



Strengthening cross border activities among *Bangladesh, India and Nepal* to control possible cross-border spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) OSRO/RAS/701/USA

Bulletin

INFORMATION

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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 Sub-region of South Asia.

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

Disease status in the sub region - No new HPAI outbreak reported

No new HPAI outbreak was reported in the Indo-Gangetic plains of Bangladesh, India and Nepal in the month of August and September 2010. However, surveillance against HPAI continued in all three countries, especially in vulnerable areas and in areas visited by migratory birds. Meanwhile, Nepal submitted the final report to the OIE on 2nd September 2010, indicating the country to be free from HPAI as there were no HPAI outbreaks since March 2010 in the country. The final report explained that from 30th March to 12th August 2010, an extensive active surveillance was carried out in commercial poultry farms, backyard poultry and wet markets. A total of 2,731 households and 562 commercial farms were visited by the surveillance team till 12th August and a total 2,384 samples (702 tracheal swabs, 938 cloacal swabs, 159 sera, 438 fresh faeces and 147 dead birds) were tested. All samples were found negative for HPAI virus. There was no evidence of antibody against HPAI virus in the tested sera.

Early this year Nepal was reeling under many HPAI outbreaks in various districts in February and March. The first outbreak was reported in January 2010 at Ward No. 7, Gharipatan area of famous tourist town

of Pokhara in Kaski district. Other districts which experienced the outbreak were Banke, Chitwan, Rupandehi, Dang, Kailali and Nawalparasi.

Besides 2.2 lineage of H5N1 virus experienced by Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal in the sub- region, a further lineage 2.3.2, which was not previously detected in South Asia was recovered from Nepal in the Pokhara outbreak.

Anthrax outbreaks in Bangladesh:

In August and September 2010, Bangladesh was battling a major outbreak of cattle and human anthrax infections, with about 600 human cases and "scores" of cattle deaths. The government had set up checkpoints at cattle markets, put livestock and health officials on "red alert," and sent emergency veterinary teams to the affected districts. Meat consumption dropped sharply as consumers shunned beef for fear of the disease. As part of the response to control the disease among cattle population, the government of Bangladesh launched a vaccination programme and also set-up a national Steering Committee to oversee the control mechanism. As per <http://www.IRINnews.org>, till 13 September 270,000 animals had already received the vaccine, and work was under way to administer a further 500,000 vaccinations in affected areas.

As per the website of Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (<http://www.iedcr.org>), Mohakhali, Dhaka of the Government of Bangladesh, from 19th to 25th August 2010, suspected Cutaneous Anthrax outbreaks among human population was reported in districts of Sirajganj (Shajadpur, Belkuchi and Kamarkhund sub-districts) and Pabna (Santhia sub- district) of Bangladesh. As part of the response the National Rapid Response Team (NRRT) of IEDCR carried out Epidemiological, Anthropological and Environmental investigation at the outbreaks sites and confirmed the Cutaneous Anthrax among human population. Earlier in the year there were suspected outbreak of Cutaneous Anthrax in Tangail district in April and June months and after the investigation from NRRT, cases were confirmed.

As per <http://www.iedcr.org> from 18th August to 30th September, 2010 a total number of 605 human cases of Cutaneous Anthrax were reported from 12 districts. The affected districts were Pabna (68 cases), Sirajganj (218 cases), Kushtia (49 cases), Tangail (26 cases), Meherpur (82 cases), Manikganj (8 cases), Satkhira (1 case), Lalmonirhat (107 cases), Rajshahi (8 cases), Narayanganj (12 cases), Laxmipur (25 cases) and Chittagong (1 case).

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Activities undertaken

- District level meeting in Bangladesh on advocacy, disease investigation, clinical symptoms and value chain mapping
- Participation in USAID Partners' meeting at Bangkok
- Simulation workshop in Bangladesh
- Study on livestock marketing systems in India

District level meeting in Bangladesh at Jessore

Within the framework of the project "Strengthening cross-border activities among Bangladesh, India and Nepal to control possible cross-border spread of HPAI (OSRO/RAS/701/USA Phase II)", orientation/sensitization workshops were planned for district veterinary/livestock staff, police, forces manning the international border, NGOs, relevant private sector entities, community groups, backyard/commercial poultry farmers, health department representatives, self-help women groups and media at the selected bordering districts in high-risk corridors of Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The workshops also aimed to better understand the poultry sector in the area and corresponding area across the border with emphasis on sensitization and capacity building of the government staff and the relevant private entities of the member countries to strengthen the disease investigation and HPAI control and prevention activities in the border areas.



Participants at the Jessore workshop

be seen as an opportunity to enhance the understanding of the ground realities and updating knowledge with regard to HPAI.

The technical session began with presentation by Dr. Oberoi on clinical picture of HPAI and discussions on it. He explained that how HPAI could be identified in the field through clinical signs and other general indicators of the disease. The presentation generated a lot of interest, especially among the non-technical participants and resulted to a healthy question-answer session.

HPAI clinical picture session was followed by a presentation by Mr. Jagmeet Uppal on orientation/sensitization of participants on key areas of advocacy interventions related with risk/outbreak communication for HPAI prevention and control. He explained the key areas of strategic communication and the principles of outbreak communication. He emphasized the creation of 'felt need' among the targeted participant groups for communication interventions/messages through sustained advocacy. He briefly explained about three pandemics of the last century and its impact on the then region. He further explained the need for preparing communities for any future disaster/pandemic (if any). He elaborated the need for the social and behavior change in context with poultry rearing practices as well as related with general hygiene and sanitation. He also explained the factors related with 'constraints' and 'enablers' for behaviour change; importance of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice studies; and various participants group for communication and advocacy interventions. The participants were given group work to discuss the prevention and control of 'animal to animal' and 'animal to human' transmission and the expected behaviour change through the interventions in prominent technical areas. Mr. Uppal facilitated the groups to understand the 'group work matrix'. The group work was followed by presentation by each group and discussions.



Mr. Nurul Amin, Deputy Commissioner, Jessore District speaking at the inaugural session of the workshop

The Jessore workshop, held on 15th - 16th September, was fourth in the series of the six planned workshops in Bangladesh. Earlier in June 2010, three workshops were held in Chapai Nawabganj, Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat. The workshops were organized in collaboration with the Department of Livestock Services, Government of Bangladesh. The participants included representatives from local administration, department of health, local media/press, NGOs, Police, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), poultry farmers, hatcheries owners and staffs (veterinarians and para-veterinarians) posted in the Jessore district. The workshop was attended by 79 participants on first day and 36 technical participants on second day.

The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Nurul Amin, Deputy Commissioner of the Jessore District. During the inaugural address he said that in the context of the Bangladesh protecting poultry industry was essential as economic development is directly linked to this industry. He also emphasized the importance of vigil at the borders in order to control the HPAI transmission. He wanted the compensation paid to the farmers in lieu of culling to be increased as current compensation rates were meager. He urged the participants to learn from the workshop and play an effective role for prevention and control of HPAI. Besides, Deputy Commissioner, representatives from Agriculture and Fisheries departments were also present during the inaugural session, which was chaired by the District Livestock Officer Mr Gazi Salehuddin.

During the inaugural session Dr. Mohinder Oberoi, Sub-regional Manager FAO ECTAD Unit (SAARC), Kathmandu, informed the participants about the background, objectives of the workshop and expectations from them. He said that the workshop was to be taken as two way learning process for the participants as well as the organizers. He explained that the workshop should



Advocacy/communication group work at the Jessore workshop

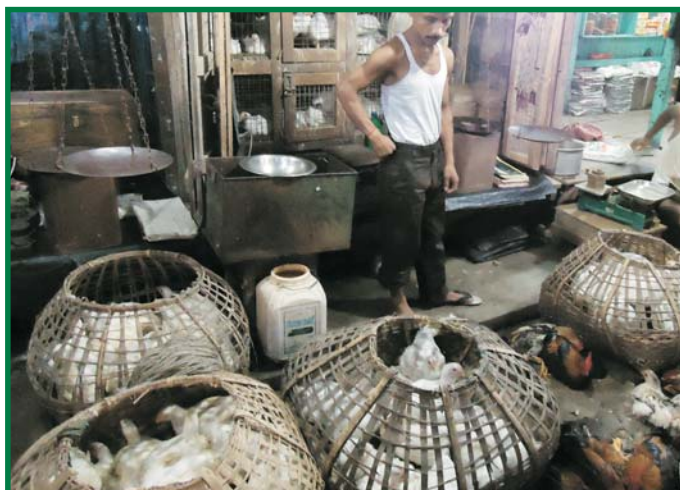
- ④ The second day of the workshop was mainly devoted to district presentation on overall status of poultry and its trade in the district; poultry value chain mapping; situation of the poultry markets and movements of poultry from one place to another and training on disease investigation with group work. Second day proceedings of the workshop began with presentation by the DLO Mr. Salehuddin, who informed the participants that Jessore district had 4.2 million poultry and over one million duck population. The district also had around 1700 broiler farms, 269 layer farms, 43 duck farms, four hatcheries and three feed mills. According to him 60% of the poultry were reared in the backyard in the district and mainly by women. The presentation also included geographical information related with district/sub-districts and various other information related with poultry production.
- ④ This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Oberoi on poultry value chain mapping and production and marketing systems. He first presented the key findings of poultry value chain mapping across the cross border corridor, poultry market profile and understanding of their linkages in cross border trade. He presented information on the selection of study sites, outbreak sites along Bangladesh/West Bengal (India) border. He also emphasized the need for interventions in key areas for strengthening cross-border emergency preparedness for prevention and control of HPAI. He also talked about the findings of the market profile study conducted by the project in each of the district. The study presented detailed findings on understanding of how poultry markets work in Jessore district and how poultry market chains are linked to epidemiologically significant events.
- ④ Dr. Oberoi also made a short presentation on the evolving HPAI situation in South Asia. He also presented an animated depiction (developed by FAO) of probable sequence of re-assortment events leading to the current Pandemic influenza A-H1N1 virus. Participants were shown pictorial clinical signs and post mortem lesions of HPAI and its differences from Newcastle disease. Following that Dr. Oberoi made a presentation on 'Animal disease investigation and value chain analysis' focusing on epidemiology, surveillance, reporting, etc. He also deliberated on technical guidance for disease investigation for veterinarians. All the presentations were followed by a question and answer session and discussions. Later the participants were divided into three groups to discuss three poultry disease outbreak scenarios to come up with their step by step line of action and diagnosis. Each group presented the group findings followed by a question and answer session and discussions. Finally, Dr. Oberoi pointed out the gaps which existed in participants' group work presentation and how those could be improved.
- ④ **Field trip:** Along with the workshop the FAO-ECTAD team members also visited the Benapole border areas, which is a main trade route between Bangladesh and India. The field trip was organized by the local livestock development office. During the field trips brief discussions were held with the BDR, Custom staff and local staff of DLO. The BDR staff informed that they were very careful in stopping illegal movement of produce from either side. These meetings helped the team members to understand the poultry value chain in the area as well as the gamut of cross-border trade. Earlier in the month of March the FAO- ECTAD visited other side of the border "Petrapole" in India before having a similar district level workshop at Barasat in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.
- ④ In the RDMA M & E workshop on 1st September presentations were made by the MEASURE Evaluation team and USAID RDMA on the ongoing activities. A Performance Management Plan (PMP) was provided which is a monitoring framework for program activities and results that are expected for 2011 through 2015. The document represented a significant revision of the API PMP established by the Mission in 2007 and was developed using a collaborative process involving USAID/RDMA, its implementing partners and other stakeholders. This strategy responds to current scientific knowledge for the key drivers for disease transmission in the region. RDMA supports programmatic interventions to respond to the disease at its source in animals, in targeted, high-risk areas. RDMA serves a mandate across Southeast Asia and South Asia. Dr. Oberoi participated in the group work to discuss the HPAI Disease Control Efforts/Cross Border Activities. Outcomes were presented in the plenary session.
- ④ The partners' meeting was held on 2nd-3rd September with opening remarks given by Dr. Aye Aye Thwin, RDMA and Dr. Subhash Morzaria, Manager ECTAD, RAP. Dr. Morzaria highlighted the collaboration of FAO and USAID and the future plans. Dr Daniel Schar, RDMA presented the avian and pandemic influenza updates, which was followed by a presentation by MEASURE Evaluation representative. The progress of FETP-V and Empresi-Asia were discussed by FAO officers from RAP and China, respectively. During the technical sessions, in addition to the FAO presentation on Regional Component- Key Lessons Learned and Proposed Work Plans were discussed. Other partners like AED, USP, IRC, WHO and Kenan Institute made presentations on their activities. On the second day FAO Subregional ECTAD Unit (SAARC) presented the progress of cross border project and the proposed activities. RDMA appeared to be satisfied with the progress and Dan Schar was appreciative of the efforts made by the project in forging collaboration among the project countries. Several other presentations were made by FAO country teams and the socio-economic group as well as by WHO.

Study on livestock marketing systems in India

- ④ From 26th August to 4th September 2010, Mr. Rajendra Singh, international animal health economist from FAO ECTAD Unit (SAARC) visited Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Dakshin Dinajpur districts of West Bengal and West Tripura district of Tripura State of India to collect data and other information for the study on livestock marketing systems in the areas close to Bangladesh border.
- ④ Before visiting the border markets and collecting the data Mr. Singh explained the background, purpose and process to the concerned officials of the respective districts along with the primary objective of the study. As per the terms of study and in consultation with the concerned deputy directors of the Animal

Participation in USAID Partners' meeting at Bangkok.

- ④ Dr. Oberoi participated in the USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Workshop and in the strategic review of Regional Avian Influenza USAID Partners' Meeting and present the progress of activities achieved by cross border project. These were held from 1st to 3rd September, 2010 at Bangkok.



Poultry market at Agartala (Tripura), India

Resource Development Department (ARDD) markets were visited for study purpose for primary data collection. Study areas also included (i) The critical poultry market information, including domestic price developments, marketing, storage, imports and exports, transport and distribution systems. (ii) Identification of poultry supply areas, poultry supply alternatives and key players in market linkages (iii) Determination of a monitoring mechanism for implementing/ maintaining bio-security measures in the market to ensure safe movement of poultry and delivery of poultry products to consumers.

⊕ The important markets visited were : (i) Siliguri/Darjeeling District: Champasiri, Matigara, Bidhan Market, darjeelingmore Market, Garidura, Mirik, Simana and Sukhya Pokhri. (ii) Jalpaiguri District: Jalpaiguri Sadar market, Chandrabandha and Haldibari. (iii) Dakshin Dinajpur: Trimohini, Hili, Patiram and Mohuna. (iv) West Tripura district: Municipal market Agartala, Melagharh, N.C.Nagar, Bishalgarh and Bisrampur in Sonamura areas.

⊕ Information was collected based on the prepared check lists and through purposive sampling procedures. Local ARDD staff, market operators, relevant private sector players including traders, food processors, transporters/agents, producer associations, feed suppliers, butchers and farmers were interviewed. Also the secondary information and publications were also collected for review.

Simulation workshop in Bangladesh

⊕ A table top preparatory simulation workshop for prevention and control of cross- border HPAI infection was held at Dinajpur, Bangladesh on 19 September, 2010. The objectives of the preparatory workshop were to examine the effectiveness and identify gaps of;

National plan documents to prevent the cross border transmission of the diseases;

Legal and administrative approaches for successful prevention of HPAI through cross border trade;

Current mechanism knowledge and information flow at cross border amongst various agencies for pre-emptive action to prevent incursion of HPAI; and

Cross Border Standard Operating Procedures under field situation; and to



Mr. Md. Jamal Uddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner of Dinajpur District (Bangladesh) speaking at simulation workshop on 19th Sept, 2010



Participants at simulation workshop held at Dinajpur (Bangladesh) on 19th Sept., 2010

Recommend workable solution at policy and execution level to minimize the risk of cross border transmission of the disease.

⊕ The workshop was attended by the representatives from Department of Livestock Services (DLS), Civil Administration, Department of Health, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Police, Customs, Department of Agriculture, Plant Quarantine Station, NGOs, poultry farmers association and media representatives (both print and electronic). The Deputy Director of Rajshahi Division of DLS, Mr. Ebrahim Hossain presided over the inaugural session. The Deputy Commissioner of Dinajpur Mr. Md. Jamal Uddin Ahmed was present as Chief Guest. The inaugural session was followed by presentation on overview of simulation and objective and presentations on current status of surveillance in poultry and wild life, mechanism of information sharing and border control by the concerned stakeholders. Dr. Oberoi, Sub Regional Manger of ECTAD (SAARC) presented a paper on SOPs related to Cross Border activities before the participants. In the afternoon session, participants were divided into three groups for discussions on surveillance in poultry and wild life, border control and information sharing. Findings of the groups were presented and discussed in the plenary. The presentations of the key stakeholders, speech of the chief guest and group work revealed that mechanism of information sharing do exist through District Magistrates' Conference and Flag Meetings between BDR and BSF (Border Security Force of India). These mechanisms may be used for quick information sharing and better border control initiatives. However, participants felt that the animal health issues were never raised and discussed. The participants recommended for direct information sharing between technical agencies and administrators of the bordering districts of both the countries on animal health emergencies. The findings of workshops will be reviewed and similar workshop(s) has been planned in the neighbouring countries to further improve the cross border information sharing and border control to manage animal health emergencies at cross border.

Upcoming Project Events

- ⊕ District level workshops in Bangladesh on advocacy, disease investigation, clinical symptoms and value chain mapping.
- ⊕ Media sensitization workshops in West Bengal, India.



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