



EU funded Highly Pathogenic and Emerging and re-emerging Diseases (HPED) Programme
4th Steering Committee Meeting - Summary Report

Tokyo, Japan, 16 July 2013

Introduction:

The 4th Steering Committee Meeting of the European Union (EU) funded Programme on Highly Pathogenic and Emerging and re-emerging Diseases (HPED) was organised on 16 July 2013 in Tokyo, back to back with the 7th Regional Steering Committee Meeting for Asia and the Pacific of the Global Framework for Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs). The meeting was attended by participants from OIE, FAO, WHO, Regional Organizations, namely ASEAN and SAARC, as members of the Steering Committee, and by representatives from SPC and some countries in the Region as observers.

Session 1 – Opening Session

The Opening Session, which was chaired by Dr Noriyoshi Ojima (MAFF, Japan), started with the welcoming addresses from Dr Juan Lubroth, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr Gyanendra Gongal, Scientist at the WHO Regional Office for South East Asia (SEARO) and Dr Gardner Murray, Special Adviser to the OIE. It was followed by the opening address from Mr Peter Sturesson, Programme Manager, European Commission (EC).

Welcoming address by Dr Juan Lubroth, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer

Dr Juan Lubroth

Dr. Lubroth highlighted the important of livestock contribution to food security and economic developments, amid growing number of world population which would reach 9.3 billions in 2050. The EU HPED programme is a novel approach to strengthen capacities at the regional level. By the end of the programme, which is scheduled to be at the end of 2014, it is expected to have a stronger ASEAN and SAARC in their capacities to address concerns and threats of highly pathogenic emerging and re-emerging diseases. Dr. Lubroth thanked the European Union for their initiative to support the important programme, setting forward a better coordinated response to minimise impacts of TADs and HPEDs.

Welcoming address by Dr Gyanendra Gongal, Scientist at the WHO Regional Office for South East Asia (SEARO)

Dr Gyanendra Gongal stated that the outbreaks of SARS, avian influenza (H5N1, H7N9) and Nipah virus in Asian countries clearly demonstrated that new highly infectious and/or highly pathogenic agents periodically emerge at the human-animal interface, and will continue to emerge in the future. To effectively address zoonoses and emerging diseases at the human, animal and ecosystem interfaces, a 'One Health' approach, which emphasizes multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach at various levels, is increasingly being adopted.

It is important that the European Union has supported regional cooperation programme in Asia which was designed to promote multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration for prevention and control of high impact and/or highly pathogenic emerging diseases at the human-animal interface. While implementing HPED Project, FAO, OIE and WHO have institutionalized a tripartite coordination mechanism at regional level and the three organizations are working together at country level for surveillance, prevention and control of zoonoses and emerging diseases. Three partner organizations have recognized the value of working together for common goal and such partnership has been institutionalized at global and regional levels. It is now evident that working together to establish a common understanding and to develop a common approach to a problem is cost-effective, efficient and time saving. Regional specialized organizations such as ASEAN and SAARC have an opportunity to work together with technical organizations such as FAO, OIE and WHO to move forward regional initiatives. Rabies elimination, avian influenza control and pandemic preparedness are some of the examples of tripartite coordination and collaboration.

Welcoming address by Dr Gardner Murray, Special Adviser to the OIE

On behalf of the Director General of the OIE, Dr Gardner Murray welcomed the participants to the 4th HPED Steering Committee Meeting. He emphasized the complexity of the programme, with many interrelated components, which explains the delay at start and the need for an extension of the OIE component.

The HPED programme is fully consistent with the global agenda and activities of the OIE, and with the tripartite collaboration between the OIE, the FAO and the WHO. In this context, the OIE provides its support to the countries, as the direct beneficiaries, with the overall support of ASEAN and SAARC.

Dr Murray underlined that the meeting should examine the progress of the activities, but also the future after the end of the programme.

Opening Address by Mr Peter Sturesson, Programme Manager, European Commission

Mr Peter Sturesson, on behalf of the European Union (EU), stated that the HPED programme is one of the most important and interesting programme run by the EU in Asia and he recognised that it is a long time process, since diseases affect human health and livelihood in the long run.

Diseases still continue to spread and remain unpredictable, with new pathogens originating from animals. Therefore, the EU regional strategy for Asia gives priority to programmes on transboundary animal diseases. Mr Sturesson emphasised the importance of

transboundary actions and of multi-country and multi-sectoral coordination, in line with the One Health approach.

The EU is one of the largest donors for the response to the avian influenza crisis, and places its action in the context of a long term vision linked to development and investment in the institutions.

The HPED programme, elaborated in 2009, is a logical step in this process that encompasses disease control, food security, human health and nutrition, alleviation of trade restrictions and strengthening of institutional capacity of regional institutions and their secretariats.

Mr Sturesson underlined the advantages of the HPED programme comparing to others: development of complementarity and synergies between animal and human health sectors; integrated approach where the three components are implemented separately but in a coordinated manner; regional approach, even though the activities are implemented at country level.

He closed his intervention by stating that the Steering Committee will look at the progresses and challenges of the programme in view of improving its implementation.

Session 2 – Introduction and Scene Setting

This session was chaired by Dr Agnes Poirier, Programme Coordinator at the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia (OIE SRR SEA) in Bangkok, and started by an introduction of participants.

Dr Kachen Wongsathapornchai, ASEAN Regional Support Unit Coordinator at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO AP) in Bangkok, presented the recommendations of the third Steering Committee Meeting, held in Bangkok on 17 July 2012. The recommendations were grouped into 5 main areas, including synergy and stakeholder engagement, multi-sectoral coordination, priority diseases, system strengthening, and programme management. The agenda of the 4th Steering Committee meeting was structured so that the recommendations could be followed up on their implementations and achievements.

Session 3 – Progress of the HPED Programme

This session was chaired by Peter Sturesson, and included the presentation, by the three international organisations, of the status of implementation of their respective component.

The OIE component by Ms Emily Tagliaro

Ms Emily Tagliaro, Project Officer at the OIE Headquarters, commenced by recalling recommendations of the 3rd HPED Steering Committee and of the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission and indicated the steps taken by the OIE, namely the request for no-cost extension of the programme and the revision of the logical framework with measurable outcome and impact indicators.

She then presented the activities implemented to date by the OIE which, as indicated in the project document, are (i) the establishment of a regional vaccine bank; (ii) the implementation of the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway; (iii) capacity building activities; (iv) communication and visibility actions.

Regional Vaccine Banks

The regional antigen/vaccine bank for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) has been operational since November 2011 and its budget has been increased early in 2012 after consultation of the stakeholders and authorization by the EU for the re-allocation of funds within the project. As of 15 July 2013, a total number of 1,400,000 doses have been delivered to Lao PDR (200,000 doses of trivalent O/A/Asia 1 vaccines in May 2012 and 600,000 doses of bivalent O/A vaccines in March 2013), to Myanmar (200,000 doses of bivalent O/Asia 1 vaccines in June 2012 and 300,000 doses of bivalent O/Asia 1 vaccines in January 2013) and to Cambodia (100,000 doses of trivalent O/A/Asia 1 vaccines in February 2013).

The regional vaccine bank for rabies has been operational since March 2012 and its budget remains unchanged. As of 15 July 2013, a total number of 1,700,400 doses have been delivered to Lao PDR (50,000 doses in September 2012 and 120,000 doses in June 2013), to Viet Nam (200,000 doses in December 2012), to the Philippines (500,000 doses in February 2013) and to Sri Lanka (300,400 doses in June 2013) and additional deliveries are already scheduled for next semester.

The OIE is progressively receiving reports from the beneficiary countries on the impact of the vaccination conducted, including the strengths, weaknesses and lessons learnt, and will use the data to populate the logical framework with outcome indicators.

PVS Pathway

The OIE PVS Pathway is a continuous process aiming to sustainably improve compliance of Veterinary Services with international standards and their sustainable efficiency. It consists of subsequent steps: the country PVS evaluation, which is a qualitative assessment of the Veterinary Services' performance and their compliance with the OIE international standards on the quality of Veterinary Services, using the OIE PVS Tool; the PVS Gap Analysis, which facilitates the definition of the Veterinary Services' objectives in terms of compliance with relevant OIE standards, taking into account national constraints and priorities, and includes the formulation of an indicative operational budget; PVS Pathway follow-up, which consist of follow-up missions to measure the progress made, as well as specific activities, projects and programmes on veterinary legislation, strengthening of laboratories, development of Veterinary Statutory Bodies and harmonization of competencies acquired through veterinary education establishments. Twinning projects have also been inserted under the umbrella of the PVS Pathway.

A state of play as of 1 July 2013 demonstrates that in the OIE Asia, Far East and Oceania region, out of the 32 members, 19 have requested a PVS evaluation mission, 18 missions have been implemented and 11 mission reports are available. More specifically, 14 out of the 18 HPED eligible countries have undertaken a PVS evaluation (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, DPR Korea, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam), while the OIE conducted a PVS Evaluation training session for self-evaluation in PR China in April 2012 with the participation of 62 veterinary officials.

Regarding the PVS Gap Analysis, out of the 32 members of the OIE Asia, Far East and Oceania region, 15 have requested a mission, 11 missions have been implemented and

10 mission reports are available. 10 of these missions were carried out in HPED eligible countries: Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Furthermore, PVS Pathway follow-up missions were also undertaken in HPED eligible countries: 2 PVS evaluation follow-up (Lao PDR, Viet Nam); 6 PVS legislation (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Viet Nam); 1 PVS Pathway for laboratories (Lao PDR).

This shows that 89% of the HPED eligible countries are engaged in the PVS Pathway. Out of the 14 HPED countries which undertook a PVS evaluation, 93% have requested a PVS Gap Analysis and 71,4% have already received the mission.

Ms Tagliaro also provided information regarding the work done in identifying the synergies and opportunities between the OIE PVS Pathway and the assessment and monitoring tool of the WHO International Health Regulations (2005).

Regarding the laboratory twinning projects implemented at global level, 14 projects have been completed, 27 are underway and more than 35 are under investigation. As an important outcome of this support, 3 candidate laboratories, including Changchun Veterinary Research Institute in PR China, have been designated as OIE Reference Laboratories at the OIE General Session in May 2012. Nine laboratory twinning projects are currently being implemented in 6 HPED eligible countries (Afghanistan, PR China, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam).

In view of the results garnered from the laboratory twinning mechanism, the OIE has launched twinning programmes on veterinary education and for Veterinary Statutory Bodies. The first OIE veterinary education twinning project has been launched on 9 July 2013 between the University of Minnesota (USA) and Chiang Mai University (Thailand) and a twinning project between the Thai Veterinary Council and the Veterinary Council of Ireland is in preparation.

Capacity building

The third activity consists of the organisation of national and regional capacity building workshops and seminars for the newly appointed National Delegates to the OIE and for the OIE National Focal Points in the following topics: Animal disease notification (WAHIS); Wildlife diseases; Veterinary Products; Animal Production Food Safety; Animal Welfare; Aquatic Animal Diseases; Communication; Laboratories. To date and since the commencement of the HPED programme, 19 seminars have been conducted, covering all 9 training subjects.

Visibility actions

Lastly, the fourth activity of the OIE component is to conduct visibility actions, which were performed at several occasions in relation to the donation of FMD and rabies vaccines and the implementation of vaccination campaigns.

To summarise, the support provided by the OIE to the HPED eligible countries through several ways such as the Regional Vaccine Banks, the OIE PVS Pathway and the regional capacity building seminars, contributes to improving the governance of Veterinary Services in the region.

The FAO component by Dr Kachen Wongsathapornchai and Dr Mohinder Oberoi

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has employed a result-based approach to implement the highly pathogenic emerging and reemerging diseases (HPED) programme funded by the European Union. The HPED programme – FAO component has been

implemented in two sub-regions of ASEAN and SAARC. Dr. Kachen Wongsathapornchai, ASEAN Regional Support Unit (RSU) Coordinator, provided an update of progresses under the ASEAN component, and Dr. Mohinder Oberoi, SAARC RSU Coordinator, updated activities from SAARC countries. The overall objective is to strengthen ability of ASEAN and SAARC to prevent, control, and eradicate HPED. Expected results (outputs) which are harmonized for the two sub-regional components include functional regional coordination mechanisms established, improved understanding of epidemiology of HPEDs, and improved diagnostic capacities for HPED in South and South East Asia regions. The posters summarizing key activities implemented from July 2012 to June 2013 were prepared and were made available to participants' viewing during the meeting.

For the ASEAN component, the following key achievements were highlighted in the presentation.

- Establishment of the ASEAN Regional Support Unit based in FAO RAP: The ASEAN RSU has been recognised as an interim coordination of the ASEAN owned coordination mechanism, namely the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Animal Health and Zoonosis (ACCAHZ), which is currently being established. ACCAHZ will be a platform for a sustainable regional coordination mechanism, beyond the project's life. To ensure the smooth transition and establishment, ASEAN also recognises the role of the ASEAN RSU to perform the functions of ACCAHZ until the ACCAHZ becomes fully functional in 2017;
- Support for the establishment of ACCAHZ
 - 1st Draft of the ACCAHZ Establishment and Financial Agreement was developed, and will be presented to SOM-AMAF in September 2013,
 - Member States agreed to provide financial contribution both in kind and in cash,
 - Effort to streamline existing mechanisms, i.e. HPAI Taskforce, CSF, etc, was ongoing;
- Regional strategic framework for laboratory capacity building and networking was developed and endorsed in August 2012;
- Regional strategic framework for veterinary epidemiology capacity development and networking was developed and endorsed in December 2012;
- Establishment of the ASEAN Ad-hoc Communication Group for Livestock (ACGL) is in the process, with TORs and work plan being drafted; and the strategic framework and transition strategy are under the development;
- Support the 1st Joint Meeting of ASEAN livestock (ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock; ASWGL) and human health (ASEAN Expert Group on Communicable Disease; AEGCD) sectoral bodies. It was the first time for the ASEAN animal and human health sectors met and formally discussed on possible collaboration. This was a big step forward to strengthen and promote animal-human health collaboration under the One Health approach;
- Regular disease tracking and information sharing through existing platforms such as EMPRESi, GLEWS, periodical updates, bulletins, which were shared among networks both within and outside ASEAN Member States and partners.

Dr. Wongsathapornchai highlighted strong engagement of ASEAN and SAARC in project planning and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Key focus of the activities was to ensure sustainability of the programme inputs and outputs thereby ensuring engagement and ownership of the regional organisations and their member states. Dr. Wongsathapornchai also emphasised that the EU HPED has been implemented under FAO programmatic approach in complementary and synergy with other existing FAO projects, building on successes, and trying to address gaps and issues.

The WHO component by Dr Gyanendra Gongal

Dr Gyanendra Gongal, Scientist at WHO Regional Office for South East Asia, New Delhi, presented a progress report of the HPED Project (Public health component) on the behalf of the World Health Organization. The project has been instrumental in fostering closer collaboration among three partner organizations and regional specialized organizations. Both the WHO regional offices for South East Asia and Western Pacific are working together to implement the Asia-Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases (APSED) to enhance collective public health security. This project has contributed to strengthen coordination mechanisms between human and animal health sectors for prevention and control of zoonoses at the human-animal interface.

Emerging diseases and zoonoses at the human-animal interface

The Asia-Pacific Region has been the epicentre for emerging infectious diseases. International media highlighted outbreaks of hand-foot-and-mouth disease in Cambodia and Nipah virus in Bangladesh. Outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) continue to occur in many Asia-Pacific countries and Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia and Viet Nam reported human cases of AI (H5N1). Anthrax and leptospirosis outbreaks were reported from a number of countries. These outbreaks reiterated the need for closer collaboration between animal health and human health sectors and WHO has been working closely with ministries of health of the respective countries to control outbreaks and build response capacity to deal with acute public health events.

Collaborative activities with ASEAN and SAARC

WHO has participated in a number of meetings and workshops organized by ASEAN and SAARC Secretariats for its Member States which helped to promote better understanding for project implementation and follow-up action. Consultation with ASEAN and SAARC Member States was crucial to define the future direction of project activities and to take responsible ownership of the project. Although it took the ASEAN Secretariat a long time to sign the Letter of Exchange due to procedural reasons, it did not affect project implementation, as the focus was on country activities. WHO has been attending annual meeting of the ASEAN Expert Group on Communicable Diseases (AEGCD) and the recommendations of the meeting were taken into consideration. WHO attended the annual meeting of AEGCD and the ASEAN Rabies Workshop held in Manila in November 2012.

A consultation on epidemiological and laboratory networking in Colombo (from 27 to 28 March 2011) was hosted by the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka in coordination with the SAARC Secretariat and facilitated by WHO. As per the recommendation of the SAARC consultation, a draft proposal 'SAARC Rabies Elimination Project' was discussed and Sri Lanka was identified as a lead country to move the project proposal forward. An expert consultation was organized by the SAARC Secretariat on 29 March 2012 to finalize the "SAARC Strategy for Prevention and Control

of Communicable Diseases” which was endorsed during the SAARC Health Ministers Meeting held in Male in April 2012. The finalization and endorsement of the SAARC Strategy for Communicable Diseases was a landmark event as it is in line with IHR (2005) and covers capacity building for public health response, establishment of centres of excellence, networking of health institutions, cross-border collaboration, information exchange and mitigation of antimicrobial resistance.

Regional activities on priority zoonoses

Rabies elimination is a regional public good. A strategic framework has been advocated for human rabies transmitted by dogs in the South-East Asia Region and Member States are developing a comprehensive rabies elimination programme to implement it using ‘One health’ approach. The region is encountering outbreaks of endemic and emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and it is important to update the knowledge and competency of clinicians and health professionals working at field levels. A training module on clinical recognition, case management and control of EID/zoonoses has been finalized and many countries are expected to adapt it according to country needs and run a training of trainers’ course in 2013. Prototype health education materials on zoonotic diseases of regional importance were developed which were used by Member States for adaptation and translation into local languages. Similarly, a resource material on EID/zoonoses has been finalized for media persons, health workers and the general public. Training workshops on behaviour change communication were organized in Bhutan and Maldives for prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases.

Functional coordination mechanism between human and animal health sectors

All countries have established a coordination mechanism between human health and animal health sectors and WHO, together with partners, is encouraging Member States to broaden the scope of inter-sectoral coordination, i.e. prioritization of zoonoses and capacity-building for a long-term preparedness and response mechanism against emerging zoonoses. The coordination mechanism between human health and animal health sectors has been strengthened and expanded to the sub-national level through collaborative activities in most countries such as joint risk assessment and outbreak investigation, pilot projects, training and workshops. Diagnostic kits and reagents for rabies, chikungunya fever, dengue fever, leptospirosis and scrub typhus have been supplied to countries in need. Technical support to develop national guidelines for prevention and control of rabies was provided to Pakistan. Myanmar has phased out production and use of nerve tissue vaccine in September 2012, as WHO has advocated introduction of cost-effective intradermal rabies vaccination as an alternate. In the Western Pacific Region, Member States like Mongolia and Philippines have developed multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms against zoonosis and strengthened them at the sub-national level. Joint surveillance and outbreak response between animal and health sectors have been conducted.

Tripartite coordination and collaboration

As a continuation of shared responsibilities among three organizations, the OIE coordinated organization of the third regional zoonoses workshop in Bali from 27 to 29 November 2012. Three organizations and partners expressed their commitment to continue supporting the strengthening/improved functioning of national coordination mechanisms between animal, human, environmental and other relevant sectors to address zoonotic and other emerging and re-emerging diseases at the country level. WHO will be hosting the fourth regional workshop on collaboration between the animal and human health sectors on

prevention and control of zoonoses in collaboration with FAO and OIE in Kathmandu from 27 to 29 November 2013.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of reviewing APSED progress during the annual APSED Technical Advisory Group Meeting and it is important to streamline indicators and other parameters to avoid duplication. Taking account of the IHR monitoring tool, WHO has been working with Member States and partners to develop a minimum set of APSED indicators and agreed on mechanisms that should be used for result-based monitoring of APSED (2010) implementation progress. All donors and partners supporting APSED activities have agreed to accept a common narrative report which is a rational and cost-effective step for donor reporting.

The European Union contracted a consultant for a Result-oriented Management (ROM) mission to evaluate the HPED project activities under WHO. The WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia facilitated meetings with major stakeholders in Bangkok, Jakarta, New Delhi and Kathmandu including teleconference with health officials in Bangladesh and the WHO Regional Office for Western Pacific. The ROM mission had an opportunity to discuss the scope and impact of HPED project activities with health officials from selected countries, WHO country offices and officials from the ASEAN and SAARC secretariats. The mission acknowledged the technical quality of work done under the HPED Project and could appreciate the comparative advantage of working with participating countries and partners through WHO. The mission advised revision of M&E tools and indicators for better assessment of HPED Project implemented through consultation between the WHO Regional Offices for South-East Asia and Western Pacific which has been incorporated while submitting progress report for 2012.

Next steps

Using the 'One health' approach, FAO, OIE and WHO are coordinating global and regional activities to address health risks at the human-animal-ecosystems interface through multi-sectoral cooperation and multidisciplinary collaboration. The implementation of HPED project is helping to galvanize cooperation and collaboration among these regional organizations. Since HPED project activities were launched lately due to complex nature of activities and need for multi-sectoral coordination and agreement, the project has gained momentum in last two years, it is logical to seek no-cost extension up to one year considering fund availability and proper justification.

Visibility

WHO is aware of communication and visibility action during implementation of the HPED Project and a brief introduction of HPED Project funded by the European Union is given at the beginning of the meetings, seminars or training workshops organized under project sponsorship. All ASEAN, SAARC countries and international partners promoting 'One Health' concept are aware of this Project which is implemented by FAO, OIE and WHO at country and regional levels.

Sustainability

The Asia-Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases will continue to play a vital role in guiding Member countries, WHO and partners in future efforts to build capacity for managing emerging diseases and other public health emergencies on a sustainable basis.

Questions and answers

In response to the question raised by Dr Kelly Preston (USDA-APHIS, Tokyo) on the low importance attached to influenza in the HPED programme, the three international organisations mentioned that various other programmes were on-going on this topic.

Mr Brett Hughes (Australian Embassy, Tokyo) questioned the sustainability of the regional vaccine banks and asked if a support from ASEAN was considered at the end of the HPED programme. The participants agreed that the vaccines banks were very helpful for the availability of high quality of vaccines for emergency response, but further support was still necessary, notably for the operational costs of the vaccination. The need of involving the private sector and the regional organisations, including the future ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Animal Health and Zoonoses (ACCAHZ), was emphasised.

Session 4 – Progress in rabies control

This session was moderated by Dr Wantanee Kalpravidh, Regional Project Coordinator at FAO RAP.

Presentation by the WHO

There has been a positive development towards rabies control in the last decade. World Rabies Day event and involvement of professional organizations in rabies control have created mass awareness at public and policy levels. Many international partners are involved in community based dog rabies control and population management in high burden countries. WHO has been encouraging Member States to introduce cost-effective intradermal vaccination to improve availability and affordability of modern rabies vaccine and phase out production and use of traditional rabies vaccine.

Elimination of human rabies is feasible and sustainable if rabies is controlled at the source, i.e. dog. Rabies elimination programmes focused mainly on mass vaccination of dogs are largely justified by the future savings of human rabies prevention programme. Animal health sector has a social responsibility to prevent human rabies by taking ownership of dog rabies control. Rabies elimination may serve as a role model for operationalization of 'One Health' and WHO has been working together with FAO, OIE and other international partners to promote rabies elimination campaign in resource constraint rabies endemic countries. WHO and Gates Foundation have launched pilot projects in selected countries of Asia and Africa to demonstrate the validity of a "paradigm shift in dealing with human-dog mediated rabies and the results are promising. The project aims to catalyse similar initiatives for the control and elimination of rabies in Africa and Asia within the next decade.

Regionally coordinated efforts are necessary for elimination of human rabies. WHO Regional Office for South East Asia came up with a regional strategic framework for elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs in the South-East Asia Region. The involvement of ASEAN and SAARC countries in regionally coordinated rabies elimination programme is crucial to sustain the progress made in anti-rabies drive. FAO, OIE and WHO are facilitating an advocacy meeting for rabies elimination from SAARC countries to be organized by the SAARC Secretariat in Dhaka from 12-14 August 2013 and it is expected to finalize a project proposal on 'SAARC Rabies Elimination Project' which will be submitted to the SAARC Development Fund for consideration.

WHO is working with Vietnam which is a lead ASEAN country to move rabies elimination programme in ASEAN countries.

Presentation by the OIE

Dr Agnes Poirier, Programme Coordinator at the OIE SRR SEA in Bangkok, referred to the evolution of the tripartite collaboration to address health risks at the human-animal-environment interface, and recalled that rabies was selected as a common priority and a model for the One Health approach.

She detailed the initiatives led by the OIE at global level, such as the Global Conference on Rabies Control (Seoul, Korea, 7-9 September 2011) and the 1st International Conference on Dog Population Management (York, United Kingdom, 4-8 September 2012) and detailed the recent changes regarding rabies in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals.

She further presented the OIE Regional Vaccine Bank for Rabies in Asia, funded under the HPED programme, detailing the composition of the bank, the procedure for requesting vaccines, the deliveries that took place since the launching of the bank in March 2012, the communication and awareness activities performed in relation to rabies vaccination and the collaboration with other partners in the implementation of the vaccination campaign.

Dr Poirier also describes the elaboration of the South-East Asia Rabies Strategy by the OIE SRR SEA, in cooperation with Viet Nam as the lead country and through the AusAID STANDZ support, following the request of ASEAN and the Call for Action towards the elimination of rabies by 2020 in ASEAN Member States + 3. The strategy consists of four components, namely: socio-cultural; technical; organisational and One Health; and political frameworks for dog rabies elimination. It will be further discussed at a Rabies Strategy Workshop to be held in Viet Nam on 15-17 October 2013, endorsed ad referendum by the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL) and presented to the OIE Delegates for endorsement at the OIE Regional Commission in November 2013.

Presentation by the FAO

Dr Carolyn Benigno, Animal Health Officer at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, presented the FAO initiatives on rabies control and prevention in the region.

Within the context of the FAO approach to zoonotic diseases, the rabies control initiatives include the participation in World Rabies Day, field support to the control of rabies in Bali (Indonesia), regional training on laboratory diagnosis and dog ecology studies in Lao PDR, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

Dr Benigno further elaborated on the results and lessons learned from the projects and studies and concluded by mentioning the need for lobbying for support to rabies control.

Discussion

- The concept of using the tripartite collaboration and coordination to deal with human rabies problem originated from dogs was well received by the participants. However,

- such collaboration and coordination still needs to be enhanced particularly when implementing activities at the regional and country levels.
- The two strategies for rabies control in South-East Asia presented by WHO and OIE were questioned on the difference and similarity. The former tended to focus on the human health while the latter on the animal sector and they should be considered as complementary but not separate. Coordination will be assured at the ASEAN Secretariat level and when implementation takes place at national level.
 - Based on the recommendations from the Regional Rabies Workshop organized in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in January 2012 on having a “step-wise approach for dog rabies elimination”, the FAO is currently developing and piloting in the field a practical on the ground tool for rabies control, which could complement the strategies being developed in the region.
 - Innovative approach should be explored to enhance rabies control activities including:
 - o the possibility of combining the oral rabies vaccines with contraceptive drug to enhance dog immunization and population control;
 - o dealing with drivers for risk factors such as management of garbage to enhance dog population management efforts.

Session 5 – Impacts and perspectives from beneficiaries

This session was chaired by Dr Tareque Muhammad, Director of Agriculture and Rural Development Division at the SAARC Secretariat.

Outcomes of the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission

Mr Peter Stureson, Programme Manager at the European Commission, expounded the purpose of the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) implemented by the European Commission in order to have a global overview of its portfolio of projects and of overall progress with regard to the achievement of results. Aiming at essentially assessing results and outcomes of a project, ROM is an external and independent monitoring tool based on five criteria: relevance and quality of design; efficiency of implementation to date; effectiveness to date; impact prospects; and potential sustainability.

The ROM mission, conducted in November 2012, noted the high relevance of the three components of the programme, in line with the needs of the target groups, but recommended to improve the indicators in each log-frame.

Regarding the FAO component, outputs of high quality are expected but some delays were observed in the first years and institutional strengthening would need longer time to be sustainable. Although some activities are only partly achieved and the impact is difficult to measure, a direct impact is likely in most areas.

The OIE component had a low disbursement at the time of the mission, which was likely to improve. Strong on good governance and with partners well involved, this component has a good flexibility to adapt and inputs (vaccines) are well managed. The PVS pathway needs a better communication on results and the impact needs to be assessed at regional or sub-regional level.

Regarding the WHO component, the financial management needed increased resources and monitoring and evaluation needed improvement. The achieved activities were of good

quality although some outputs were delayed. The impact, difficult to measure, is likely if plans are followed.

Finally, Mr Sturesson underlined the importance of setting realistic targets and establishing measurable indicators with baselines, and the need to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

Perspective from Thailand: OIE PVS pathway

Dr Thanawat Tiensin, Senior Veterinary Officer at the Department of Livestock Development of Thailand, presented the lessons learnt from the OIE PVS evaluation mission, which was carried out in Thailand in March 2012, with an active participation of the Veterinary Services and other stakeholders such as the producers, private sector, professional associations and other government agencies. He provided details on the strengths and major gaps identified by the OIE experts and the measures taken by the Thai Government, including the recruitment of staff (145 new veterinarians recruited at district level by 2013 and recruitment plan of 1,000 veterinarians for the next 10 years) and a 13% increase in the budget of the Department of Livestock Development for 2013. The PVS evaluation undeniably raised awareness of policy makers at high level, as evidenced by the commitment of H.E. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Dr. Yukol Limlamthong.

Thailand is now planning for a PVS Gap Analysis mission, which should focus on two strategic priorities: the control of veterinary drugs and the delegation of veterinary services to private sector and local authorities.

Dr Tiensin also mentioned their twinning programme on laboratories, with an on-going project on brucellosis, two projects in preparation, and a technical collaboration with Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Furthermore, Thailand has started a twinning project on veterinary education between Chiang Mai University and the University of Minnesota (USA) and is preparing a twinning project between the Veterinary Council of Thailand and the Veterinary Council of Ireland in consortium with other partners.

Lastly, Dr Tiensin pointed out the intention of Thailand to establish a Collaborating Center on Capacity Building of Veterinary Services and to play an active role at regional level.

Perspective from the Philippines: OIE Regional Vaccine Banks and PVS pathway

Dr Emelinda Lopez, Veterinary Officer at the Bureau of Animal Industry of the Philippines, described the donation by the OIE of 500,000 doses of rabies vaccines, 125,000 dog collars and information, education and communication materials (posters, brochures in English and Tagalog languages, T-shirts and caps for the vaccination teams). She detailed the distribution of the rabies vaccines in the high risk areas of the country and the implementation of mass vaccination in Quezon City and Masbate.

Dr Emelinda Lopez also presented the implementation of the OIE PVS pathway in the Philippines, where the different steps (evaluation, gap analysis) have been undertaken including a Veterinary Services Strategic Planning Summit in December 2012, as well as pilot PVS missions on One Health and Aquatic Animal Health.

Perspective from Thailand: FAO support activities

Dr Karoon Chanachai, Chief of the Veterinary Epidemiology Development Center at the Department of Livestock Development of Thailand, as the ASEAN Lead Country on veterinary epidemiology capacity development, provided an overview of the regional veterinary epidemiology capacity development in ASEAN region. Key progresses were highlighted, as well as challenges faced in terms of coordination, needs, and sustainability. Dr. Karoon provided a vision of ASEAN on how to address the remaining challenges. With the assistance of FAO, through the EU-HPED and other complementary projects, there have been attempts to streamline and harmonise initiatives among ASEAN Member States (AMS) and between AMS and relevant partners. The notable progress is the development of the ASEAN Strategic Framework for Veterinary Epidemiology Capacity Development and Networking, which was endorsed by ASWGL in December 2012. The Framework provides a comprehensive, harmonized, and cohesive direction to veterinary epidemiology capacity development that is flexible enough to address specific country needs. The next steps are to ensure successful implementation of the Framework, as well as appropriate monitoring of its implementation and achievement. This will be realised through the internalisation of a responsible focal group within ASEAN to assume responsibility and accountability. In light of the establishment of ACCAHZ, where epidemiology is envisaged to be one of the core functionality of the Centre, it will also pave a way forward to a sustainable coordination for veterinary epidemiology in the region.

Perspective from ASEAN: WHO support activities

Dr Jintana Sriwongsa, Senior Officer in the Health and Communicable Disease Division of the ASEAN Secretariat, presented the guiding principles of the ASEAN socio-cultural blueprint, which aims at improving the capability to control communicable diseases in the region. The Strategic Framework on Health Development (2010-2015) focuses on three areas, (i) prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases, (ii) HIV and AIDS, and (iii) enhancing regional supportive environment and is implemented under the guidance of lead countries.

Dr Sriwongsa further detailed the ASEAN Medium Term Plan on Emerging Infectious Diseases (2012-2015) and the work of the ASEAN Expert Group on Communicable Diseases (AEGCD), including the HPED activities that focus on cross border areas of ASEAN Region.

An inter-sectoral coordination is in place, with the ASEAN + 3 Framework and Workplan on Human and Animal Health Collaboration, and the first joint consultation meeting between AEGCD and ASWGL in November 2012, with specific focus areas of collaboration such as rabies control and prevention, risk communication and laboratory networking.

Perspective from SAARC: WHO support activities

Dr Ibrahim Zuhuree, Director in charge of the Social Affairs Division at the SAARC Secretariat, started by recalling the SAARC objectives and mechanisms that are relevant to the HPED programme, i.e. to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance, and to strengthen cooperation amongst SAARC countries and with international and regional organisations.

Since inception, food security is one of the most important areas of cooperation of the Association, and addressing issues related to transboundary animal diseases and highly

pathogenic emerging diseases is recognised as extremely important because of their direct impact on food security and public health.

Within the SAARC Secretariat, the HPED programme is jointly run by the Social Affairs Division and the Agriculture and Rural Development Division, through separate memorandum of understanding signed with FAO and WHO in 2010.

Dr Zuhuree further detailed the activities carried out under the programme, with the establishment of the Regional Support Unit (RSU) and the Regional Epidemiology Centre (REC), a project website, the epidemiology and laboratory networks and a number of training seminars and workshops.

Regarding sustainability and continuity, the Asian Development Bank is processing a technical assistance proposal entitled "SAARC food security through control of transboundary animal diseases" and a regional project on elimination of human rabies will be submitted to SAARC Development Fund.

To conclude, Dr Zuhuree reiterated the commitment of SAARC to remain engaged with FAO, OIE and WHO to consolidate and institutionalise the resources and activities that have taken place under the HPED programme.

Session 6 – The way forward: Sustaining the activities beyond 2013

This session was chaired by Peter Sturesson, who started the discussion by recognising the need for donors to coordinate their action, and by assuring the willingness of the EU to continue financing such a programme with the view to achieving its sustainability.

The EU is currently preparing the new programming period (2014-2020) and this kind of programme could be funded by two different channels:

- bilateral programmes with the least developed countries in Asia, which will focus on few sectors by country: based on the results of the OIE PVS pathway, notably the PVS Gap Analysis, a financial plan for the Veterinary Services could be included in the support to sectors such as rural development or trade;
- funds for regional integration and coordination.

Regarding the One Health aspects, programmes with long terms effect would be eligible to the thematic programme on "Global public goods and challenges".

Dr Jintana Sriwongsa (ASEAN Secretariat) reiterated the need for additional funding in the perspective of the creation of the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015, and recommended to develop an exit strategy for the HPED programme.

Dr Tareque Muhammad (SAARC Secretariat) pointed out that the control of transboundary animal diseases is a new activity and the no-cost extension of the programme would allow the internalisation of the process in SAARC countries. He underlined the need for visible activities on the ground to obtain political support, and he mentioned that the SAARC Secretariat is fully committed to organising in Dhaka an advocacy meeting for rabies elimination from SAARC countries.

In response to the question raised by Dr Kelly Preston (USDA-APHIS, Tokyo) on the feasibility of the ASEAN free of dog rabies by 2020, Dr Gardner Murray (OIE) advised to be

realistic since disease control is a long term investment that needs a high level involvement of the countries. He restated that the HPED programme should be regarded as seed money to illustrate disease control options such as vaccine banks.

Dr Subhash Morzaria (FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific) stressed that the transboundary aspect of the diseases requires the involvement of the regional organisations, and strengthening these institutions would allow a more efficient response to emerging diseases such as avian influenza A(H7N9). The possibility of having multiple donors should be explored, in particular with the Asian Development Bank, which has a large investment programme in Asia.

Overall, it was recognised that the sustainability of the programme would need more consolidation, whereas the sustainability of disease eradication needs a longer time.

Session 7 – Recommendations and closing

This session was chaired by Dr Gardner Murray.

Ms Emily Tagliaro introduced for discussion the recommendations drafted during the day based on the participants' comments. They were adopted by the meeting after minor discussions (see annex).

With regards to the closing of the programme, Mr Sturesson stated that the final report should include proposals for the future, and that it is likely that an ex-post evaluation will take place in 2015, although it has not yet been decided at EU level.

On the question of having a possible wrap-up meeting at the end of the programme, the participants agreed that it would be very useful to discuss the lessons learned and the sustainability options, and that it could be held back-to-back to the annual tripartite regional meeting on zoonoses.

In their closing remarks, the representatives of the WHO, the FAO and the OIE expressed their thanks to all participants, organisers and host country, and to the EU for funding such an important programme.

To conclude, Mr Sturesson declared that progresses have been achieved and the programme has now a good basis to move to a consolidation phase. Furthermore, the HPED programme could be a good model to be taken into consideration by regional organisations to work towards regional integration in other sectors.

The meeting was closed at 5:45 pm.

3rd HPED STEERING COMMITTEE

Recommendations

17 – 19 July 2012, Bangkok (Thailand)

Considering that:

- Extensive efforts and progress have been made by ASEAN and SAARC Member States in strengthening the regional coordination mechanisms for disease control.
- The recommendations from the OIE Global Conference on Rabies Control in Incheon (Republic of Korea, 7-9/09/2011), the FAO/OIE Global Conference on FMD Control in Bangkok (Thailand, 27-29/06/2012), and the 3rd Regional Workshop on Multi-Sectoral Collaboration on Zoonoses Prevention and Control in Bali (Indonesia, 26-28/11/2012) are the basis for the actions to be implemented at national, regional and global strategies.

Takes note:

- That the EU has accepted the no-cost extension of the FAO and OIE components of the HPED programme for one year;
- Of the progress made in the implementation of the established activities for each component of the HPED programme.
- That the programme implementing organizations have been successful and have generally achieved their specific component objectives, and that by the end of 2014, will have met the programme goals and paved the way for the future.

Recommends:

- That the EU accepts the no-cost extension of the WHO component of the HPED programme.
- To continue to:
 - Engage the ASEAN and SAARC Secretariats, Member States and relevant sectoral working groups in the planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programme activities and to advocate for greater and longer term political commitment and ownership of activities to ensure sustainability.
 - Promote the synergy and complementarity with other relevant programmes and activities in the region.
 - Support the implementation of the regional organizations' roadmaps and strategies.
 - Reinforce the capacities of Member States to be in compliance with OIE international standards and WHO International Health Regulations (IHR) through trainings and related activities.
 - Encourage countries to actively participate in the OIE PVS Pathway and in the WHO IHR core capacities assessment and encourage them to use the findings to prioritize their animal health and zoonoses control activities and as a basis for seeking funding support; ensure that veterinary and public health systems and services are included in developing the Country Programme Frameworks.

- To advocate for continued work through tripartite FAO/OIE/WHO collaboration on the One Health approach through the development and implementation of One Health strategies at national, regional and international levels.
 - Rabies, one of the priority diseases for the region, has been proposed as the case to benefit from One Health approach, notwithstanding the fact that other emerging infectious diseases with potential to cause high impacts to animal and human health are still being considered as GFTADs and APSED as important for the region (for example, animal influenzas).
 - To address Rabies:
 - It is required to take into account the existing international standards, strategies, guidelines and platforms from FAO, OIE and WHO relevant to the prevention and control of Rabies.
 - Dog vaccination together with dog population management are to be considered the most cost-effective and sustainable interventions to protect human health.
 - Synergistic and coordinated efforts by the tripartite are required to ensure the efficiency of Rabies control implementation at the regional, sub-regional and country levels.
- Building on successes of the EU HPED programme, to explore options with regional secretariats, the tripartite and development partners to sustain achievements and activities beyond 2014 including:
 - OIE FMD and Rabies Regional Vaccine Banks.
 - Regional Coordination Mechanism, including Regional Support Units, as well as relevant Regional Technical Support Bodies.
 - Joint Regional Technical Working groups.
 - Regional Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Development and Networks.
 - Continue to support the strengthening of surveillance and response for zoonoses prevention and control at regional and country level through the implementation of relevant components of the APSED framework.
- That the next Steering Committee focus on the expected key deliverables to be made by the programme and options to sustain them based on lessons learned.
- That the next meeting take place back to back with the GF-TADS meeting in Bangkok (Thailand) on 15 July 2014.
- That a wrap-up meeting among the tripartite partners take place before the end of the project.

PROGRAMME

Time	Theme	Speaker
08:30–09:00	Registration of participants	
09:00–09:30	SESSION 1 – Opening Session	Chair: Noriyoshi Ojima
	Welcoming address by the FAO Welcoming address by the WHO Welcoming address by the OIE Opening address by the EU	Juan Lubroth Gyanendra Gongal Gardner Murray Peter Stuesson
09:30-10:00	SESSION 2 – Introduction and Scene Setting	Chair: Agnes Poirier
09:30-09:40	Introduction of participants	
09:40-09:50	Meeting objectives and review of the recommendations from the 3rd meeting	Kachen Wongsathapornchai
09:50–10:30	Group photo - Morning break – Coffee/Tea	
10:30-11:45	SESSION 3 – Progress of the HPED Programme	Chair: Peter Stuesson
10:30–10:55	The OIE component	Emily Tagliaro
10:55–11:20	The FAO component	Kachen Wongsathapornchai / Mohinder Oberoi
11:20-11:45	The WHO component	Gyanendra Gongal
11:45-12:00	Questions and answers	
12:00–13:00	Lunch	
Time	Theme	Speaker
13:00-13:45	SESSION 4 – Progress in rabies control	Chair: Wantanee Kalpravidh
13:00–13:30	Tripartite presentation	WHO/OIE/FAO
13:30–13:45	Discussion	
13:45-15:00	SESSION 5 – Impacts and perspectives from beneficiaries	Chair: Tareque Muhammad
13:45–14:05	Outcomes of the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission	Mr Peter Stuesson
14:05 - 15:00	Perspective from Thailand: OIE PVS pathway Perspective from Philippines: OIE regional vaccine banks Perspective from Thailand: FAO support activities Perspective from ASEAN: WHO support activities Perspective from SAARC: WHO support activities	Dr Thanawat Tiensin Dr Emelinda Lopez Dr. Karoon Chanachai Ms Jintana Sriwongsa Mr Ibrahim Zuhuree
15:00 - 15:30	Afternoon Break - Coffee/Tea	
15:30 - 16:30	SESSION 6 – The way forward: Sustaining the activities beyond 2013	Chair: Peter Stuesson
	Enhancing the synergies between partners, regions and countries Remarks of ASEAN Remarks of SAARC Vision of the EU	Facilitated discussion
16:30-18:00	SESSION 7 – Recommendations and closing	Chair: Gardner Murray
16:30 - 17:30	Recommendations	Emily Tagliaro
17:30 - 17:45	Next Steps – Extension / end of the programme, final evaluation	
17:45 - 18:00	Closing remarks	OIE, WHO, FAO, EU
18:30 - 19:30	Official Dinner (Forest Hongo Hotel)	
The HPED Programme is financed by the European Union		

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