

**The Mahidol-Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit:  
hub and spoke anatomy and a long gestation**

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The Mahidol – Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit, funded by the Wellcome Trust and hosting the Trust’s Thailand Major Overseas Programme, is a tropical medicine research collaboration between Oxford University in the UK and Mahidol University in Thailand. The main research interests are the epidemiology, diagnosis, pathophysiology and treatment of malaria, scrub typhus, melioidosis, leptospirosis and other tropical infections which impose a substantial disease burden on rural populations throughout this populous region. The Unit has a ‘hub and spoke’ structure, with the main administrative offices and laboratories embedded within the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, but most clinical studies and much of the laboratory work taking place in ‘up-country’ study sites. The Unit operates major clinical study sites in Thailand, Laos, Bangladesh, and Mozambique. In addition there are numerous smaller projects throughout the region, including collaborations with hospitals in India, Cambodia, Burma, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The Unit is nearly 30 years old, and has been successful in conducting and promoting tropical medicine research and improving the clinical management of malaria and other diseases in the region and beyond.