In response to the request of Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) of China, FAO initiated a mission aimed at assisting China to strengthen its national animal health laboratory networks for more efficient animal disease surveillance and control. Two international experts Dr Gwenaelle Dauphin and Dr Filip Claes from FAO HQs visited China from 7th to 20th October 2014. Their visits covered four cities: Beijing, Harbin, Qingdao and Shanghai. The mission was mainly to review existing Chinese laboratory networks and policies, consolidate the information gathered, define strategies and priorities, and make recommendations.

With support from staff of the FAO Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) China, Dr Dauphin and Dr Claes visited China Animal Disease Control Center (CADC), Beijing Animal Disease Control Center, Harbin Veterinary Research Institute (HVRI), Heilongjiang Provincial Animal Disease Control Center, China Animal Health and Epidemiology Center (CAHEC), Shanghai Animal Disease Control Center and Shanghai Veterinary Research Institute (SHVRI).

The mission team visited the laboratory at each organization and had discussion meetings with senior management /laboratory leaders and experts to gather detailed information on their laboratories, such as mission, mandate, activities, funding sources, connection with other national reference laboratories and provincial laboratories. On 20th October, they met with representative from the Veterinary Bureau (VB) of the MoA, provincial ACDC laboratory directors and persons responsible for laboratory quality management. Dr Dauphin and Dr Claes had discussion with the representatives from different provincial laboratories, did a debriefing to the VB about their visits in China, and provided recommendations on laboratory system, laboratory testing and capacities and data sharing.

The Linking Epidemiology and Laboratory Research on Transboundary Animal Diseases in China and EU (LinkTADs) first progress meeting was co-organized by Shanghai Veterinary Research Institute and FAO and was held in Shanghai from 15th to 16th October 2014. Prof John Edwards, Senior Technical Coordinator; Dr Li Shuo, National Project Coordinator from FAO ECTAD China attended the meeting. The meeting aimed at reviewing the achievements for the past year and defining the plans for the future. In the welcoming speech that was given by Prof Edwards, he noted that LinkTADs is a very important project in terms of linking epidemiology and laboratory science in the EU and China, FAO China’s role is to support all partners and acts as a bridge between EU and Chinese partners.

The LinkTADs Second Workshop on Vaccine and Diagnostic Technology Development on Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses was held in Shanghai on 17th October 2014. The main objective was to strengthen the collaborations among partners on diagnostic technologies and vaccine development, with special emphasis on the linkage between epidemiology and laboratory research in the prevention and control of important animal diseases and zoonoses for both EU and China. 45 participants including scientists, experts and students from 19 institutions from China and Europe attended the workshop.
Dr Guo Fusheng from FAO ECTAD China chaired the session on “linking laboratory with epidemiology”, he encouraged all participants in China to strengthen the links between their laboratory research and epidemiology. The China Field Epidemiology Training Program for Veterinarians (FETPV) network could play an important role in setting up the bridge.

FAO attendance at the workshop on improving biosecurity and value chain analysis in Guangxi

The workshop on improving biosecurity and value chain analysis was held in Yulin, Guangxi Province on 15th October 2014. This workshop aimed to develop a better understanding of the risks of avian influenza to Guangxi Province and from Guangxi by using the value chain analysis approach. Over 50 participants attended the workshop, including veterinary officials from different levels of the Animal Diseases Prevention and Control Center (ACDC) and Animal Health Inspection Institute (AHII), managers and traders from live bird markets, managers from poultry breeding companies, FAO and the China Animal Health and Epidemiology Center (CAHEC). Dr Guo Fusheng and Mr Tang Hao from FAO ECTAD China helped with facilitation of the workshop. The local veterinary officials appreciated FAO and MoA’s support for H7N9 prevention and control in Guangxi, and believed this project will make significant contribution to understand the risks of avian influenza for Guangxi and neighbouring areas.

In the company of local veterinary authority staff, representatives from FAO ECTAD China and CAHEC visited the live bird wholesale markets in Yulin and Guiyang, and poultry breeding companies in Yulin on 16th to 17th October to gain better understanding of the situation of local live bird markets and poultry industry. Information on the markets and the biosecurity status, trading volume was collected through interviews and observations.

FAO assistance for workshop on improving biosecurity and value chain analysis in Hunan Province

The workshop on improving biosecurity and value chain analysis was held in Changsha, Hunan Province on 28th October 2014. This workshop aimed to improve live bird market biosecurity and develop a better understanding of the risks of avian influenza to Hunan Province and from Hunan by using value chain analysis approach. Over 40 participants attended the workshop, including veterinary officials from the Animal Diseases Prevention and Control Center (ACDC) and Animal Health Inspection Institute (AHII) at different level, managers and traders from the live bird market, managers from the poultry breeding companies, FAO (Dr Guo Fusheng) and CAHEC (Dr Shen Chaojian). The local veterinary authority attaches great importance to this project and is willing to provide their full support.

Through the workshop, participants’ understanding on value chain analysis approach was improved. Dr Guo Fusheng from FAO ECTAD China, Dr Shen Chaojian from CAHEC and Dr Huang Jianlong from Hunan ACDC will further discuss with Hunan veterinary authority on how to improve the biosecurity of the selected LBM in Hunan.

Upcoming Activities:

2. LinkTADS policy meeting on ASF to be held in Beijing on 17th November 2014.
3. The training on African Swine Fever (ASF) Epidemiology and Risk Assessment will be held in Beijing from 19th to 21st November 2014.
4. China-Viet Nam bilateral collaboration meeting will be held from 4th to 5th December 2014 in Nanning, Guangxi.
5. China-Lao PDR-Myanmar tripartite collaboration meeting will be held in Lao PDR from 8th to 10th December 2014.

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