



Mr. Lamas Leang receives the malaria drug administration for the second time. Photo by Khorn Linna/CRS

Malaria Target Drug Administration Prevents Malaria

SUCCESS STORY

Chong Village is located in Nhang Commune, Andong Meas District, Ratanakiri Province, northeast of Cambodia, next to the Vietnam border. The village is quite remote, and the road condition to the village is terrible. It takes more than 2 hours to travel by car from Ratanakiri Town. The village is covered by dense forest and range of mountains. The total population of the village is 1,015 (Female: 357). A significant proportion of the population are from an ethnic group called Jarai. The Jarai are farmers and collect goods from the forest to support their livelihood. By spending a lot of time in the forest where there are many mosquitoes, they have a higher chance of getting infected by malaria.

Mr. Lamas Leang is an ethnic Jarai living in Chong Village. He has a very poor family. He can't write and speak the Khmer language well. He supports his family's living by farming and collecting forest products in the deep forest where there is malaria. Mr. Leang has had malaria many times in the past.

As Mr. Leang explains, "In the past, I got malaria many times. When I got sick, my family was in trouble because no one worked to generate income. My kids did not have enough food to eat. I knew that malaria was caused by mosquito bites. I tried to protect myself, but my work put me at risk of getting malaria."

Since 2021, CRS has been partnering with the National Center for Parasitology Entomology and Malaria Control (CNM) and Provincial Health Department to implement the Last Mile Activities under RAI3E Malaria Project, which aims to eliminate malaria in hard to reach locations of Cambodia. The project is implemented in three target provinces, namely Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, and Stung Treng. Target Drug Administration (TDA) is one of the essential activities of the Last Mile, which administers Artesunate/Mefloquine twice to men between 15 to 49 years old to prevent them from getting malaria.

When the TDA activity was conducted in Chong Village, Mr. Leang was invited to get drug administration two times. At first, he was hesitant to take the drug, but later he found that it really helps to prevent him from malaria. The TDA activity helped not only Mr. Leang, but other men in the village. According to Mr. Hor Mengkea, Provincial Malaria Supervisor of Ratanakiri Province, "In 2021, the number of malaria cases decreased significantly compared to 2020. Particularly, Plasmodium falciparum (Pf) cases decreased remarkably from more than 100 cases in 2020 to only 18 cases 2021."

After Mr. Leang received malaria drug administration, he has not had malaria anymore. He is confident. He can perform his job in the forest without fear. Mr. Leang said, "Now I can earn income for my family continuously. At the same time, I share my experience with other men in my village to take the malaria preventative drug like me."