Reflection on the role of APMEN in elimination

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Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network

What is APMEN?

• A network of countries and stakeholders in the Asia Pacific region that are committed to working towards malaria elimination

• Consists of 18 countries:
  – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu, and Vietnam
The Role of APMEN

- Supports countries to collaboratively pursue regional malaria elimination efforts through knowledge exchange, capacity building, building the evidence base and leadership and advocacy for elimination
Key Activities

• Advocacy and leadership to support elimination efforts in the Asia Pacific Region
• Bringing together a wide range of stakeholders in elimination including: partners from government, development agencies, scientific institutions, funders, and private sectors
• Developing a collegial space for knowledge sharing and partnerships through well-run annual meetings, workshops, study tours and other events
• Building the evidence on key regional priorities through Technical Working Groups
• A range of capacity building activities including the highly successful APMEN Fellowship Program
Advocacy and Leadership

• Played a lead role in establishing elimination as a shared, regional goal and brought global attention to the achievements and challenges faced by Asia Pacific countries
• Established a country-led platform for elimination with robust governance processes
• Brought together a unique range of stakeholders in elimination, including country program managers, scientists, development agencies, the private sector, WHO and other global malaria leaders
• Advocated for and built evidence around the safe and radical cure of *Plasmodium vivax*, especially through the Vivax Working Group
• Continuing to expand and adapt to an ever changing malaria and public health landscape
Achievements

Building the evidence base

• Established additional Technical Working Groups on Vector Control and Surveillance and response to build evidence and regional capacity for elimination

Building capacity

• Built capacity of future leaders in elimination through the APMEN Fellowships Program and other capacity building activities

Knowledge exchange

• Developed a reputation as a collegial platform to share experiences, expand regional awareness, and foster partnerships for elimination
• Facilitated strategic partnerships for elimination
# Technical Working Groups to Build Evidence for Elimination

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Vivax Working Group</strong></th>
<th>Composed of APMEN Country Partners and Partner Institutions and leading experts in <em>P. vivax</em> throughout the region and globally</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>The aim is to develop and coordinate operational research to build evidence around surveillance, diagnostics, and treatment of <em>P. vivax</em> in the Asia Pacific</td>
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<td>Funds and supervises operational research led by scientists based at regional research institutions</td>
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<td>Provides an avenue through which country program managers can have input in operational research priorities</td>
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Technical Working Groups to Build Evidence for Elimination

• Vivax Working Group
  – Identifies key knowledge gaps of *P. vivax* to build consensus amongst Country Partners and Partner Institutions
  • Four systematic literature reviews
  • Two workshops on *P. vivax* genotyping (Malaysia, 2011 and ROK, 2012); and G6PD detection workshop (ROK, 2012)
  • Workshop on planning a multi-centre primaquine trial (China, 2011); and Workshop on the threat of antimalarial resistance to elimination (Indonesia, 2013)
  – Coordinated 21 research grants administered through the Country Partner Technical Development Program (16 surveillance, 4 diagnostics, 3 clinical trials)
Technical Working Groups to Build Evidence for Elimination

• **Vector Control Working Group**
  – Composed of APMEN Country Partners and Partner Institutions with special expertise in entomology or vector control
  – Survey on vectors and vector control strategies to identify entomological capacity and resourcing of vector control in the region
  – Literature review on the use of larvicides and repellents for elimination
  – Supported the development of the pocketbook, *Malaria vectors in Asia Pacific countries*, containing data on the distribution, ecology, and medical importance of 26 Asia Pacific malaria vectors
  – Funded 23 people to attend the Integrated vector management (IVM) course at the Institution of Medical Research, Malaysia
Technical Working Groups to Build Evidence for Elimination

Surveillance and Response Working Group

- Identified priority programmatic and capacity gaps that needed to be addressed
  - Reaching out to migrant and mobile populations at higher risk of malaria
  - Integrating multiple reporting systems
  - IT, internet, and telecommunication reporting timeliness
  - Maintaining malaria microscopy
  - The need for increased capacity in data analysis at the country level
Technical Working Groups to Build Evidence for Elimination

Surveillance and Response Working Group

– Formed to build capacity and share knowledge and experience across country programs
– Conducted training focused on three topics of data analysis, spatial decision support systems, and stratification
– Developed and disseminated priority indicators for malaria elimination and prevention of reintroduction programs and their implementing and research partners and donors
Building Regional Capacity to Achieve Elimination

APMEN Fellowship Program

– Build the capacity of future leaders in areas that have been identified as priorities by the Fellow’s country program and the APMEN network
– Foster collaborations for elimination; leads to fruitful knowledge exchange
– Developed a mentoring relationship with their host; led to highly effective training and facilitated knowledge exchange across countries and across generations of malaria experts
# Building Regional Capacity to Achieve Elimination

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<th>Global Information Systems (GIS)</th>
<th>Build skills around mapping</th>
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<td>Build skills on temporal spatial modelling</td>
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<td>Build skills on the use of GIS data to inform decision making for elimination</td>
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<td>Other Capability Building Activities</td>
<td>Integrated Vector management course</td>
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<td>Science of Eradication Course</td>
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Partnerships for Elimination

- Country-to-country partnerships
- Regional-global partnerships
- Linkages between public health agencies
- Multiple forms of malaria and public health expertise
- Cross-sectorial partnerships at the country level
- Public-private partnerships
Future directions

- Addressing twin threats of artemisinin resistance and insecticide resistance
- Sustaining elimination status of malaria-free areas
- Vector control and diagnostics strengthening
- Sustaining elimination status of malaria-free areas