

October 2009 – September 2012

Rationale

Bokeo and Luang namtha were two provinces which were added as provincial focus of interventions under MID-BCC. The four provinces – Vientiane Capital, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet and Champasack were the earlier priority provinces of the previous Avian Influenza Behavior Change Communication (AI-BCC) Project.

The purpose of the PAR in Bokeo and Luang Namtha provinces was to ensure that communication strategies will enable people to change their behavior in a way that is consistent with their culture, livelihood strategies, gender, division of labor, etc. both to respect their human rights and to ensure that change actually happens.

Objectives

The research was envisioned to generate information about the communities' pressing health problems, health practices, and health seeking behaviors by monitoring their daily lives.



Materials and Methods

Focus group discussions with key officers of the community councils



Focus group discussions with women's and men's groups in the community



Transect walk and observation



Results

The research findings in Bokeo pointed to the need to enhance the sharing of information among women for early detection of possible disease outbreak. This discovery naturally flowed into the decision to consider training members of the Lao Women's Union on using text messaging in early detection of disease outbreaks.



The insights from the PAR also led MID-BCC to continue providing training opportunities to village leaders -- the village chief and the village councils. Thus, MID-BCC assisted the Provincial Health Departments of Bokeo and Luang Namtha in training 100 community leaders, village veterinarians, and health volunteers on reducing the risk of bird flu.



Conclusions

The PAR exercise made us cognizant to the local decision making in the community, mobilizing local support to address local problems. The PAR also made us decide to continue training health volunteers because their role is recognized in the community yet they have fewer opportunities to keep themselves updated on health issues.



Acknowledgment

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