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Viet Nam: A success story with lots more to learn

Overview

Viet Nam is often cited as a success story in handling the spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Communism provides the country with the comparative advantage of having strong political commitment and support from the central to the local governments, as compared to other countries facing similar challenges.

The implementation of key disease control strategies like mass vaccination, culling, compensation, movement restriction and raising public awareness on disease transmission, has contributed to the country's efforts in limiting the spread of the virus in the past year.

Latest wave of H5N1

However, the recent recurrence of HPAI which struck the country in December 2006, came as a reminder that the disease is still present and that continuous strong effort is required to contain the spread of the disease. The outbreak has caused poultry deaths in Ca Mau Province since 6 December 2006, just weeks before the Joint Government UN Communication Campaign on Animal and Human Influenza was launched in January.

The disease spread is said to have been triggered by unvaccinated illegally raised free-range ducks with delayed reporting of deaths in these birds to the authorities. Raising free-range ducks is a common practice in many provinces in the Mekong delta, where there are enormous rice fields. Free-range ducks usually feed on snails from the rice fields.

Since the onset of the disease in 2003, Viet Nam became one of the most seriously affected countries.



Ly Van Lam Commune, Ca Mau City

Communication as key

Communication is recognized as a key feature in the prevention and control of HPAI avian influenza. It is a poultry disease that directly affects the livelihoods of people who raise poultry and it is therefore most important for producers to be able to clearly understand and participate in the prevention and control of the disease.

To be able to communicate effectively, we need to first understand producers' circumstances and the needs of the people with whom we want to communicate.

Lessons from Ca Mau

During our recent visit to Ca Mau Province (29 January – 1 February 2007), it was clearly demonstrated that raising public awareness through mass generalized advocacy campaigns is not sufficient and sometimes, does not even reach the most important target groups.

Viet Nam: A success story with lots more to learn - Continued

The recent visit to Ca Mau taught us many lessons, one of which is that a general mass communication campaign may get the information out, but that does not necessarily mean that the messages have been successfully imparted. Another important point is that behaviour change takes time and effort, and involves strong, innovative and continuous communication.

Overall communication campaign

The overall communication activities of the joint programme, which is coordinated by UNICEF (United Nations Children Fund) in Viet Nam, focuses mainly on the period leading up to the Tet (Lunar New Year) festival which was celebrated between 16-21 February this year. The main materials produced for this period include posters, banners, television and radio spots, newspaper articles and activities related to the event of the launch of the joint campaign in major cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

It appeared to us that the people were attracted by the colourful posters, but did not seem to pay attention to the messages on them. What was even more disheartening was that some farmers we spoke to did not seem to be aware of the modes of transmission of HPAI and even thought of it as a human and not an animal disease.

One farmer we spoke to said he understood that HPAI is a “chicken” disease and he did not need to worry about it because he raised ducks. Another farmer we spoke to told us that he heard about HPAI only from the news on television and thought it was more of a media hype done to scare the people and that it is actually not a serious problem.

Speaking to one farmer shed light on the fact that the overall messages of the HPAI communication campaign were far from reality when it comes to implementation at the village level. Some farmers told us that they did not always wash their hands with water after interacting with their poultry, not to mention the use of ‘soap’; and hand washing here would mean washing their hands in the pond, river or canal where their poultry enjoyed swimming.



Sample of a campaign poster prepared under the Joint Government UN Communication Campaign for Avian and Pandemic Influenza 2007

There is a lot of opportunity to strengthen communication under the vaccination campaign, which seems to be going well with no infection reported among vaccinated flocks.

A paravet we spoke to told us that the information they always provided to the people during their field visits was to report suspected poultry incidents; not to eat sick/dead poultry and not to throw sick/dead poultry into the water (rivers, canals). He said most people were satisfied with the amount of information they received and usually never asked any questions.

However, a farmer we spoke to while two paravets were vaccinating his ducks told us that he did not know what vaccine was being given to his ducks and did not know what disease it protected them from. He said he agreed to allow the paravets to vaccinate his ducks because the vaccine was given for free and that he heard from neighbours that he could sell the ducks for higher price if they were vaccinated.

Window of opportunity

There is a window of opportunity we can make use of, so that our communication efforts can be strengthened and would hopefully lead to behaviour change. It is realized that dissemination of information in areas where there is limited or no access to broadcast radio, television or community loudspeakers like in Ca Mau, can be done through visiting paravets and other front line workers, mobile loudspeakers and distribution of easily comprehensible print materials.

The joint programme will also move beyond the general national communication campaign to support more communication activities with specific groups of people directly affected by HPAI.

We realize that HPAI is here to stay, at least for several years more, and the communication materials that are building-up during the HPAI campaign should also help raise awareness of other poultry diseases and improve the overall livelihoods of poultry raisers.

The key messages for this campaign were the generic messages agreed upon by the three UN agencies - WHO, FAO, UNICEF – and include:

- Wash (hands with soap and water)
- Cook (poultry well);
- Separate (poultry from home)
- Report (to authorities in case of suspicion in poultry or humans who have had contact with poultry)



Working with villagers in Lao for the prevention and control of highly pathogenic avian influenza

By Michael Pizzari, Brigitte Bagnol and Vicky Houssiere,
FAO Bangkok and Vientiane: (E-mail: michael.pizzari@fao.org):

The Lao People's Democratic Republic until recently was one of the few countries in Southeast Asia to have no human cases of H5N1. Unfortunately, that all changed when two women died from the infection in early March 2007.

In an effort to beat the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza, the Government of Lao PDR in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization is working with communities on avian influenza prevention and control by training a network of village veterinary workers (VVs). These volunteers and their supervisors meet with communities to discuss ways to reduce the risk of HPAI outbreaks in their villages. In Phonexay, an isolated village not far from Luang Prabang in central Lao, reachable only by crossing a wooden suspension bridge over a ravine, the village leader gathered the community to come and listen to the village veterinary workers. Phonexay represents much of rural Lao, where chickens roam freely in between the houses, scavenging for food and sharing the same living spaces as the villagers. Mainly the women and children here are involved in raising poultry. In fact, 80 per cent of Lao's poultry production is carried out by backyard farmers.

Using flipcharts made of cloth for easy transport on their motorbikes, the VVs talk to the villagers about avian influenza, how it is transmitted and ways to keep their animals and themselves healthy. These small but crucial community meetings allow villagers to engage in active dialogue on the threat posed by highly pathogenic avian influenza and other poultry diseases. Working at the grassroots level with VVs also allows FAO project staff to see what the people's reality is, how they live and what alternatives are most viable for them; this way, appropriate solutions are determined in collaboration with the people themselves.

Participatory tools for assessment and monitoring of poultry raising activities and animal disease control

By Michael Pizzari, Brigitte Bagnol and Vicky Houssiere
(E-mail: michael.pizzari@fao.org)

The first step in any effort to assist small holder poultry farmers with animal production and disease control is to work directly with them. It is important to learn about their problems and needs, understand how decisions are made in regard to poultry production at the household level.

While visiting a village veterinary worker (VW) training in Van Vieng in central Laos, participatory tools were used with the trainees to investigate the link between the rainy seasons and poultry disease and the relation to household income.

Using the agriculture calendar, participants indicated in a graph when the rainy season begins, what period of the year poultry are healthy, sick or sold. Participants indicated that during certain times of the year, the value of poultry is higher, in certain months, their poultry usually die off, and in what period chickens are used for consumption or as offerings during special festivals.

In a second exercise, the participants drew on cards the various animals they keep on their farms and were then asked to position all the animals on a chart laid out on a table. Each participant was then given five stones to score the most important animals to their livelihoods by placing more stones on the animal of most importance. Interestingly, once final tallies were complete, the animal that scored the most was the chicken.

Active participation of those involved in poultry rearing, particularly women, help in understanding what communities see as the main issues facing their household or community with regards to poultry health and potential ways of resolving them.



Community-Based Avian Influenza Control in Indonesia

By Jonathan Bell (E-mail jonathangbell@gmail.com)

The USAID Community-Based Avian Influenza Control Project in Indonesia is born of the realization that although the livestock department surveillance teams can find the disease where they look, there is still a need for the community at large to be aware of it, how to avoid it in both poultry and people, and what to do if it comes. It therefore aims to have a much deeper reach within the community. It applies the principles of participatory surveillance to ordinary members of the community, rather than just the technical staff of the livestock department. It can include local informal leaders, religious groups, and women's groups, and allows local leadership in tackling the problems. Because of the vast population involved, it is not possible to have a community training session in every village, but the aim is to have one person in every village – that is the administrative unit called *desa* – who has taken part in a participative training session. These people are necessarily volunteers, because of the large numbers involved. To recruit such a large number of volunteers is beyond the scope of a centrally administered project alone, and so the project is working together with two large Indonesian community based organizations, the Indonesian Red Cross, and Muhammadiyah. The organizations can make use of their countrywide networks of branches and members to recruit volunteers.

The training of the village volunteers is done by master trainers, who receive one week's intensive training, including a field visit, and training in training techniques. The training of village volunteers covers five essential aspects: how to recognize highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI); how to find it through active participatory surveillance; how to prevent HPAI in birds; how to prevent transmission from birds to humans; and how to respond to cases of HPAI. However, this is not done in a didactic way at all. It is recognized that in fact the community may already be knowledgeable about this disease, and techniques for applying this knowledge are taught. Most importantly, response to outbreaks are not imposed from outside. Instead, the community is encouraged to come up with its own plan, taking into account the need to isolate the source of the disease. The program is still in its early stages, but already there are indications that it is helping communities to recognize HPAI, and respond to it in an appropriate way.

The project aims eventually to cover the whole of Java, Bali, North Sumatra, and the Southern most province of Sumatra, Lampung. In addition it supports the national coordinating body for HPAI, and has a communications component which produces mass media materials on HPAI and communication materials for the field program.



The author is employed by Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI), implementing partner for the USAID funded Community based Avian Influenza Control Project.

Articles for publication in our rural poultry e-Newsletter can be sent to:

ruralpoultry@kyeemafoundation.org

Visit our website:

www.kyeemafoundation.org

“Super Chicken” Takes the Lead in Educating Cambodian Farmers on Protecting Against Avian Influenza

One of the main goals of communications work on avian influenza in Cambodia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia has been to educate the general public – as simply and practically as possible on how they can prevent and control avian influenza in their communities. Under a contract from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Academy for Educational Development (AED) has been working on educating rural, backyard poultry farmers and animal and human health workers about how avian flu is transmitted and on steps they can take to prevent and control the spread of the disease among their animals and communities.

The process began with the collection of background information on the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) related to avian influenza among farmers in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. Among the findings in Cambodia were that most people realized the risk of avian influenza outbreaks was high, but that key preventive practices to keep their poultry safe (such as keeping them enclosed/away from other birds, and washing hands before and after handling poultry) were not that common.

AED then organized a workshop for the Royal Kingdom of Cambodia and USAID to present the survey findings. Attendees included government officials from different ministries, nongovernmental organizations such as UNICEF, FAO, CEDAC, CARE and Veterinarians without Borders, and the media. Meeting attendees were also asked to provide input into a communication strategy and message development process.

A follow-up meeting was held to orient government ministry officials to behaviour change communication practices and to engage them in the further development of informational materials. One key result of the meeting was the creation of Super Chicken (or Super Moan in Khmer), a chicken “superhero” that has been used in posters, television ads and other materials to help educate farmers on how to protect their poultry from avian influenza.



Overall, six radio and two TV spots aired in Cambodia, mostly featuring the *Super Moan* character and highlighting the four main avian influenza prevention messages. Hundreds of DVDs, video CDs and cassettes with the materials were given to international and Khmer NGO partners for distribution. Community groups reported widespread use of the materials in diverse settings including health centres, schools, and during trainings for farmers.

In cooperation with FAO and the Animal Health Department, almost 500 Village Animal Health Workers each received the posters, as well as leaflets on how to build low-cost protective fencing for poultry. The leaflet was distributed by staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' Department of Animal Health and Production; NGOs including PLAN, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, International Relief and Development, and local AED partners Centre d'Etude et de Développement Agricole Cambodgien (CEDAC), Resource Development International (RDI), and AVSF (AED's regional partner).

AED also worked with CEDAC on mobilizing farmers associations, and developed and produced an educational leaflet on healthy poultry raising (with avian influenza messages embedded). To date, over 90,000 copies have been printed and distributed. Another way the project has aimed to reach low-literate populations has been the development of a community theatre program that will feature at least 350 performances in rural areas of Cambodia. Three Khmer organizations — Fine Arts Association, Sovanna Phum and Action IEC — will educate communities on avian influenza through theatre performances. It is hoped that this activity will reach close to one million people throughout Cambodia.

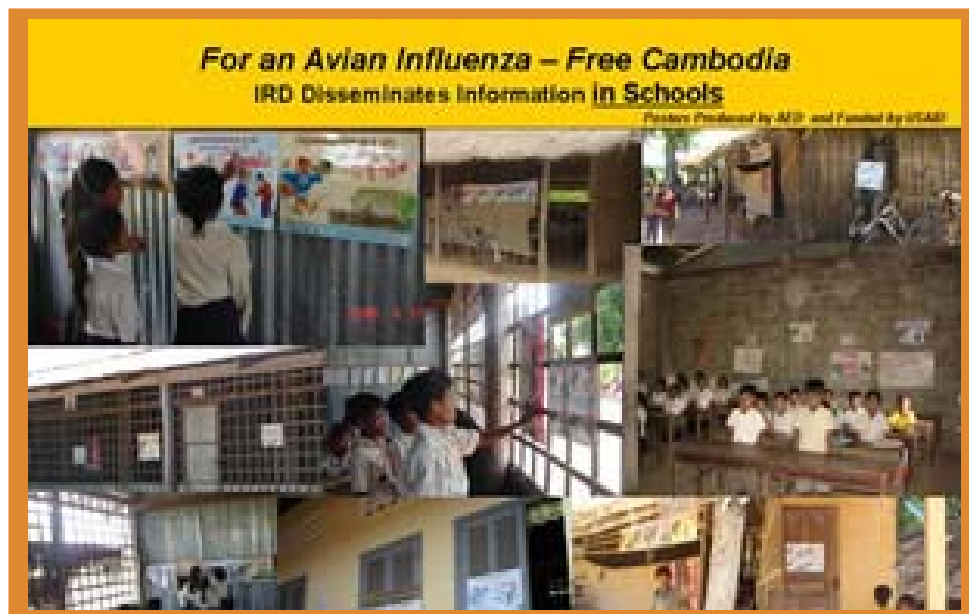
Other tangible results of the workshop were the design of two posters and the writing and production of two radio advertisements that included the key messages.

The main messages delivered by Super Moen instructed farmers to:

- Fence poultry
- Keep new poultry separate from existing flocks for 14 days before intermingling them
- Wash their hands with soap and water after touching poultry
- Sweep/clean their yards regularly to remove poultry droppings

Super Chicken” Takes the Lead in Educating Cambodian Farmers on Protecting Against Avian Influenza - *Continued*

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Dear INFPD members,

Network for Smallholder Poultry Development is currently reviewing the existing literature and data sources on the contribution to income, livelihoods and food security from smallholder poultry production.

Unfortunately, studies and surveys that investigate the contribution to income and food security often remain unpublished.

If you have or are aware of unpublished data organizers would be grateful for your help in identifying this data, grey literature or valuable websites.

They are particularly interested in:

- Survey data (quantified) on contribution to income and food security from smallholder poultry production.
- Studies (qualitative) on social and cultural significance of poultry in smallholder societies.

Please send contributions by email to the following address: knk@life.ku.dk

Emus and Bush Turkeys

Emu and bush turkey (or Australian bustard, a genus familiar to southern Europeans, northern Africans, Arabic peoples and central Asians in semi arid grasslands) are important bush meat for many indigenous Australians who have not traditionally farmed plants or animals but managed a very unpredictable dry landscape to maximise productivity. Both birds are nomadic and numbers have declined noticeably in central Australia, as have red kangaroos, the major game species of the region, and many smaller animals have become extinct. Bush turkeys are attracted to recently burnt areas where green grass and insects are in response but require specific areas for nesting adjacent to breeding display areas for the male. Emus have a broad diet enabling them to feed from a number of different sources and also benefit from patch burning and are attracted to waterholes. The other most important bird food source is the Mallee fowl, a mound incubating bird, which is prized for its eggs but these birds are very contracted in their range these days. All of these birds have suffered dramatically from predation of eggs and chicks by introduced predators (particularly cats and foxes) and deterioration of their food and shelter, commonly due to enormous hot uncontrolled bushfires replacing the historical small scale, cooler, patch burning. Traditional activities like increase ceremonies, cultural restrictions on harvesting, maintaining rock holes, and patch burning are being revitalised to address these declines and are being married with western approaches that include survey and monitoring, feral animal control and GIS assisted planning of fire and vegetation management. All of these activities are possible but are logistically very difficult on the landscape scale required to give real benefits of biodiversity preservation, sustainable harvest and the associated benefits to health and maintenance of culture and tradition in remote traditional communities.

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LOOK

POULTRY COOK BOOK PROJECT

Dear rural poultry readers,

We are looking for:

- Poultry recipes;
- Short stories about activities to support sustainable and safe poultry production with local communities;
- Role of poultry in local farming systems;
- Role of poultry in women's empowerment; and
- Food security.

Thank you for forwarding your contribution to:

m-francew@kyeemafoundation.org



Olga Reina's farewell at the office in Maputo. Olga had some very nice words to say about her time with KYEEMA. We wish her well in her new position.

KYEEMA is an Australian aboriginal word meaning "of the dawn"

Our philosophy is that through helping people to improve their livelihoods, we will assist them to start their lives with new hope for the future, to have a new dawn.

XXIII World's Poultry Congress 2008 ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS ARE NOW OPEN!

Abstracts may be submitted until 7 September 2007

Individuals and groups from around the world are encouraged to participate in the substantial and innovative congress program.

Authors are invited to submit an oral and/or poster presentation for consideration by the program committee. To review the abstract preparation and submission guidelines please visit the congress website: www.wpc2008.com

Abstracts may only be submitted online via the congress website: [website](#). Please contact the congress managers to discuss alternative arrangements if you are unable to access the website.

[Please click here to submit an abstract](#)

Please ensure you read the detailed abstract preparation and submission guidelines contained on the congress [website](#) before submitting your abstract.

Registration

If you are interested in registering for the Congress and would like to receive congress correspondence, [click here](#). Information regarding registration and accommodation will be available in September/October 2007.

Please note that all presenters must register for the meeting by **Friday 29 February 2008**. Registration payment not received by this date will result in presenters being withdrawn from the program.

Sponsorship/industry exhibition

Opportunities for participation in the Congress for industry are now available! For more information see the [website](#) or contact sponsorandexhibit@wpc2008.com

Affiliated meetings

The XXIII World Congress is proud to be joining together with the following meetings to bring you the biggest world's poultry congress ever. There is something available to suit all levels of poultry interest.

- 6th Asian-Pacific Poultry Health Conference (AP6)
- 4th International Ratite Science Symposium (4th IRSS)
- 2008 Poultry Information Exchange (PIX2008)

WPC2008

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Update on restocking activities in Sussundenga District, Manica Province, Mozambique

Restocking of vulnerable families took place in April 2006 when fifteen families received four birds each. Restocking will start again in 2007 after the implementation of the first ND vaccination campaigns for the year.



Figure 1: Senhora Andife is responsible for her grand children. They received four chickens at the end of April 2006 and they are pleased with their progress as two of the hens now have a total of 15 chicks between them

Figure 2: Senhor Tomé Manuel Rorape and Esperança António received one rooster and three chickens in April. They are standing beside their chicken house.



Update on restocking activities in Dondo District, Sofala Province, Mozambique

Restocking of vulnerable families with village chickens continues with funds provided by the GRM Social Club in Brisbane and GRM staff in Dubai. In addition, two families who received chickens previously have returned four chickens each and these have been passed on to new families



Figure 3: Senhora Rosa Ernesto, Preciosa, Rafael, Maria de Lourdes, Leonora and Cecilia also received four village chickens in June 2006.

Figure 4: Sonia, Atija and Eujenia José received three hens and one rooster in June 2006. Before receiving the birds they benefited from training in poultry husbandry by ASVIMO's community vaccinators



NB: The opinions expressed in articles contained in this e-Newsletter are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the e-Newsletter editors.