

# MID-BCC – Communications for Change in Infectious Diseases in Greater Mekong Subregion



## Results of Pre-test Dengue Counseling Cards



Vientiane Capital  
November 15-17, 2010

# Background

- ❑ In September 2010, dengue cases in Lao PDR soared affecting 8 provinces which alarmed health clinics and outpatient departments of main hospitals in Vientiane Capital.
- ❑ The highest number of cases was recorded among student age and young adult populations, 15 to 24 years old, followed by 9 to 15 years old.
- ❑ The Vientiane Provincial Health Department needed communication materials for its clean-up drive and health education activities of volunteers such as members of the Lao Women Union to mobilize communities to take action to eliminate mosquito breeding sites and motivate people to seek treatment when symptoms such as continuous high fever is experienced.
- ❑ The primary intervention was to pursue a campaign against dengue with key audiences such as: students, workers and families who are living in identified dengue hotspots in the city.

# Pre-test Objective

The Vientiane Capital Health Department prepared messages and used one page photocopied A4 flyer as the communication material distributed to schools and communities which were reached by the department's initial campaign.

AED reviewed this A4 leaflet and proposed 10 messages. AED also commissioned a local ad agency to re-conceptualized and packaged these dengue messages in 10 counseling cards. These 10 counseling cards will be used in drafting a poster design, a pocket size 8-panel flyer, and an A3 booklet for health care workers.

The pre-test was conducted to determine the correctness/ appropriateness of the illustrations and messages in terms of comprehension; acceptance; attractiveness; call to action; and involvement of target audience.

# Pre-test Groups

- 6 Health care workers (5 females & 1 male; age – 23 to 25 years old) sampled from the Mother and Child Hospital, a tertiary hospital that provides maternal and child health services. This hospital also recorded cases of dengue in 2010.
- 9 Health care workers (9 females & 3 males; age – 23 to 45 years old) of Xaythany District Hospital that provides more than primary health care services and has reported more than 600 cases of dengue from January to November 2010.



# Pre-test Groups

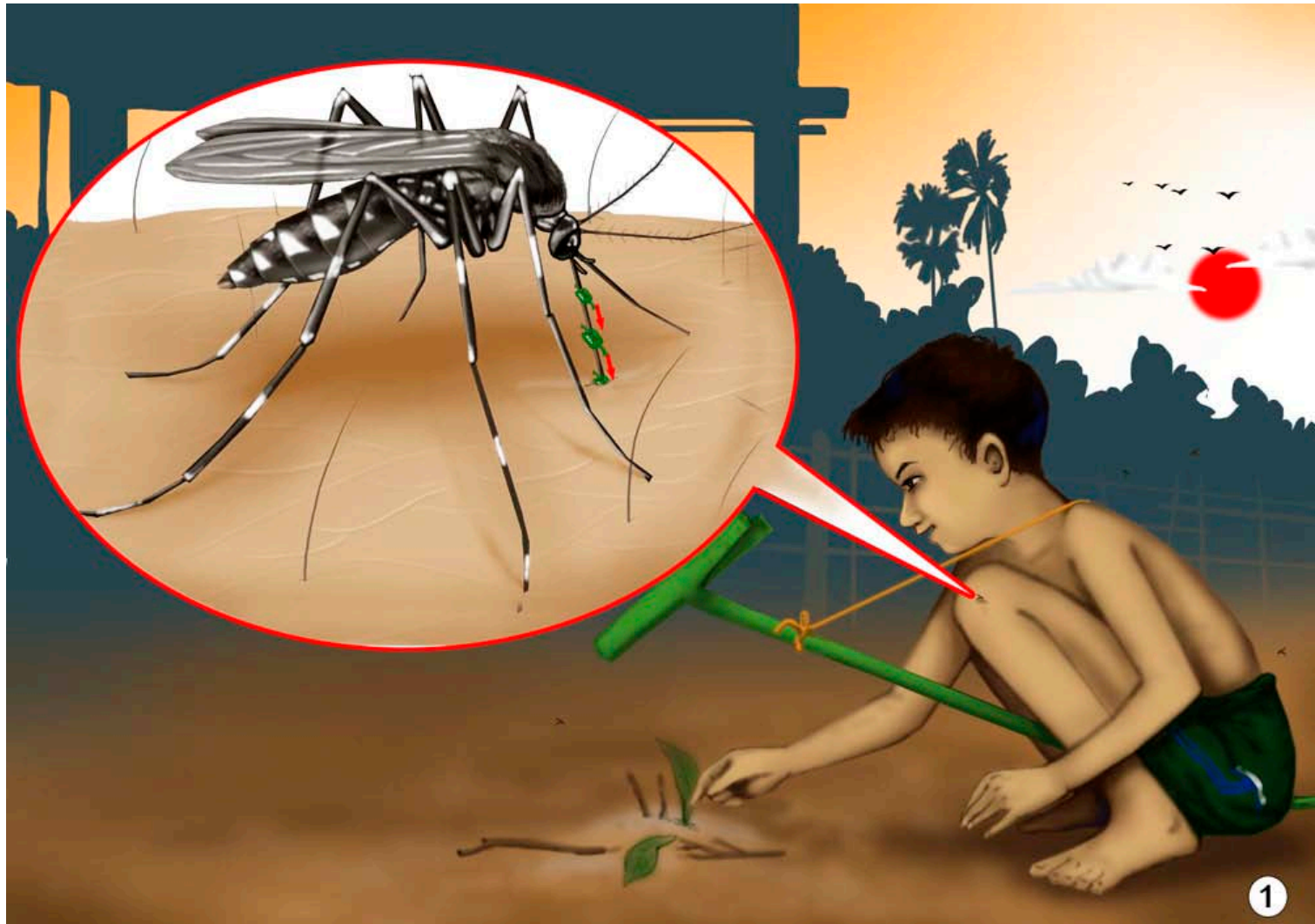
6 Walk-in clients (all females) of Mother and Child Hospital. Age: 24 to 36 years old

12 Villagers (9 females & 3 males; age – 25 to 52 years old) of Ban Kaoleo. This village is known for jar making and pottery. All had experienced dengue in the family.

14 Secondary school teachers (11 females & 3 males; age – 25 to 40 years old) of Vientiane High School.



Card 1. Dengue fever is an illness spread by the bite of the *Aedes* mosquito.



# Comprehension

- ❑ All five groups of FGD participants recognized that the child is bitten by a mosquito.
- ❑ They also noted that since the child does not wear a shirt, the more he is exposed to mosquito bites.
- ❑ Mosquitoes bite at daytime. They noted the sun in high position that represents daytime.
- ❑ The zoom in illustration of the mosquito is clear. The group of teachers and villagers of Kaoleo recognized the zebra color of the mosquito, whereas the villagers call it “*neunglay*”, the striped mosquito. “*Neunglay*” is the local equivalent for *Aedes*.

# Acceptance

- All FGD groups noted that the child plays “*makankoy*”. It is a game common in villages that uses banana fronds to make it a toy horse. However, they expressed that the game should be played by more than one child.
- Health care providers of Mother and Child Hospital were not clear about what the child is doing on the soil.





# Attractiveness

❑ According to the medical staff of Xaythany District Hospital, the zoomed illustration of the mosquito attracts attention. More so if the illustration of the child's skin will be enhanced in terms of color and details of the epidermis.

❑ The health care workers did not like the illustrated virus brought by the mosquito. Virus cannot be seen by naked eye.

❑ The child with no shirt leaves the impression that he is at risk of mosquito bites.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Health staff of both hospitals recognize that the illustration can be directed to people of all ages, not only to children who are risk of mosquito bites.
- ❑ Health staff of Xaythany District Hospital however, emphasize that parents should protect their children from mosquito bites.
- ❑ One client of the Mother and Child Hospital acknowledged that this card will be useful as a teaching material in school. She said that as a teacher, she uses illustrated materials inside the class. Unfortunately, highly colorful illustrated teaching materials are not always available.

# Involvement

□ Being mothers, the walk-in clients of Mother and Child Hospital claimed that they are moved by the illustration. They are made aware that their children who play outdoor, a common sight in their neighborhood or village, are exposed to mosquito bites.

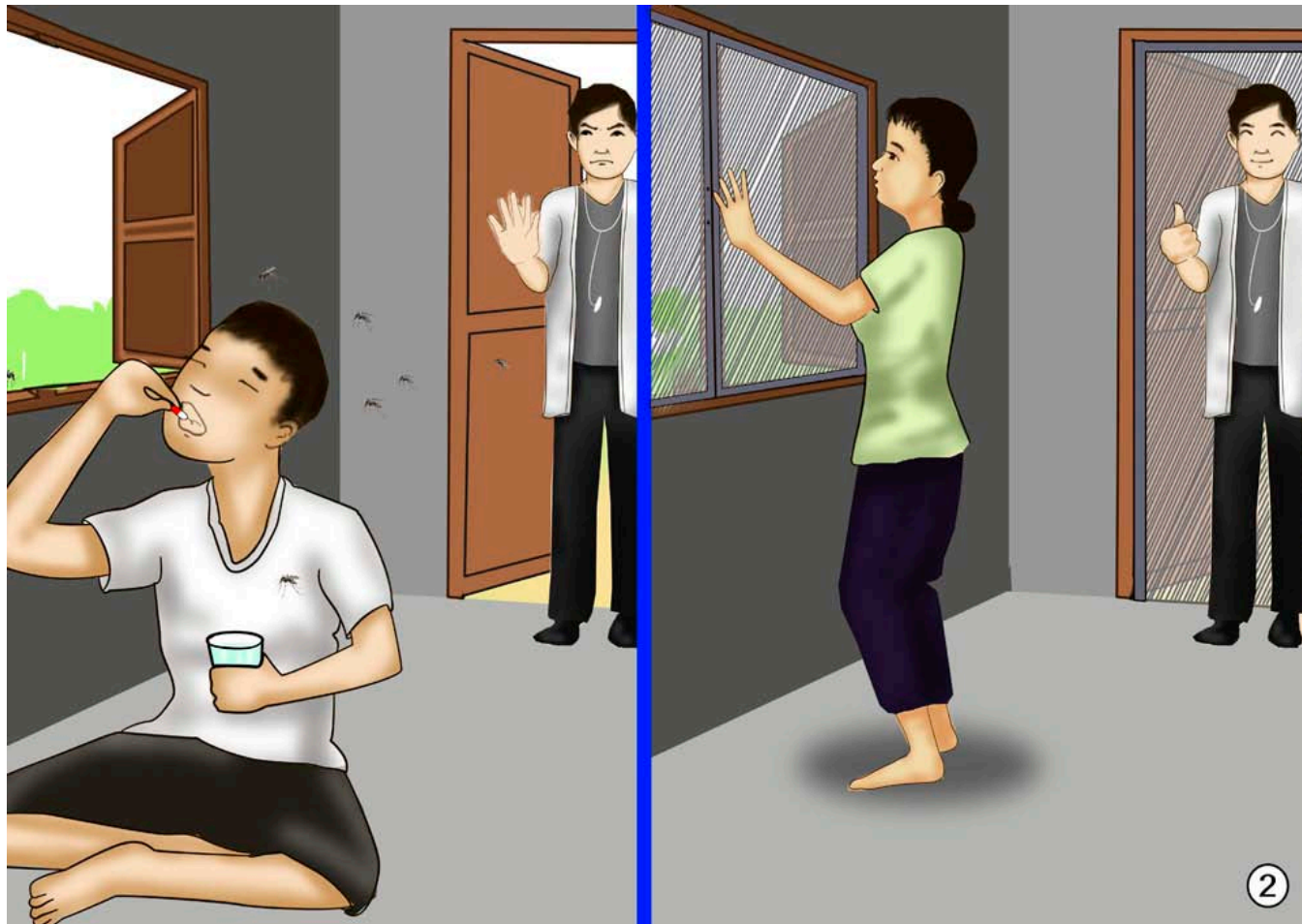
□ The health staff of both hospitals opined that this illustration is more directed to parents ---  
Parents should know how to protect their children from mosquito bites.



# General Opinion

- The illustration could have been better if the child is wearing a shirt.
- The child is playing with somebody else, because this local game is played by more than one player.
- The position of the sun is fine, but sun's color should be changed. Not red.
- The color of mosquito proboscis (the part that sucks blood) should be changed. The illustration of the virus (in green) should be deleted. Virus cannot be seen by naked eye.
- All medical staff in both hospitals believe that the illustration will be better understood if text is printed somewhere on the page.

Card 2. There is no drug to treat dengue, but you can protect yourself and your family from getting sick by preventing the Aedes mosquito from breeding and gathering.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Health care providers got the message that one should not take drugs without doctor's prescription.
- ❑ They also perceived that one can protect himself and family from mosquitoes by putting screens on windows, per advice of the doctor.
- ❑ Clients from Mother and Child hospital expressed the advantage of putting screen to avoid mosquitoes coming inside the house. However, they claimed that putting screens in their houses is not common in Vientiane and in villages.
- ❑ All respondents, however, did not get the connection of the first frame to the second one. (*There is no drug to treat dengue.....but you can protect yourself and your family from getting sick by preventing the Aedes mosquito from breeding and gathering.*)

# Acceptance

- ❑ Villagers from Ban Kaoleo confirmed that people take medicines by themselves when they are sick. People self medicate.
- ❑ The group of teacher said that one should not take any medicine without consulting health staff.
- ❑ As a practice, villagers let their doors and windows open to allow air and rays of sun to come in . Their houses do not have screens.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ The man taking the drug is clear.
- ❑ Health care staff of the Xaythany District Hospital claimed that the doctor who advises not to take drugs by your own – this catches attention.
- ❑ Having the screen in the house is good to see, but this is not common in Laos. It depends on the financial capacity of people.





# Call to Action

- ❑ Health care workers said that it would be easy to keep the house clean but not to have it screened.
- ❑ Respondents in all groups noted “Take the doctor’s advise - not to take any drug without doctors’ prescription.”



# Involvement

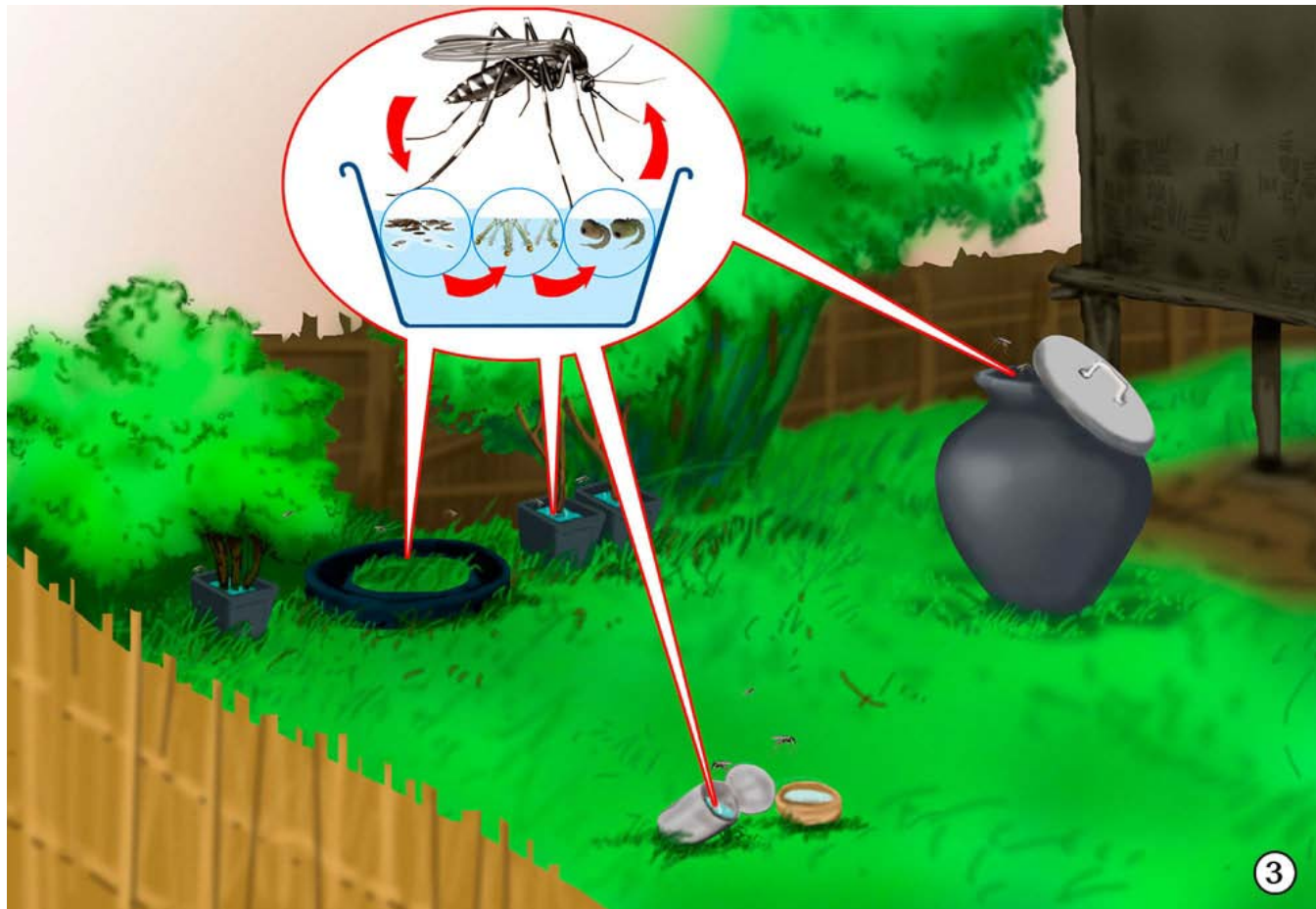
- In all groups, respondents said that this card should be directed to people in the city who can afford to put the screen.
- Almost all respondents said that the images show to everyone that one way of preventing mosquitoes come into the house is by putting screens in windows. It may sound ideal, but it depends on the financial capacity of households.
- All health care workers claimed that they should remind people not to take any drugs without the advice of medical personnel.

# General Opinion

- ❑ The health staff of Xaythany District Hospital said that the doctor could have been noticed more if he is looking face-to-face with the man.
- ❑ The doctor's shirt should have collar and be closed.
- ❑ The image could be understood better if the text to explain the image is placed on the same page of the illustration.



Card 3. To prevent the breeding of the *Aedes* mosquito, you must prevent water from collecting in your home and surroundings. (*The Aedes mosquito prefers to breed in clean, still water easily found in our homes.*)



# Comprehension

- Respondents in all groups agreed that the image shows the kinds of containers in their surroundings that could be breeding grounds of mosquito larvae. These are cans, jars with no cover, and old auto tires.
- The situation being depicted in the image is a common sight in Vientiane city and in villages.



# Acceptance

□ All respondents also agreed that potential users or viewers of this material can easily recognize the images. Illustrated containers are all around in their neighborhood and community.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ Health care workers from both hospitals liked the illustrations of the containers including the grass. However, some noted that the color of the grass is too green.
- ❑ The villagers of Kaoleo appreciated the images. They claimed that the presentation could have been real if animals were added in the illustration.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Respondents in all groups opined that the illustration calls their attention to clean their surroundings and containers shown in the card are living grounds of mosquitoes.
- ❑ They all agreed that the illustration tells them to keep their place clean and their water jars covered.





# Involvement

All respondents agreed that this card is directed to every people in the community.

□ Among teachers of Vientiane High School and walk-in clients of Mother and Child Hospital, they are aware that cleaning the containers every time will destroy the larvae.



# General Opinion

- ❑ The illustration depicts Lao context. The situation that is presented is quite real.
- ❑ Some health care workers in both hospitals noted that the sketch of the mosquito larvae should include information of one week. This is to inform people that they should clean at least every week.



Card 4. Every day, you should remove water from places where it can collect, such as water jars, pails and watering cans, pot plates, potted plants, trays, flower, drains, and gutters.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Respondents in all groups said that the illustration is a continuation of the earlier (no. 3) illustration. The images tells them what to do with the uncovered jars, cans and other containers in the yard filled with water.
- ❑ The illustration shows cleaning of the surroundings , destroying the breeding grounds of mosquitoes, and covering their water containers.



# Acceptance

- ❑ Respondents in all groups claimed that the illustration realistically shows Lao setting.
- ❑ Walk-in clients of Mother and Child Hospital quipped that health personnel who visit their villages used to tell the same message – keep their surroundings clean and free from living places of mosquitoes.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ All respondents found the illustration attractive.
- ❑ Some medical staff however saw that the grass is greener than the real grass. In real situation, they said, the ground is not fully covered by grass; there are patches of soil. Animals are also present.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Respondents from all groups claimed that the image strongly suggests that cleaning the surroundings will destroy the breeding grounds of mosquitoes.
- ❑ They also agreed that people can practice cleaning. Cleaning is a common activity that only needs their time and no other resources from their end.



# Involvement

- ❑ All health care workers from both hospitals believed that this image should be seen by people living in similar environments.
- ❑ Cleaning as a practice can be done by families and communities.





# General Opinion

- The message of the illustration is very clear.
- Cleaning is the most practical way of destroying the larvae, if people will do it regularly.
- The health care workers suggested to add image of day or time to indicate doing the suggested action regularly.
- The health care workers of Xaythany District Hospital noted that some animals must be added to graze the grass. The grass, if there is water, could also be a breeding ground of mosquitoes.

Card 5. Clean places around your home where mosquitoes like to hide, like in cool, dark places.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Respondents in all groups recognized that the action is clear. Cleaning will disturb the mosquitoes in dark places where they often stay.
- ❑ Opening the windows will let the rays of the sun come in and lessen the darkness in the room.
- ❑ Changing the water in flower vases, for example will destroy the larvae.



# Acceptance

- ❑ Among walk-in clients of Mother and Child Hospital, health staff and volunteers encourage them to clean the house more often.
- ❑ Image of the house presented in the illustration represents the same setting of a Lao house in the city with minimal furniture. But a Lao house in the village usually is a one-room affair.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ Health staff of Mother and Child Hospital noted that they like the image of the family members working together to keep the house clean.
- ❑ Most of the respondents observed that the image shows a living room which can be real in some houses in the city.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Health care workers of Xaythany District Hospital said that this image is a good material to be shown in the community.
- ❑ The teachers noted that when the house is regularly cleaned, mosquitoes will not stay.



# Involvement

□ Respondents in all groups acknowledged that this illustration can be shown to everyone in the community. Everyone in the family should be concerned in keeping members in the family protected from mosquito bites.



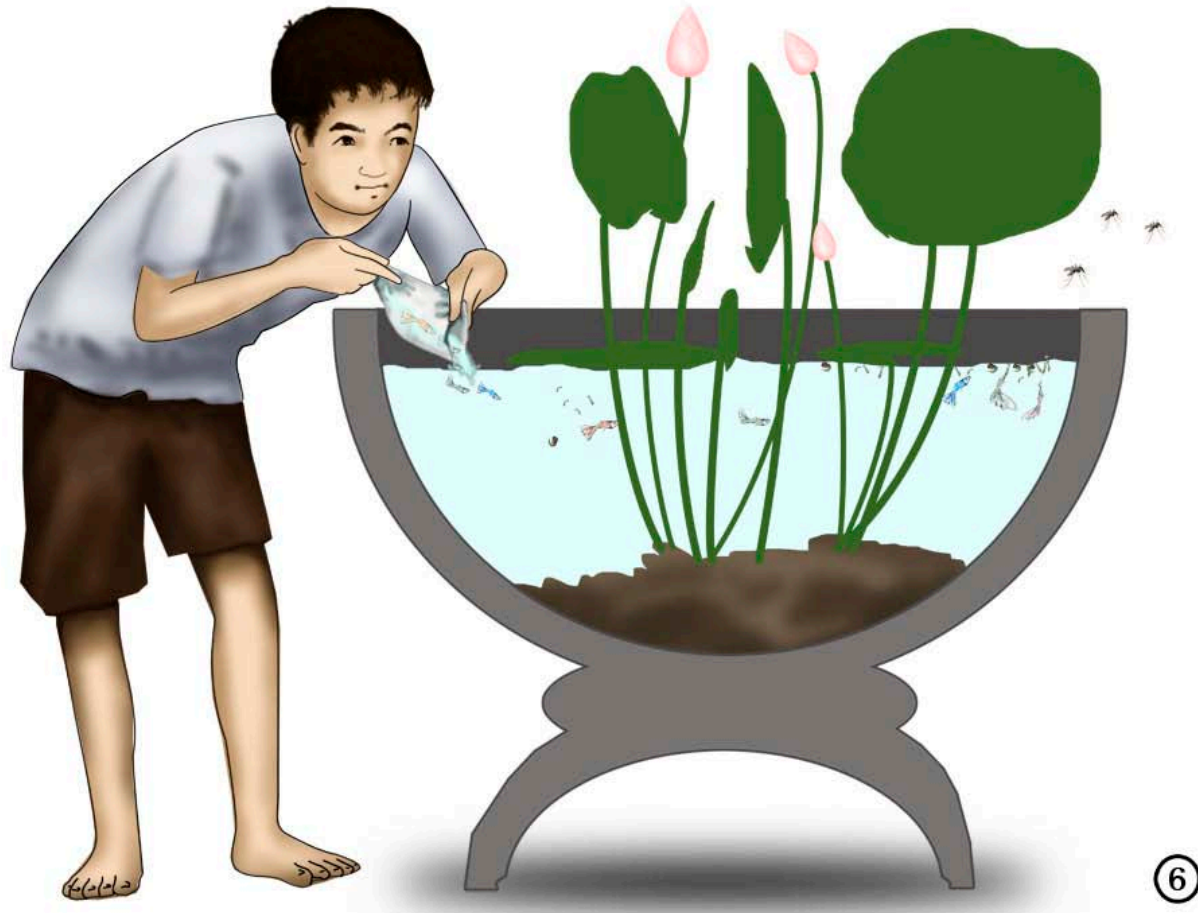
# General Opinion

□ Health care workers of Xaythany District Hospital opined that the image shows a living room in the city. However, they think that be it in the city or in the village, cleaning which in a way destroys the breeding sites of mosquitoes, should be consciously observed by households.





Card 6. Put larvae-eating fish "*pahanukleung*" in water containers.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Respondents in all group agreed that using the larvae- eating fish called “*pahanukleung*” is very popular. This larvae-eating fish has been promoted by the government since the country has experienced dengue outbreak.
- ❑ The image that presents the fish-eating larva is clear.



# Acceptance

□ Half of the health care workers of Mother and Child Hospital and half of those in Xaythany District Hospital noted that while the government and monks promote putting the “*pahanukleung*” in water containers for domestic consumption, some prefer to put salt or the powder being provided by the government.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ Respondents in all groups found the image to catch attention. All respondents liked the lotus pond. They liked the lotus plant considering the sacred implications of the lotus plant in their lives.
- ❑ The images in the pond are clear. However, most of the respondents remarked that it will be much better if sketch of the fish eating the larvae (actual) in water will be made a little bit bigger.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Health care workers from the Xaytahany District Hospital and walk-in clients from Mother and Child Hospital expressed that using the fish-eating larvae is easy to do. Many people have done it. It is a popular practice both in the city and in villages.
- ❑ The health care workers also added that the fish is not expensive. It costs about 2000 LAK only and it will multiply fast within a week.



# Involvement

- Respondents in all groups think that the image and the message can be shared with people in the community especially the households.
- They also added that the practice of using larvae –eating fish has been done in the past and they have never heard of any negative story about it.



# General Opinion

- ❑ All respondents agreed that the image clearly promotes the use of larvae –eating fish to destroy the larvae of dengue mosquito.
- ❑ The larvae-eating fish could be given more emphasis if it will be drawn a bit bigger than its present sketch.



Card 7. You can also prevent mosquito bites by using mosquito repellents, coils, and nets.





# Comprehension

□ Respondents in all groups understood the image and the message. They said that the illustration promotes sleeping under the net; putting mosquito repellent lotion, and burning the mosquito coil.



# Acceptance

- ❑ Health care workers in both hospitals acknowledged that they promote the three practices.
- ❑ Mosquito nets, mosquito repellent lotion and mosquito coils are locally available.
- ❑ Female respondents from Ban Kaoleo noted that they usually put their children to sleep under the net. Their husbands are outside the house at day time.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ Health care workers of Mother and Child Hospital said that the image catches attention particularly the mosquito nets.
- ❑ They also said that people can easily recognize the image because mosquito nets are common in the community.  
One household may have more than one mosquito net.



# Call to Action

□ Villagers from Ban Kaoleo noted that this image suggests that sleeping under the mosquito net, using mosquito repellent lotion, and burning mosquito coils will protect a person from mosquito bites.



# Involvement

- ❑ Respondents in all groups agreed that this image and corresponding message is directed to people in the community.
- ❑ The teachers' group added that only parents can do the burning of the mosquito coils; it should not be encouraged among young children.



# General Opinion

❑ All respondents in all groups that the message of the illustration is clear. The three practices (sleeping under the mosquito net; using insect repellent lotion; and burning mosquito coils) being promoted are simple and people can practically follow.

❑ The illustration should include children sleeping under the net. In most cases, adult men do not sleep under the net at daytime.



Card 8. The *Aedes* mosquito usually bites during the day, so be especially careful to avoid mosquito bites at dawn and dusk.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Villagers from Ban Kaoleo said that the image shows the man and woman doing some activities. While doing so, the man and woman listen to the radio.
- ❑ The teachers said that the clock at the background indicates that the mosquitoes are about to come and bite people.





# Acceptance

- ❑ The teachers remarked that the image shows that it is getting dusk. Community people are not mindful about time when they work.
- ❑ The villagers from Ban Kaoleo noted that the cloud of mosquito at the background is not realistic. Mosquitoes do not come from the sky.
- ❑ The villagers from Ban Koaleo also confirmed that people usually do the same activity outside the house.
- ❑ Health care workers from Mother and Child Hospital said that making baskets is common among village men. Listening to the radio while working is also common if they have the radio.



# Attractiveness

- ❑ Health care workers of Mother and Child Hospital find the image interesting and attractive particularly the cloud of mosquitoes coming.
- ❑ Villagers of Ban Koaleo liked the clock that indicates the time for people more likely to be bitten by mosquitoes.



# Call to Action

□ All respondents agreed that this image and message would tell people to be mindful when mosquitoes will be more active at daytime.



# Involvement

□ Health care workers of Xaythany District Hospital emphasized that this message should reach rural people who are engaged in activities that require their unlimited time. These people should be made aware on what time of the day mosquitoes are likely more active.



# General Opinion

- ❑ Respondents in all groups agreed that overall the image is clear. The message is also clear.
- ❑ Some villagers of Ban Kaoleo said that in real settings, the men do not wear shirts. Thus, they are more prone to mosquito bites.
- ❑ Some also said that mosquitoes fly lower ( in contrast to the illustration that mosquitoes come from the sky).



- ❑ All respondents also said that the illustration would be better understood if text goes with it as part of the page.

Card 9. The symptoms of dengue can include high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, joint pain, skin rashes and mild bleed.



# Comprehension

- Health care workers of the two hospitals confirmed that the message is correct.
- The illustration clearly shows that the person is sick, with high fever, body sore, with skin rashes.
- The sick person stays at home. He puts blanket around his body



# Acceptance

- ❑ Health care workers in both hospitals commented however that the illustration is not correct. Technically, the blanket wrapped to the sick person should be taken out.
- ❑ One of the villagers said that her skin was more red than the illustration when she had dengue fever.



# Attractiveness

- Health care workers in both hospital said that the illustration is clear. The message becomes complicated because they do not advice the use of blanket when a person has high fever.
- They said that putting wet towel at the forehead of the sick person to lower the fever is a common practice in the community.

# Call to Action

❑ The villagers of Ban Kaoleo said that if one will experience high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, joint pain, skin rashes and mild bleed, he has to be worried about it. He has to go to the hospital and seek treatment.



# Involvement

□ Health care workers in both hospital commented that this message should be shared to people in the community. More often, villagers experienced fever and they themselves take Paracetamol or any pain reliever. They should see the illustration that symptoms of dengue cases should be given serious attention.



# General Opinion

- Overall, respondents in all groups said, that the illustration as well as the message is clear.
- The illustration needs revision – take out the blanket around the body of the sick person.
- The skin should be shaded with more red.
- The illustration, when finalized, should have the text on the same page.

Card 10. If you think you have dengue fever, you can take pain relievers, rest, and drink plenty of fluids. If you feel worse in the first 24 hours after the fever reduces, consult with a health care provider.



# Comprehension

- ❑ Respondents in all groups believe that the message is clear. *“If you think you have dengue fever, you can take pain relievers, rest, and drink plenty of fluids.* Illustrations to show these actions are appropriately provided.
- ❑ They also think when the woman calls an ambulance, it indicates that the sick person is in serious condition.



# Acceptance

- ❑ Respondents in all groups noted that calling an ambulance is not a common practice in Vientiane Capital, more so in the villages.
- ❑ In the villages, people who are likely to have dengue initially stay at home, take Paracetamol and oral rehydration solution (ORS). They will see the medical personnel after two days if condition does not improve.



- ❑ The blanket around the sick person's body should be taken out.
- ❑ The sick person needs a pillow. He is lying in an awkward position.

# Attractiveness

- ❑ Some health care workers of Xaythany District Hospital like the state ambulance (195) an indication that people knows what to do during emergency. But the state ambulances which are not many in Vientiane can only be seen more frequent at the Lanexang Avenue, in front of the morning market.
- ❑ The same health care worker respondents also shared that to get an ambulance is expensive for people. Cost of the ambulance is normally charged against the sick person.
- ❑ Villagers of Ban Kaoleo added that they are not aware of the state ambulance. They go directly to the hospital to see a doctor.



# Call to Action

- ❑ Respondents in all groups opined that this card should be used by health care workers. They should emphasize the message to clients.
- ❑ Illustration of the ambulance should be dropped. It would be better to show a sketch of the hospital or clinic to show that the woman calls a medical staff in the hospital.



# Involvement

- ❑ Respondents in all groups agreed that this card will be effective to people who are likely to have dengue fever.
- ❑ The health care workers noted that while it makes sense for people to know the symptoms, and for them to know how to seek treatment, it is equally important for them to know of the ways how to avoid contraction.

# General Opinion

- The ambulance is not commonly availed by people. Some families who can afford get the services of the state ambulance.
- The illustration of the ambulance can be replaced by a drawing of a hospital to indicate that the woman is calling the hospital.
- The sick person should be provided a pillow under his head.
- The illustration or the card should be provided text of the message.