

# MALARIA PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES IN BHUTAN

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**Abstract.** The aim of this study was to understand the perceptions and practices concerning malaria in Bhutan so as to initiate a basis for further study. This study was conducted from July to August 2007 by using focused group discussions with health workers, community members and village health workers. Our study revealed that certain portions of the fever patients in the community seek alternative remedies within their communities before availing modern treatment facilities. The main factors causing delay reporting to the health facility were long distance to the health facility, socio-cultural and religious practices, financial, lack of manpower, and lack of knowledge, cultural norms and quality of services from health facilities. It can be concluded that there is still a major problem seeking early diagnosis and prompt treatment by a fever patient. In order to overcome the problems and achieve the program goals, further studies are needed to generate evidences in developing interventions to promote the early diagnosis and prompt therapy.

**Key words:** malaria, perceptions, practices, Bhutan

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