

malaria
consortium

disease control, better health

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Dr Khin Maung Than
Township Medical Officer

Dr Khin Maung Than works as a Township Medical Officer, where he oversees all health initiatives in Wuntho township in the Sagaing region of Myanmar. Based on his experience collaborating with Malaria Consortium, he felt that the integrated community case management (iCCM) approach for childhood illnesses – assessing and treating danger signs for malaria and diarrhoea and assessing and referring for pneumonia – is an excellent approach for strengthening community-based primary healthcare. Through Comic Relief-funded [Expanding Rural Communities' Access to Health Services in Myanmar](#) project, Malaria Consortium is supporting the country to reach universal health coverage, by providing basic healthcare services to hard-to-reach villages.

Great improvements have been seen in Wuntho as a result of this approach; Dr Khin Maung Than believes it is helping to reduce the

township's under-five deaths. Timely referral to hospital by malaria volunteers (MV) is a key factor which can enable early, life-saving treatment. In addition, in 2018 there were no under-five deaths reported for diarrhoea and pneumonia.

In Dr Khin Maung Than's opinion, the success of the iCCM approach in Wuntho township is strongly associated with community engagement and mutual trust. This includes trust between supervisors and MVs, and between MVs and the community. Wuntho Township has been implementing community dialogues, an approach pioneered by Malaria Consortium that encourages engagement with all sections of the community, thereby strengthening community ownership of health issues. Dr Khin Maung Than believes this two-way engagement is essential for the health system to thrive.