

Malaria CSO platform, GMS

CSO representative speech at the APLMA Senior Official's Meeting

Malaria week, 22-25th April 2019

Anantara Siam Hotel, Bangkok Thailand

Honorable Chair, representatives of the government, donors, technical partners, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of communities and civil society in the Greater Mekong subregion, I thank APLMA for this opportunity to share the knowledge and experience from the GMS Malaria CSO Platform.

The Global Fund's ongoing commitment to this region has facilitated a significant reduction of malaria cases, particularly over the last 5 years. This reduction has been achieved through strong collaboration between public, private and civil society organizations, and particularly the unwavering dedication of an extensive network of community workers. In 2018 alone, more than 33,000 community workers were mobilized across the GMS under the RAI2E. They demonstrated their technical and practical ability to deliver effective and efficient malaria interventions; interventions that are targeted to mobile, migrant and ethnic minority populations. This included community case management services, expanded vector control, and social and behavior change communication. In the context of elimination, the role of these community workers is critically important.

Although the reduction of malaria in the GMS is a big success, it has unfortunately left a concentrated malaria epidemic in many remote and border areas, affecting populations that are most vulnerable because they are hard-to-reach. Hard-to-reach geographically, socially, culturally, economically and politically. These populations are far from static health facilities, frequently travel to high-risk areas, and often migrate across formal and informal State borders. Our collective achievement of elimination in the GMS will require malaria services to be closer to these affected communities, and a prioritization of the most hard-to-reach populations through strategic partnerships and an increased reliance on a community's trust of civil society actors.

The last mile of elimination is going to be difficult and will come with many challenges. To achieve our target of elimination by 2030, we must ensure that investments are sustainable and meet the specific needs of communities. We need your political support to deliver integrated health packages in response to a decrease in interest in malaria services. We need your political support to remove the policy and legal barriers which hinder efficiency and impact at a community level. And we need your political support to increase the availability and accessibility of effective tools for prevention, testing, and treatment to all malaria vulnerable populations, regardless of their nationality, geography, culture, legal status or financial capacity.

As the Ministers of Health from the GMS, some of their representatives are here today, highlighted in the 2018 Ministerial Call for Action, collaboration across borders, coordination among partners and multi-sectoral responses are fundamental to achieving elimination by 2030. Civil society are essential partners for malaria elimination. We are an effective extension of conventional health services; creating a bridge between the health system and the most affected and hard-to-reach communities.

With effective engagement of civil society and a prioritization of hard-to-reach populations, together, will we be able to eliminate malaria from this region.

Thank you for your attention

Dr Soulany Chansy

RAI RSC alternate CSO representative

Vice-chair, CCM, Lao PDR