STRENGTHENING PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS IN ASEAN THROUGH ANIMAL HEALTH

SUMMARY PROGRESS UPDATE
SMART ASEAN PROJECT
JUNE–DECEMBER 2021

Strengthening the regional cooperation and capacities in preventing animal-to-human (zoonotic) diseases and transboundary animal diseases has been ASEAN’s commitment under the agreement on the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Animal Health and Zoonoses (ACCAHZ).

FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), with a long history of collaboration with the ASEAN Member States on pandemic preparedness and response, continues to support ASEAN through the Strengthening Mechanisms in Animal Health for a Resilient ASEAN (SMART ASEAN). It is a two-year project funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The project was endorsed by the Forty-third ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) Meeting on 27 October 2021.

Key outputs of the project:
- Enhanced regional coordination and collaboration among multi-sectoral partners and stakeholders in ASEAN
- Strengthened and functional ASEAN coordination mechanisms to prepare and respond to emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) with pandemic potential
- Strengthened ASEAN technical capacity for pandemic preparedness and response
- Improved and inclusive policies on pandemic and zoonotic disease risk reduction in ASEAN

With financial and technical support from...
PROGRESS IMPLEMENTATION PER OUTPUT
JUNE-DECEMBER 2021

1. Enhanced regional coordination and collaboration among multi-sectoral partners and stakeholders in ASEAN
   - Completed: 33%
   - Ongoing: 56%
   - Not implemented in the reporting period: 11%

2. Strengthened and functional ASEAN coordination mechanisms to prepare and respond to EID with pandemic potential
   - Completed: 8%
   - Ongoing: 92%

3. Strengthened ASEAN technical capacity for pandemic preparedness and response
   - Completed: 0%
   - Ongoing: 88%
   - Not implemented in the reporting period: 12%

4. Improved and inclusive policies on pandemic and zoonotic disease risk reduction in ASEAN
   - Completed: 0%
   - Ongoing: 60%
   - Not implemented in the reporting period: 40%

ALL OUTPUTS
- Completed: 11%
- Ongoing: 77%
- Not implemented in the reporting period: 11%

KEY ACTIVITIES

- ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL) endorsed the project on 15 August and 6 September 2021, respectively, and officially launched it at the Forty-third AMAF Meeting in October 2021. **Next step:** conduct the project inception meeting to discuss possible synergy and collaboration opportunities with relevant key stakeholders and partners.

- Initiated collaboration and coordination with relevant Australian health investments. **Next step:** conduct bilateral meetings with relevant Australian agencies to identify areas for potential partnership and complementarity with the project’s objectives.

- Conducted two quarterly coordination meetings between FAO, ASEAN Secretariat and DFAT to update on the status of the project implementation and future planned activities. **Next step:** continue the quarterly coordination call.

- Re-strengthened the ASEAN Regional Support Unit (RSU) to support the establishment and ensure operationalization of ACCAHZ. **Next step:** recruit three technical advisors and one operations specialist to support ASEAN RSU and ACCAHZ operationalization. In addition, a GEDSI expert will also be recruited to review the GEDSI component of the project.
• Reviewed the ASEAN Animal Health Trust Fund (AAHTF) agreement and identified potential ways for the Trust Fund to support ACCAHZ operationalization.

• Participated in the Fourth Joint Meeting of the ASEAN Plus Three Field Epidemiology Training Network (ASEAN+3 FETN) and ASEAN Veterinary Epidemiology Group (AVEG) to identify potential opportunities for joint activities to support the five-year strategic framework of collaboration between ASEAN+3 FETN and AVEG. **Next step:** follow up on the decisions made during the Fourth Joint Meeting of the ASEAN+3 FETN and AVEG.

• Reviewed the laboratory and epidemiology frameworks in ASEAN, discussed the progress of the review with the lead countries and identified what support is needed. **Next step:** draft the monitoring tool for the laboratory and epidemiology frameworks.

• Participated in the Seventeenth ACCAHZ Preparatory Committee Meeting to support the re-strengthening of the ASEAN RSU. The ACCAHZ Operationalization Action Plan for 2021-2023 was drafted and agreed upon during the meeting. **Next step:** conduct bilateral meetings with the relevant ASEAN Member States responsible for finalizing the ACCAHZ Rules of Procedures.
• Identified activities to support the implementation of various ASEAN animal health frameworks through FAO tools such as the Surveillance Evaluation Tool (SET), Laboratory Mapping Tool (LMT) and Epidemiology Mapping Tool (EMT). **Next step:** present at the ASEAN Laboratory Directors Forum (ALDF) and the AVEC the complete list of potential FAO-supported activities in laboratory and epidemiology.

• Developed Terms of Reference (ToR) to hire two consultants to conduct reviews and studies on gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) and risk reduction along ASEAN value chains. **Next step:** conduct reviews and studies to contribute to inclusive and evidence-based risk reduction policies and practices along ASEAN value chains, and to ensure consideration of GEDSI aspects for the SMART ASEAN project.

"FAO is committed to supporting the implementation of the establishment of ACCAHZ and ensuring its operationalization. I am confident that this project will contribute to reducing risks and spread of transboundary animal diseases and emerging infectious diseases in ASEAN," - Rajendra Aryal, FAO Representative for Indonesia and Timor-Leste

"Through the partnership with FAO, our technical support and resources are available to reinforce ASEAN’s animal health systems and coordination with key stakeholders. The important project focus is supporting ACCAHZ," - Jillian Ray, Counsellor Australia Mission to ASEAN