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EMERGENCY CENTRE FOR TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES • FAO REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Walking the talk regionally

Introducing the Regional Communication Strategy Framework in Bangladesh and Indonesia

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Four days, two countries, two workshops, one outcome. Between April 26 and 30, the communication team of the Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases Regional office for Asia and the Pacific (ECTAD-RAP) conducted two similar workshops in Dhaka, Bangladesh and in Jakarta, Indonesia. Supported by funds from USAID, both workshops had the goal of introducing the *Regional Framework for a Communication Strategy against Emerging Infectious Diseases in Asia and the Pacific 2011-2016*, and helping participating countries assess their need for a national communication strategy based on this framework.

Drh. Pudjiatmoko, Director of Animal Health, Government of Indonesia, makes the opening speech at the workshop in Jakarta, flanked (to his left) by Dr James McGrane, Country Team Leader of FAO ECTAD Indonesia, and by Dr. Murti Utami, MPH, Head of Public Communication Center of the Ministry of Health

The *Regional Framework for a Communication Strategy* represents the output of an FAO-led collaboration including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC), and the Academy for Educational Development (AED), with inputs from the World Health Organization South East Asia Regional Office (WHO SEARO).

Both workshops, which convened high-level officials from the respective countries' ministries of health, agriculture and environment, as well as other ministries, departments of livestock development, NGOs and international agencies and donors, were unanimous in strongly recommending that a One Health based communication strategy against EIDs based on FAO's regional strategy framework be developed in Bangladesh and in Indonesia.

Bangladesh's Secretary of Fisheries and Livestock, Mr Ujjwal Bikash Dutta makes the opening speech at the workshop. Sitting on the panel are (from the left) Mr Md. Ashraf Ali, Director General, Department of Livestock Services, Mr Mosharraf Hossain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock and Dr Mat Yamage, Chief Technical Advisor, Country Team Leader of Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases, FAO Bangladesh

Intersectoral meetings

The meeting in Bangladesh, held at the Dhaka Sheration Hotel on April 26 and 27, was attended by 37 participants including representatives from the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, in addition

to other ministries, the Department of Livestock Services, the Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute, the Directorate General of Health Services, and the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research.

Representatives from WHO and UNICEF also attended. Professor Thomas Abraham, Director of the Public Health Communication Department of the University of Hong Kong, was the keynote speaker at both workshops, and made a clear case for paradigm shift in communication as the world moves towards One Health.

Professor Nitish Debnath, National Coordinator of One Health Bangladesh, said of the workshop, "One Health in Bangladesh has now crossed the professional boundary to include its proponents from bureaucrats and communication professionals."

The workshop in Indonesia, held on 29-30 April at the Sari Pan Hotel, Jakarta, was attended by 45 participants representing the animal health sector, human health sector and the environment sector, in addition to USAID and other donors, NGOs and the government's Central Management Unit.

In both workshops, a three-person task force drew up a list of recommendations based on participant inputs. The top recommendations in both countries were the need for explicit government endorsement and the adoption of One Health and the development of a One Health communication strategy against EIDs based on the Regional Communication Strategy Framework.

Extreme left: ***Professor Thomas Abraham of Hong Kong University, keynote speaker at the Dhaka and Jakarta workshops, spoke on the implications of One Health for communication.*** *Left:* ***Dr Mat Yamage, Chief Technical Officer/Country Team Leader, ECTAD Bangladesh, speaks at the opening ceremony.***
Above: ***Mr C Y Gopinath, Regional Communication Coordinator, FAO ECTAD-RAP, clarifies a point to participants at the workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia***

Strengthening surveillance in India

In recent times, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), SARS, Nipahvirus and other EIDs have revealed a critical and urgent need to enhance animal disease surveillance and epidemiology to ensure early detection of disease and quick response. Improving surveillance capacity is precisely one of the aims of the USAID-funded project *Immediate Technical Assistance to Strengthen Emergency Preparedness for HPAI to India*.

Existing systems

The project targets existing surveillance systems within the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fishery, and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, both under the Ministry of Agriculture of India. Recently, the Project Directorate on Animal Disease Monitoring and Surveillance, Bangalore (PD_ADMAS) requested FAO's help in assessing the current surveillance system. FAO's Dr Akiko Kamata, Animal Health Officer, and Dr. Paul White , Spatial Epidemiologist, undertook a field trip to conduct the research.

They learned that PD_ADMAS has created a credible foundation for national animal health status and disease surveillance, establishing a countrywide network of 15 cooperating veterinary diagnostic laboratories. Using data from these collaborating laboratories together with nationally supplied data PD_ADMAS has developed an easy-to-use internet-hosted data management and querying system called the National Animal Disease Referral Expert System (NADRES) that is used for disease location forecasting and economic impact analysis for economically important livestock diseases.

Below left to right: ***Dr Uma (PD_ADMAS); Dr Rajeshwari Shome, Principal Scientist (PD_ADMAS); Dr Mukund Gajendragad, Principal Scientist (PD_ADMAS); Dr K Prabhudas, Director (PD_ADMAS); Dr Paul White (Spatial Epidemiologist, FAO India); Dr Akiko Kamata (Animal Health Officer, FAO Rome); Dr Divakar Hemadri Principal Scientist (PD_ADMAS)***

Photos: Paul White, FAO

REGIONAL UPDATE

Towards a better network

South Asian countries meet in Kathmandu to plan how to make their laboratory networks stronger

Consultation for establishing a network of regional leading diagnostic laboratories in South Asia

2-4 March 2011 • Kathmandu, Nepal

Thirty nine participants, including 28 laboratory focal people from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka attended the *Consultation for Establishing a Network of Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratories in South Asia* organized by FAO from 2-4 March 2011 in Kathmandu, Nepal, with support from the European Union.

The objectives were to identify key regional diagnostic laboratories and develop a plan to strengthen capacities, identify mechanisms to support networks of national laboratories to improve the laboratory diagnosis of the priority highly pathogenic emerging diseases (HPEDs), and to provide technical input to develop rational disease control strategies.

The main activities of the regional laboratory network will focus on the following; 1) facilitate resource mobilization for strengthening regional diagnostic laboratories; 2) identify training needs and conduct training in diagnostic tests; 3) isolate and characterize viral strains in each country to define disease prevalence and provide information for vaccine strains to be used in the control programme; 4) supply laboratories with reagents and other expendable and nonexpendable materials; and 5) in cooperation with WHO and the human health sector develop harmonized diagnostic procedures, standards and training related to cross-cutting HPED issues.

Dr Mohinder Oberoi (standing), ECTAD Sub-Regional Manager, facilitated break-out group discussion on FMD network activities

Linking market chains with epidemiology risk assessments

26-27 April 2011 • Bangkok, Thailand

What if the market chain approach were to be integrated more explicitly into epidemiologic risk assessments? A consultative workshop, *The integration of livestock market chain analysis in the control of HPEDs in South and Southeast Asia*, was held on 26-27 April 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand, to explore precisely this.

The objectives of the workshop, which was supported by the European Union, were to develop guidelines for the implementation of livestock market chain studies to be used in the control of HPEDs in South and Southeast Asia; to prioritize the required epidemiological (human and animal) and socio-economic data to identify efficient and equitable interventions to reduce disease maintenance and transmission of HPEDs; and to identify the required data collection techniques, data storage and data analysis and modelling techniques.

Dr Subhash Morzaria, Regional Manager, ECTAD-RAP, reminded everyone in his speech that the aim is improved control of endemic and epidemic, transboundary, emerging and re-emerging diseases. He pointed out that some value chain methodologies could be improved to give a clearer indication of how value chain elements are related to disease risk.

Dr Jan Hinrichs, Animal Health Officer (second from left), ECTAD-RAP, Dr Eric Brun, Chief Technical Advisor, Control Implementation and System Development, (second from right) at the workshop

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HOW THEY CLEANED UP

The Dhaka live bird market

Photos: C Y Gopinath

There was a time when the Banalata Baboshayee Samity market for live broilers and chickens, in the heart of Dhaka, Bangladesh, used to be a foul-smelling, unhygienic place where customers held their noses as they shopped for chicken. Blood and feathers and feces marked the gutters and floors, amidst the cacophony of birds. Wastes were not disposed off properly. Processing over 20,000 birds a day, the live bird market was also a hot spot for the transmission of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). Birds were slaughtered in the stalls and out on the streets without regard to biosecurity.

The USAID-funded FAO Bangladesh project has changed all that. In its first phase, the project has contributed to reducing the spread of HPAI H5N1 in 24 live bird markets (LBMs) in Bangladesh including eight in Dhaka, through a Cleaning and Disinfection (C&D) Program. The Banalata Baboshayee Samity chicken market, with about 150 vendors, is one of the renovated markets. FAO has implemented the C&D initiative in collaboration with the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the Department of Livestock Services (DLS), the market committees and the vendors in these markets. Banalata is the only live bird market supplying poultry, meat and eggs to about 250,000 residents.

The program goal was a sustainable sanitation and disinfection program that would minimize the spread of HPAI. Floors were tiled, making them easier to clean; new water lines and drainage pipes were laid; electricity connections and water pipes were installed through the market; the traditional bamboo baskets in which chicken were caged were replaced with metallic ones, easier to clean. Karcher machines, used is the west for such cleaning tasks, were imported, together with spraying equipment and disinfection materials.

Key to the success of the operation was to confine all slaughter to a designated slaughterhouse. Vendors objected, arguing that there was no space available in the already crowded market to erect a slaughterhouse. Finally, a small area was found by the staircase. A vendor, Mizanur Rahman, realizing that such a small room would not be enough as business grew over the years, argued with his co-vendors. A larger space was allocated for the slaughterhouse.

Cleaners were trained. FAO also provided technical oversight and logistic supports through September 2010 in preparation for the winter peak season for HPAI.

In Banalata market, FAO facilitated regular C&D services of 72 vendor stalls and all vehicles (on average, seven pickup trucks and 15 rickshaw vans). There was an immediate upturn in sales, as consumers began finding the clean premises more inviting. Daily sales of poultry grew from about 12,000 to about 18,000. The market committee became enthusiastic about the program and vendors agreed to start paying for cleaning services.

Noting the impact of a designated slaughterhouse upon poultry sales, the market committee has constructed a new slaughterhouse with its own finances.