



# INFORMATION Bulletin

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## *Strengthening Cross Border Activities among Bangladesh, India and Nepal to Control Possible Cross-Border Spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)*

### Project Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is to contribute to the elimination of the threat posed by HPAI due to cross-border activities in the Gangetic Plain subregion of South Asia.

More specifically, the project will strengthen the capacity of the countries sharing an epidemiological environment in the Gangetic Plain subregion to deal with the risks and threat of HPAI posed by cross-border activities.

### Disease status in the sub region

- Bangladesh recorded one HPAI outbreak in June 2009 at a commercial poultry farm in North Agrabad, Doublemooring Upazila of Chittagong district.

### Activities undertaken

1. Poultry value chain mapping across Nepal-India-Bangladesh-Myanmar borders
2. FAO/OIE/SAARC Sub Regional Meeting of GF-TADs for SAARC Region, 4-5 June 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal
3. Stakeholders meeting related to cross border trade, 10 July 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal
4. Technical Committee meeting, 19 July 2009, Dhaka, Bangladesh
5. Stakeholders meeting related to cross border trade, 21 July 2009, Dhaka, Bangladesh

### 1. Poultry value chain mapping across Nepal-India-Bangladesh-Myanmar borders

**The specific objectives of the study were to:**

- Map value chains and poultry trade volumes and values across borders;
- Identify high risk factors and areas for introduction of disease via trade;
- Map the high risk areas and trade routes; and
- Evaluate value chain analysis

### Study points across borders

- Bangladesh - India (6 points)
- Bangladesh - Myanmar (1 point)
- India - Bangladesh (6 points)
- India - Nepal (2 points)

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## Cross border poultry value chain mapping points

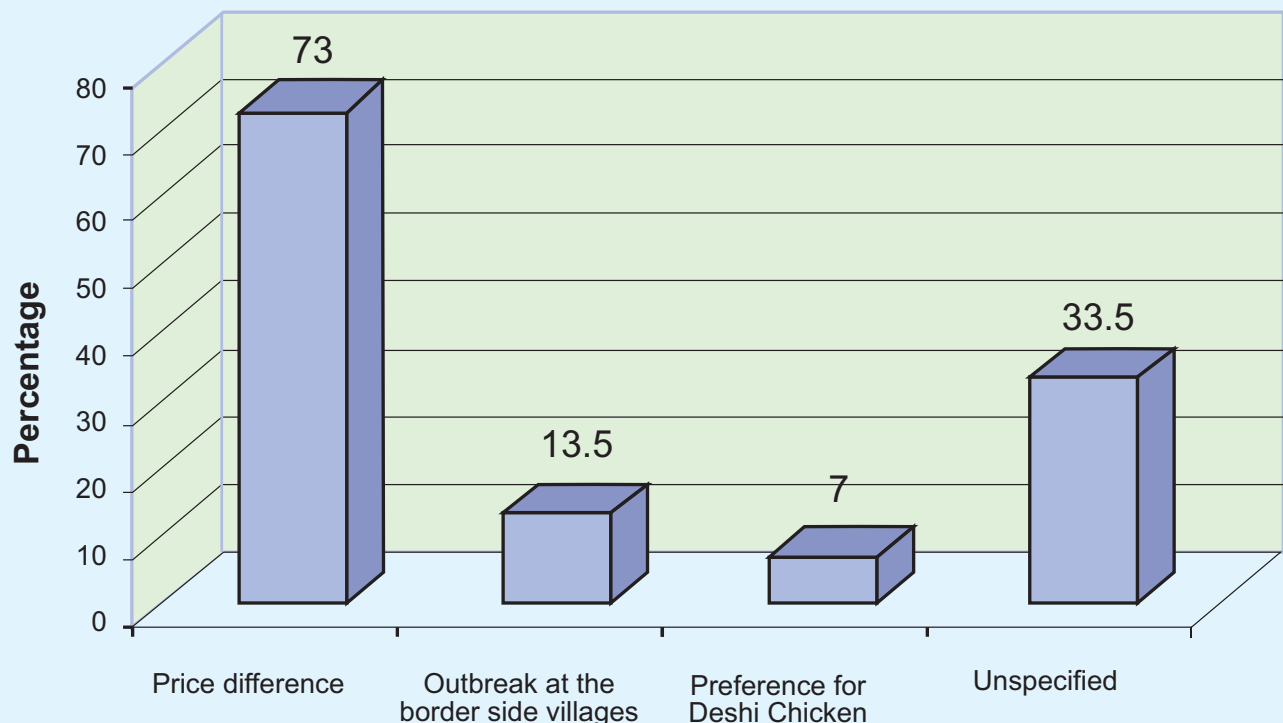


## Status of on going studies

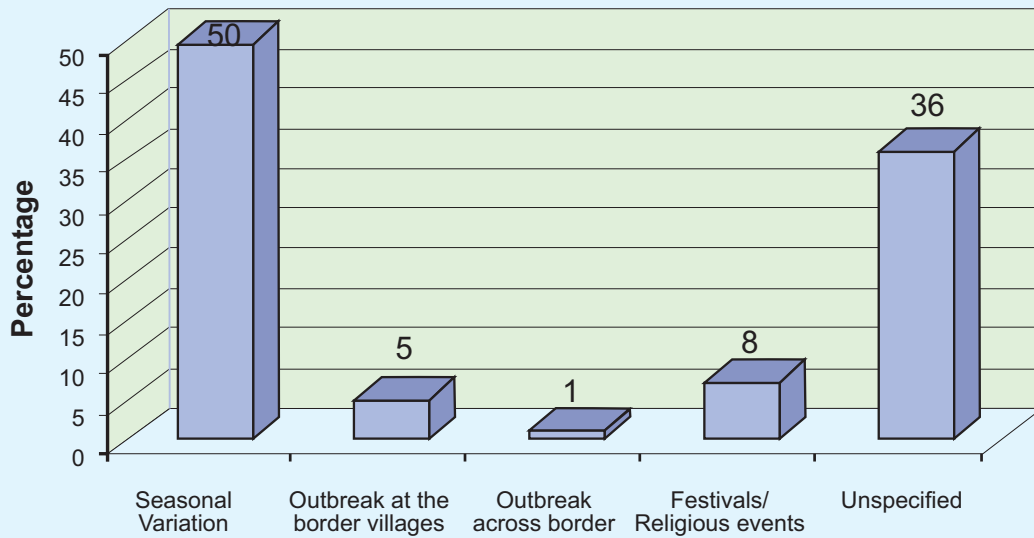
- NEPAL: Study completed results presented before stake holders
- BANGLADESH: Study completed results presented before stake holders
- INDIA: First phase study completed, second phase of data collection ongoing
- MYANMAR: Data collection completed

## Main observations in Bangladesh and India

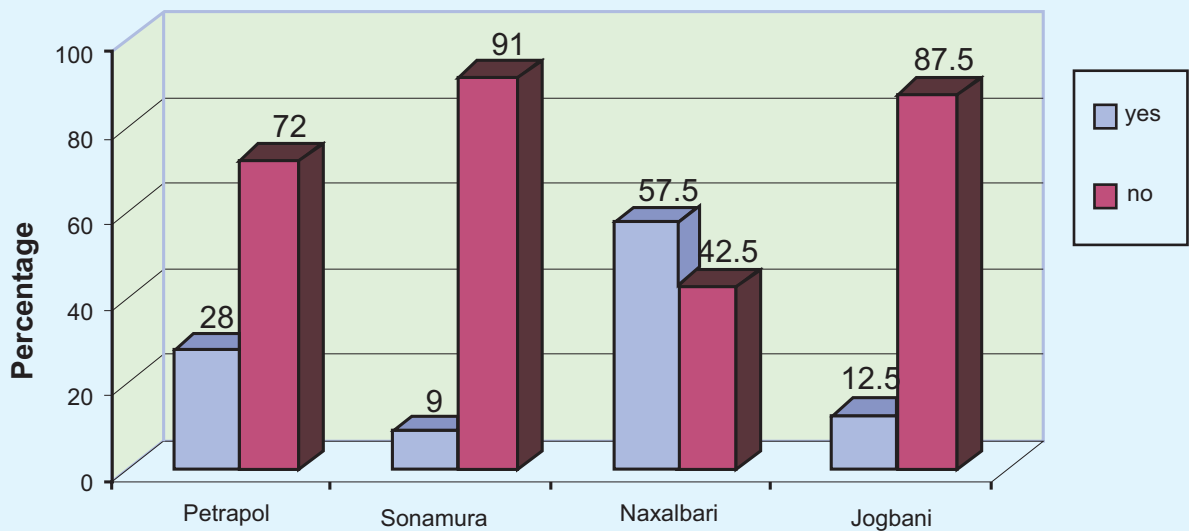
- Economic incentive (cost factor) was found to be the main reason for stimulating the cross border trade. The price difference was significant across the borders.
- Gap in demand and supply was also found to encourage cross border illegal trade during festivals and socio-cultural occasions.
- Comilla-Sonamura corridor was a hot-spot for trading in poultry and poultry products between Bangladesh and India.
- In some places the trade was well developed, organized and coordinated by influential people of the area.
- Seasonal changes (monsoon) also triggered cross border trade
- Trade across Bangladesh-Myanmar was openly performed and could be a high risk corridor as recently an outbreak was recorded in Cox's bazaar near this corridor.
- The awareness level about HPAI varied from place to place in both the countries.



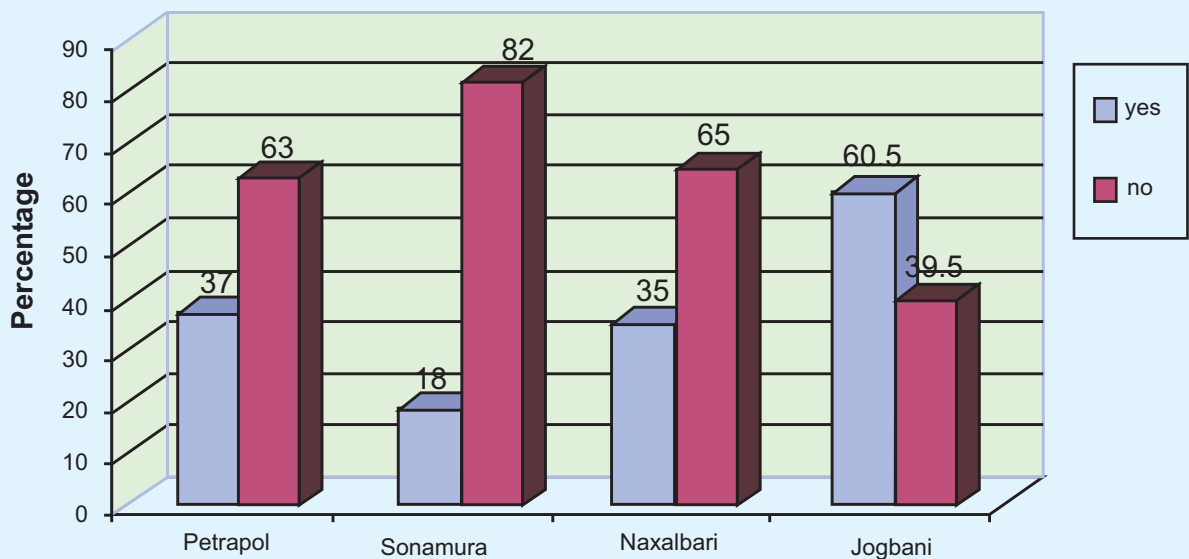
## Reasons for cross border poultry movement in border areas of Bangladesh



**Reasons for price fluctuation in border areas of Bangladesh**



**Knowledge of avian influenza in border areas of India**



**Avian influenza extension service received by people of border areas in India**

## 2. FAO/OIE/SAARC Sub-Regional Meeting of GF-TADs for SAARC Region



A joint FAO/OIE/SAARC Sub Regional Meeting on GF-TADs was organized on 4-5 June in Kathmandu, Nepal. The eight SAARC member countries were represented by senior officials from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and SAARC Secretariat. Technical and logistic support was provided by FAO (HQ, RAP, Nepal) and OIE (Asia Pacific office, Tokyo). The country representatives presented the status of TADs and their control initiatives. Technical presentations on Global GF-TADs initiative, FMD, HPAI and PPR control strategies were made by FAO and OIE. The meeting made the following recommendations:

1. Considering that SAARC CVOs have developed a broad and generic roadmap for TADs control it is now recommended that more specific strategies and roadmaps be developed for each of the priority diseases identified for the region taking into account specific regional issues. In this regard the following is recommended:
    - a. As part of the global effort to control FMD, a number of regions in the world have moved toward developing regional road maps for FMD control. In order to support this global effort and to provide strong thrust to the control of FMD in SAARC countries it is recommended that a road map for FMD towards progressive control and eradication developed for the subregion.
    - b. Recognizing that PPR is endemic in the SAARC region and has an economic significance to the livestock industry of member countries, the meeting recommends that a regional strategy for PPR control and eradication be developed, based on the global rinderpest eradication programme model.
    - c. While all SAARC member countries have national strategies to control HPAI in poultry, given the regional importance of the disease the meeting recommends that a sub regional HPAI strategy to cover SAARC member countries be developed as soon as possible and to be compatible with the FAO/OIE Global Strategy on the Control of HPAI.
  - d. The disease specific roadmaps should be developed with the CVOs of each country based on the already agreed GF-TADs framework for SAARC, taking into account the need for harmonization of approaches, including the need for regional epidemiological studies based on pathogen ecology, management of cross border livestock movement, disease information sharing, and improved understanding of the biological (particularly genetic and immunological) characteristics of pathogens, and the mechanism of provision of vaccines in case of emergencies.
2. In order to enhance regional coordination using the GF-TADs framework, the meeting emphasized early implementation of GF-TADs in SAARC, through the early establishment of RSU
  3. Given the increasing importance of emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), it is recommended that broader capacity on early detection and response be developed in the region and greater cross-sectoral collaboration be promoted on the broad principles of One World One Health.
  4. Considering the rapid spread of pandemic H1N1 2009 influenza in humans, the propensity of the virus to recombine with other Influenza A viruses, and the presence of H5N1 virus in the region, it is recommended that in the context of SAARC member countries, a surveillance strategy for H1N1 and H5N1 be developed in pigs and mixed pig-poultry farming systems, and overall capacity development in the region to diagnose this disease be strengthened.
  5. In the context of long term capacity building for the region to control TADs and EIDs, it is recommended that SAARC countries are encouraged, when appropriate, to have their veterinary services assessed using the OIE PVS tool, and PVS gap analysis (OIE in collaboration with FAO and other partners).
  6. The meeting recognizes and appreciates the efforts of FAO and OIE in fostering regional cooperation and collaboration for improved control of TADs in SAARC countries.

### 3. Stakeholders meeting related to cross border trade, Kathmandu, Nepal

The Stakeholders' meeting to share the results of the cross border poultry value chain mapping across the Nepal-India borders was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 10 July 2009.

The meeting was held in a congenial manner with the participation of Dr. Prabhakar Pathak, Director General and Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of Nepal, as chief guest. Thirty two participants, including senior staff from the Department of Livestock Services, private sector representatives, USAID, NGOs, INGOs, AED etc and FAO attended. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Nepal, with FAO-Nepal providing logistical support.

The study made the following observations:

- Economic incentive (cost factor) was found to be the main reason for stimulating the cross border trade. The price difference was significant across long porous border.
- Gap in demand and supply was also found to encourage cross border illegal trade.
- About 70-80 per cent of the trade of broilers and village chickens was observed during the early morning.
- Certain people (*Farias* on bicycles) were engaged full time in cross border trading activities including disabled persons.
- Slaughterers and live bird wholesalers were identified

as the main points where large numbers of informal birds (live and dressed) entered Nepal.

- The awareness level was low (less than 40 per cent) among most of the main actors across the board.
- Adoption of routine biosecurity measures for safe project counterparts from Bangladesh, India and Nepal. In addition representatives from USAID/ Bangladesh and AED/Bangkok, Bangladesh, and veterinarians from the Department poultry rearing/trading and human health risks was low in commercial farms, live bird collectors, slaughterers and back yard poultry farmers.
- Most informal bird and egg markets were concentrated in some border areas.

Dr. Prabhakar Pathak, chairing the session, thanked FAO and Nepal Social Marketing and Distribution (SMD) (P) Ltd for conducting the study. Dr. Pathak mentioned that the Government of Nepal was making sincere efforts to combat the negative impact of HPAI on the poultry industry and small scale producers. He stated that the findings of the study should be an asset in implementation of the programme geared towards reducing the impact of HPAI in the country, as well as across common borders in the Indo-Gangetic plains. He further said that findings of the study could be regarded as a milestone in developing a preparedness plan.

### 4. Technical Committee meeting, Dhaka, Bangladesh



A meeting of the Technical Committee formulated under the project was held at Dhaka, Bangladesh on 19 July 2009.

#### The immediate objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share the current HPAI situation in each country;
- Share the progress made in implementation of the cross border project; and
- Find ways of strengthening cooperation through the Technical Level Committee.

Twenty-three people representing the target countries Bangladesh, India and Nepal, USAID/ Bangladesh and

its partners in the sub-region and FAO attended the meeting. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Bangladesh. The workshop was attended by Chief Veterinary Officers (or their representative) and designated and all associated units and networks. In the meantime the meeting acknowledges and supports the ongoing work on HPAI and FMD being conducted by FAO and OIE in some countries and the subregion of Livestock Services, Government of Bangladesh also participated. FAO consultants from Bangladesh, Sub Regional ECTAD Unit (SAARC) provided technical support to the workshop. FAO-Bangladesh provided logistical support for the meeting.

The chief guest, Mr Md. Shah Alam, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Government of Bangladesh, welcomed participants and thanked the organizers. Mr. Shah pointed out that Bangladesh, India and Nepal share a common border, heritage and culture and suggested that understanding of this fact is important in resolving any issue common to these countries. He stressed the need to take a regional approach in resolving trans-border issue and thus welcomed the regional approach taken by the FAO through the USAID project 'Strengthening cross border activities among Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Myanmar to control possible cross border spread of HPAI (OSRO/RAS/701/USA)'. He added that the geographical border in the region does not represent a strict barrier and movement across the three countries is common among people of the border areas: thus the global initiative for control of Transboundary animal diseases is important. However, little progress has been made in SAARC countries, due to weak implementation modalities and a need for greater understanding of problem identification and resolution. Mr. Shah concluded by stressing that the value chain study conducted under the OSRO/RAS/701/USA project should help in resolving the issues in years to come. During the meeting technical and country status presentations were made followed by group discussions. The following recommendations were made;

#### **Recommendations for Information sharing**

- Communication at the ministerial level
- Strengthen/operationalise the existing information sharing mechanism between governments
- Develop/discuss SOPs for type of information sharing and at what level
- The issue could also be discussed at SAARC Technical Committee level

#### **Recommendations for Cross border surveillance**

- Mandatory reporting of disease through better networking.
- Provide government support for poultry health management at the backyard level
- Efforts should be made to increase clinical surveillance.

#### **5. Stakeholders meeting related to cross border trade, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Stakeholders' meeting to share the results of the cross Border poultry value chain mapping across Bangladesh-India and Bangladesh-Myanmar borders was held at Dhaka, Bangladesh on July 21, 2009 at the Department of Livestock Services Meeting Room. The meeting was held with the participation of Dr. Habibur Rahman, Director General and Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of Bangladesh, Government of Bangladesh officials, senior Department of Livestock Services staff, private sector representatives, NGOs, INGOs, AED and FAO. Dr. Rahman made the opening speech. The workshop was hosted by the Government of Bangladesh, with FAO-Bangladesh

providing logistical support. Dr Mohinder Oberoi (on behalf of FAOR Bangladesh),



welcomed participants and explained that the meeting was organized under the USAID project 'Strengthening cross border activities among Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Myanmar to control possible cross border spread of HPAI (OSRO/RAS/701/USA)', with the objective of sharing the findings of the poultry value chain mapping study. This study was implemented through the Bangladesh Centre for Communication Programs (BCCP) to identify high risk areas for introduction of HPAI via cross border routes, by mapping market chains and poultry trade volumes across Bangladesh-India and Bangladesh-Myanmar borders.

Dr. Rahman thanked FAO and BCCP for undertaking the study and confirmed that the Government of Bangladesh was actively working to combat the negative impact of HPAI on the poultry industry and small scale producers. He regarded the study findings as being an asset in implementing the programme to reduce the impact of HPAI. Dr. Rahman concluded the session by complementing the study team for their successful implementation of the study and thanked the development partners for their assistance to Bangladesh in combating HPAI.

#### **Up Coming Project Events**

- Sub Regional Workshop on Understanding and use of Poultry Value Chain Analysis in Poultry Production and Marketing in the context of Cross Border trading from 14 to 18 September 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal
- USAID Partners Meeting to discuss the progress of the project, 24 to 25 September 2009, Bangkok, Thailand



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