

Community network building in Kraburi district, Ranong Province

Kraburi district, Ranong Province

Ranong province locates in the Southern part of Thailand and shares its international border with the Thanintharyi Division of Myanmar on the west. Many migrant population and ethnic communities from Myanmar come to the Ranong province to work in the rubber plantation worksite, palm oil worksite, garden and fishing. Due to the porous nature of the border between Thailand and Myanmar, the resurgence of malaria is still needed to be vigilant for Thailand to attain the malaria elimination goal by 2024. In 2019, Ranong province had 53 malaria cases, where the Kraburi district accounted for over 50% of cases. In 2020, the Kraburi district found 16 malaria cases (70% of malaria cases in Ranong Province).



In the Kraburi district, there are seven sub-districts, namely,

1. Nam Chuet
2. Nam Chuet Noi
3. Mamu
4. Pak Chan
5. Lam Lian
6. Choporo
7. Bang Yai

With the support of the American Refugee Committee, the regional malaria CSO Platform secretariat facilitated the network building workshop to strengthen the collaboration of local community members and volunteers with local health authorities of all sub-districts in Kraburi district. The workshop is conducted in Kung Nan resort on 8th October with a total of 49 participants (Male – 16, Female – 33), including representatives from the National Vector Borne Disease and control program, Health promotion hospital, lecturers, malaria posts, village health volunteers, ARC staff, and CSO platform secretariat. The participants discussed the importance of community network, community health issues, the sustainable approach for the malaria interventions and ways of linking the health network, and the right to access the health services by the migrant workers.



The workshop prioritized into 3 main sessions –

1. Update of Malaria situation in Kraburi district, Ranong Province
2. Sharing the experiences of health services for the migrant population and demonstration of malaria testing using RDT and blood slides
3. Forming a network of volunteers and health workers to communicate and coordinate malaria-related activities at the district and village level

In Kraburi district, ARC is implementing the Global Fund RAI2E grant working closely with local authorities and community people, including village volunteers. ARC volunteers focus on community engagement, awareness-raising, LLIN distribution, referral, and follow up for malaria. Mr. Phanuwat Srisura, a representative from VBDC, explained Ranong province has seen a decreasing trend of malaria cases over the year and acknowledged the achievement of the



province was a collaborative effort from the government, civil society organizations, frontline health workers, and volunteers. He also noticed that the good practices of information sharing between ARC in Thailand and Myanmar for the patients crossing the country.



Later on, Mr. Jirapon Chirakantithat, Entomology unit control, demonstrated how to conduct blood testing using RDT and blood slide to the volunteers and provide refresher training to the malaria posts. After the demonstration, volunteers had the first time opportunity to get hands-on experience on malaria blood testing supervised by the malaria posts.

Providing health services to the migrant workers at the district hospital

Mrs. Nattaya Sornprai, a nurse from Kraburi hospital, explained that they are welcome to all migrant workers regardless of any legal status who seek health services. She also shared that migrant workers who have migrant health card paid the same treatment fee as the Thai nationals. For the migrant workers who don't have a migrant health insurance card, the hospital still provides the health services and help the migrant workers finding ways how they can pay the treatment fee.

Surveillance and rapid response team in Bang Yai sub-district



Bang Yai sub-district managed to bring down the 28 malaria cases in 2019 to only 2 cases in 2020 with the strong community surveillance team called surveillance and rapid response team 'SRRT'. Mrs. Sinima Ratanadilok na Phuket explained that one SRRT team comprised approximately five persons including village health volunteers, different departments of the hospital (laboratory, pathology, and epidemiology units) and a government representative. The team is responsible for

performing surveillance, conduct a preliminary field investigation, and implement necessary interventions to control the spread of disease. The team meets as necessary to discuss the disease situation and exchange information. SRRT is very useful for outbreak detection and containment. The SRRT team also reported the information of positive malaria cases throughout the village level to the central level and completed necessary follow-up action in a few days in Bang Yai sub-district.

At the end of the workshop, the participants clearly understand to join the one sub-district community network to form a big team to fight malaria and other diseases. As a result, all the participants from different sub-districts of Kraburi district joined the existing LINE group of one sub-district to share malaria knowledge, malaria situation in the village, information of positive cases and follow up activity.

A voice from the community volunteer

Mrs. Win Mu



My name is Win Mu. I am a Burmese migrant. Currently, I am living in a Pa-Jan village in Kraburi district, Ranong Province, for more than ten years. As our village is close to the border with Myanmar, a lot of Myanmar people came and worked in Thailand. I feel that Myanmar people do not have enough health knowledge on how to prevent malaria and other diseases. They also don't know where to go and find health services when they sick due to the language barrier and poor knowledge. I am very proud of myself in my community as they know me as ma Win whom they can come to me and request help and advice for their health.

Besides, I help in my village distributing LLIN, repellent, mosquito coil for migrant people, and coordinating the malaria activities with the health authorities from Kraburi district. I help not only Burmese migrants but also the Thai nationals who need help to go the health facilities to seek treatment. I am very happy that I am useful and helpful to my community. I also enjoy working as an ARC volunteer as the organization truly cares about the vulnerable population who lives in very remote and hard to reach areas. We are regularly going deep into the jungle to provide health education and bringing people who need to go to the health facilities. I want to see all people in my community lives without malaria.