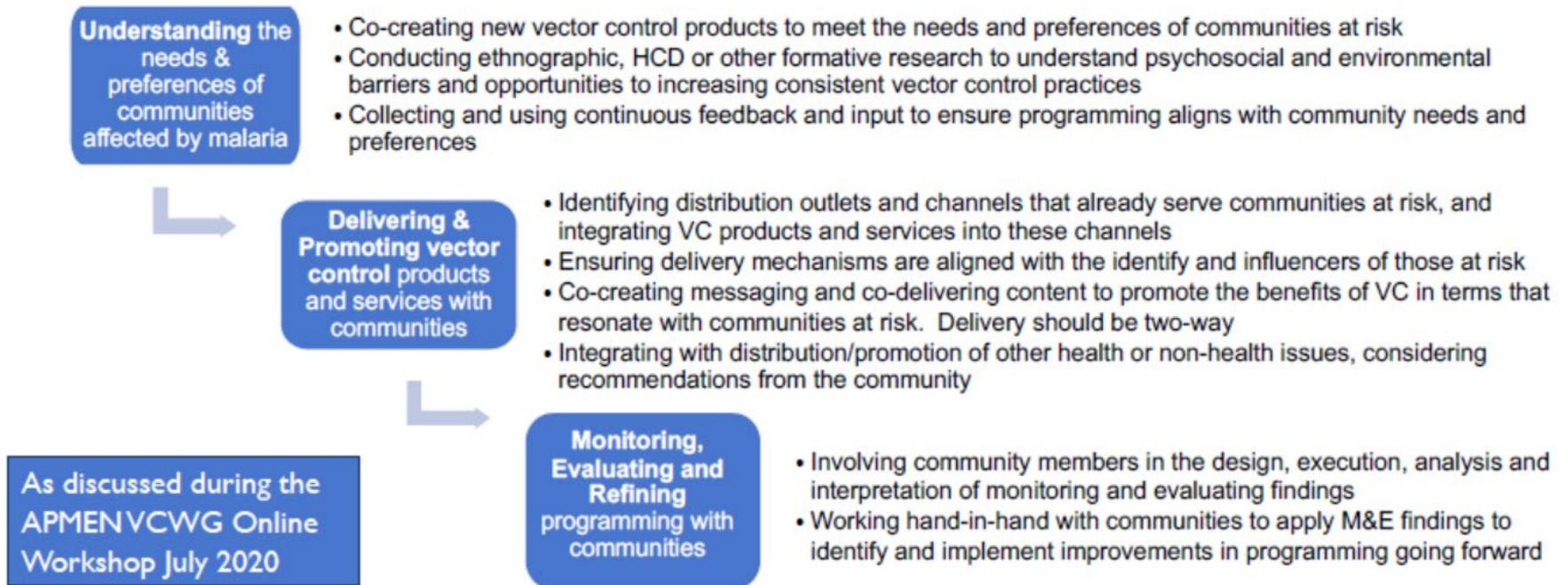
- Program management, planning, coordination
- Risk and population mapping
- Monitoring and evaluation



Demand side

- Demand generation
- Self-efficacy (repairing torn nets, hanging correctly)
- Community consultations
- Coupling with appropriate SBC strategies
- User feedback loop

Community Engagement: A Life cycle Approach



Best practices in the region

Going beyond IEC & SBCC



Community Dialogue Approach is one of multiple, emerging community engagement approaches gaining traction and evidence of impact.

Watch: Using Community Dialogue to tackle antibiotic resistance in Bangladesh

<https://bit.ly/3e2cpj0>

Resource: [A guide to implementing the community dialogue approach](#)

Best practices in the region

Utilizing non-traditional distribution channels



Women and children are promising delivery and change agents. Workshop discussion highlighted the potential of women and children to leverage their community-level access and influence to improve gender equity and increase as well as sustain vector control results.

Vector control in Indonesia, On house on larva observer

Best practices in the region

Utilizing non-traditional distribution channels



Forest-goers package distributed in Myanmar including a LLIN, head-lamp, topical repellent (PMI Burma)

Non-health distribution channels can expand access for communities, including retail outlets, schools, community events and community outreach mechanisms outside of the health sector. One example of this is PMI-supported program in Cambodia and Myanmar) use of community rangers to distribute “**forest packs**”—containing multiple vector control products—to forest goers at risk of malaria.

Emerging priorities

- **Organize a more focused review the use of community volunteers** –health and non-health—to support vector control and elimination targets in the region, against community engagement principles to identify opportunities to further leverage this channel.
- **Purposefully identify specific opportunities to use a gender lens to inform, deliver and evaluate vector control programs** in Asia Pacific. Assess and document Asia-Pacific cases where a gender-transformative approach has expanded vector control and elimination results.
- **Develop standard operating procedure (SOP)-type guides to promote vector control community engagement best practices** in support of vector control and elimination more broadly. These SOPs could be organized by opportunity area discussed during the July 2020 online workshop.
- **Leverage technology to discuss community engagement principles with a broader audience of stakeholders** and maintain momentum with a core group of “champions” to promote more and better application of community engagement principles and best practices.

Innovations with potential to facilitate community engagement



Digital
research &
health

- Mobile & digital methods are making it easier to engage communities *more quickly and more continuously* i.e. design, co-creation, monitoring & evaluation phases
- Digital technologies have potential to enhance the quality and reach of vector control programming

New
products

- Manufacturers, product development partners and funders are working with communities to design new vector control products to better address the needs and preferences of underserved/last mile communities at risk

New delivery
mechanisms

- Bundled products & services
- Integrated delivery, linking VC with other products and services valued by communities at risk

More on Community engagement

APMEN TechTalks

Waging a malaria elimination campaign without community support is like fighting a battle with one arm tied behind your back. We need the people who bear the brunt of malaria to understand what elimination program objectives are, and gain their help to identify, deliver and assess solutions likely to achieve these objectives. To successfully prevent malaria and other vector borne diseases, communities at risk need to be able to access the right tools, understand the benefits of using or facilitating (in the case of indoor residual spraying) vector control methods, seek diagnosis for fever and complete treatment for confirmed cases. As key stakeholders committed to eliminating malaria in Asia Pacific, we need to better understand how to effectively engage communities to achieve vector control program and elimination objectives. These are the issues we will explore during this next APMEN TechTalks, lessons and insights from experienced persons in this field. It is a subject we should all learn more about.

Community Participation: A Foundation for Malaria Elimination

Community Engagement and
the Need for Methodological
Innovation



Prof. Koen Peeters

Head of Unit,
Medical Anthropology

Institute of Tropical Medicine
Antwerp, Belgium

Engaging Communities to
Design, Implement & Assess
Vector Control Programming



Josselyn Neukom

APMEN/APLMA Consultant
Cambodia

Engaging Communities for
Improved Vector Control
Outcomes



Dr. Than Naing Soe

Director, Health Literacy
Promotion Unit
Ministry of Health and Sports,
Myanmar

Moderated by Dr. Leo Braack, Technical Lead - APMEN
Vector Control Working Group (VCGW) and
Senior Vector Control Specialist - Malaria Consortium

The webinar will be recorded and shared through the APMEN social media and
Online Resource Exchange Network for Entomologists website (orene.org)

Please send your questions to
l.braack@malariaconsortium.org

Date: 25 November 2020, Wednesday

Time: 2:00 PM Singapore time

To register: <https://tiny.cc/APMENTechTalksNov25>



APMEN TechTalk on Community Participation: A Foundation for Malaria Elimination

<https://orene.org/tech-talks/>

Recorded webinar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCWNyvSajkc>

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United we
defeat malaria
in Asia and the Pacific

Thank you