

Dr. Sha, T-RAD Clinic Medical Director, recognizes the importance of a laboratory in medical care and discusses the impact the T-RAD Clinic lab has had on people in the area.

“Twenty-thousand patients in two years is a large quantity for any clinic, but it is enormous considering that the entire population of the Ler Doh (Kyaukkyi) township is 113,000. However, not all patients come from this area. Some Karen travel for hours to receive treatment from the T-RAD Clinic.

There is very little training, few medical clinics, and understaffing. For many in Karen State, the nearest treatment facility with a laboratory is T-RAD, which is unassociated with any medical division. Every year during the rainy season, the Karen face additional difficulties because of the increase in mosquitoes causing dengue and malaria. Dengue reduces white-blood cells, while malaria attacks red-blood cells. The only way to tell is to examine the blood under a microscope. Our laboratory has three main tools. The microscope is the primary tool for diagnosis used in the lab. The second is a biomedical machine. The third machine performs a test called immunoassay. Recently, the T-RAD Clinic lab initiated another strategy for meeting the high demand of lab technicians and the need in KDHW areas, where they have yet to develop a lab technician training program. The T-RAD Clinic started their own program that trains technicians from different labs in specialized fields. This past month, the clinic trained and housed two visitors. Saw Kyi Lin was trained in blood transfusions and Saw Eh K’lie in malaria.”

As the lab grows, Dr. Sha hopes to increase the number of students to whom they can offer lab training.

