

Meeting Report

South-East Asia and Western Pacific Bi-Regional Meeting of Malaria Drug Resistance Monitoring Networks



9–12 November 2015
Siem Reap, Cambodia

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC

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ENGLISH ONLY

MEETING REPORT

SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND WESTERN PACIFIC BI-REGIONAL MEETING OF MALARIA
DRUG RESISTANCE MONITORING NETWORKS

Convened by:

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC

Siem Reap, Cambodia
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NOTE

The views expressed in this report are those of the participants of the South-East Asia and Western Pacific Bi-Regional Meeting of Malaria Drug Resistance Monitoring Networks and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the World Health Organization.

This report has been prepared by the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific for those who participated in the Southeast Asia and Western Pacific Bi-Regional Meeting of Malaria Drug Resistance Monitoring Networks held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, 9–12 November 2015.

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Keywords:

Malaria / Drug resistance / Regional health planning / Communicable diseases

ABBREVIATIONS

ACPR	adequate clinical and parasitological response
ACT	artemisinin combination therapy
AL	Artemether-Lumefantrine (Coartem TM)
AM	Artemether
API	Annual parasite incidence
AS	Artesunate
AS+Amo	Artesunate+Amodiaquine
AS+SP	Artesunate + Sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine
AS+MEF	Artesunate + Mefloquine
BBINS	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka
CQ	chloroquine
DHA-PIP	dihydroartemisinin-piperaquine
Doxy	Doxycycline
ERAR	Emergency Response to Artemisinin Resistance
Global Fund	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HF	Health Facility
IMR	Institute of Medical Research
K13	Kelch 13
LFU	loss to follow-up
LPF	late parasitological failure
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
NMPE	National Institute of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology
NMCP	National Malaria Control Programme
PMI	President's Malaria Initiative
PQ	primaquine
RAI	Regional Artemisinin Initiative
RDT	rapid diagnostic test
TES	therapeutic efficacy studies
WHO	World Health Organization

SUMMARY

In the South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions, antimalarial drug resistance monitoring has been strengthened through the establishment of three drug-resistance monitoring networks: the Greater Mekong Subregion network, the Pacific network and the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka (BBINS) network. The South-East Asia and Western Pacific Bi-Regional Meeting of Malaria Drug Resistance Monitoring Networks was co-organized by the WHO regional offices for South-East Asia and the Western Pacific, WHO headquarters and the Emergency Response to Artemisinin Resistance (ERAR) hub together with the WHO Representative Office in Cambodia. Sixty participants from 14 countries attended, including therapeutic efficacy studies (TES) investigators and malaria programme managers, along with technical consultants and representatives from key partner agencies.

At the end of the meeting, participants were expected to have:

- 1) reviewed the malaria drug resistance situation in the Greater Mekong Subregion, the Pacific and South Asian countries;
- 2) reviewed implementation of the WHO TES protocol;
- 3) discussed the role of K13, the molecular marker for tracking artemisinin resistance, and of other molecular markers for monitoring malaria drug resistance in the Region; and
- 4) developed work plans and budgets for the networks and the countries for TES monitoring in 2016–2017.

Technical presentations from WHO staff included an overview of the sentinel sites and activities in the three TES networks of the Greater Mekong Subregion, the BBINS and the Pacific, implementation/ monitoring and reporting issues using the standard protocol including requirements from ethics committee, updates on the K13 marker for artemisinin resistance, and the global antimalarial drug efficacy database. Much discussion centred on implementation and monitoring challenges encountered before, during and at end of the studies. The update on the *Strategy for Malaria Elimination in the Greater Mekong Subregion 2015–2030* and treatment policy change was also presented. All countries prepared a two-year work plans and budgets for TES (2016–2017).

Recommendations for Member States:

- 1) Countries are recommended to continue to strengthen high quality TES implementation using the standard WHO protocol.
- 2) Strengthening and sustaining capacity of national programmes to implement TES is critical. Supporting the strengthening of microscopy capacity (regular refresher training for TES microscopists) is critical as is training of those who collect slides.
- 3) Alternative ACT regimens need to be tested before deciding on drug policy change as soon as signs of declining efficacy manifest.
- 4) Countries are recommended to maintain regular monitoring visits to TES sites.
- 5) Countries are recommended to facilitate integration of monitoring of drug efficacy into routine surveillance systems in pre-elimination settings.

Recommendations for WHO:

- 1) Tasks for the networks focus on coordination, information sharing and technical support to the above activities with particular emphasis on strengthening cross-border information sharing and coordination.
- 2) WHO is recommended to share the finalized monitoring tools and reporting guidelines with in-country and external monitors.
- 3) WHO is recommended to provide support for countries moving into elimination as they adopt new approaches to monitoring and surveillance beyond TES.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The South-East Asia and Western Pacific Bi-Regional Meeting of Malaria Drug Resistance Monitoring Networks was convened in Siem Reap, Cambodia in November 2015 to review and plan therapeutic efficacy studies (TES). This was the first meeting to bring together participants from the Greater Mekong Subregion, the BBINS and the Pacific networks. The meeting was an opportunity for participants to share information and experiences in implementing TES at a time when many countries are taking steps towards pre-elimination or elimination while others still face t high malaria burdens and the increasing risk of artemisinin and multidrug resistance. The meeting was organized by the WHO regional offices for South-East Asia and the Western Pacific and the Global Malaria Programme in WHO headquarters in coordination with the WHO ERAR hub in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

1.2 Objectives

At the end of the meeting, participants were expected to have:

- 1) reviewed the malaria drug resistance situation in the Greater Mekong Subregion, the Pacific and South Asian countries;
- 2) reviewed implementation of the WHO TES protocol;
- 3) discussed the role of K13, the molecular marker for tracking artemisinin resistance, and of other molecular markers for monitoring malaria drug resistance in the Region; and
- 4) developed work plans and budgets for the networks and the countries for TES monitoring in 2016–2017.

1.3 Opening session

Dr Eva Christophel, Malaria Regional Advisor for WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia delivered the opening remarks on behalf of Dr Shin Young-soo, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific. Many countries in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions have achieved the malaria targets of the Millennium Development Goals. With the sixty-eighth World Health Assembly's endorsement of the *Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016–2030* countries are

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