

October 2009 – September 2012

Rationale

In bringing about behavior change to reduce the risk of avian influenza in animals and humans, we often focus on individual backyard poultry farmers, traders, vendors and their families. Under the USAID MID-BCC project, FHI 360 highly considered the community structure and norms that encourage individual health behaviors.

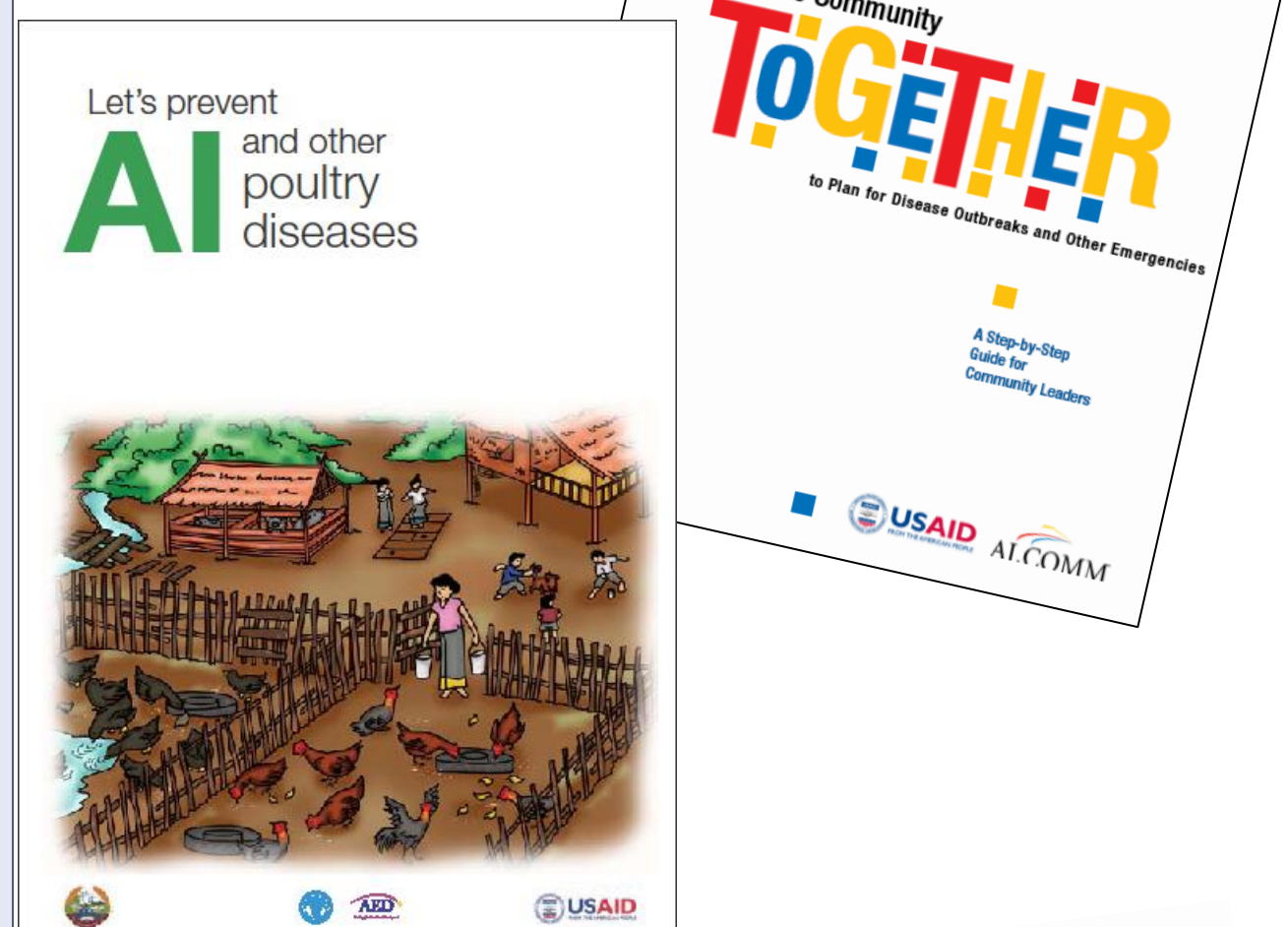
MID-BCC utilized the results of the KAP surveys done by the previous USAID project AI-BCC, the endline KAP conducted by the government of Lao PDR with support from World Bank, and the insights gathered from the participatory action research (PAR).

One common implication from the findings of these studies was the need to build the capacity of community leaders whom people listen to, are respected, and have a sphere of influence among the people.

Objectives

- To help community responders, volunteers, and commune and district leaders to plan and respond effectively to possible bird flu and H1N1 outbreaks
- To orient key community stakeholders and village-level influentials on the issues of bird flu and deliver key prevention messages through the use of communication materials
- To increase the involvement of communities in villages in planning and implementing surveillance and reporting, bio-security and communication activities.

Materials and Methods



This poster was printed only to serve the purpose of the MID-BCC Lessons Learned Meeting on Sept 5-6, 2012.

Using team-oriented workshops and role plays, training participants learned their roles and responsibilities and drafted their communication plans on the proper community response before an outbreak, during an outbreak and after an outbreak.

The community leaders' training was designed to develop a common sense of purpose among community leaders and residents, and to plan their community's communication response to possible outbreak considering their local resources.

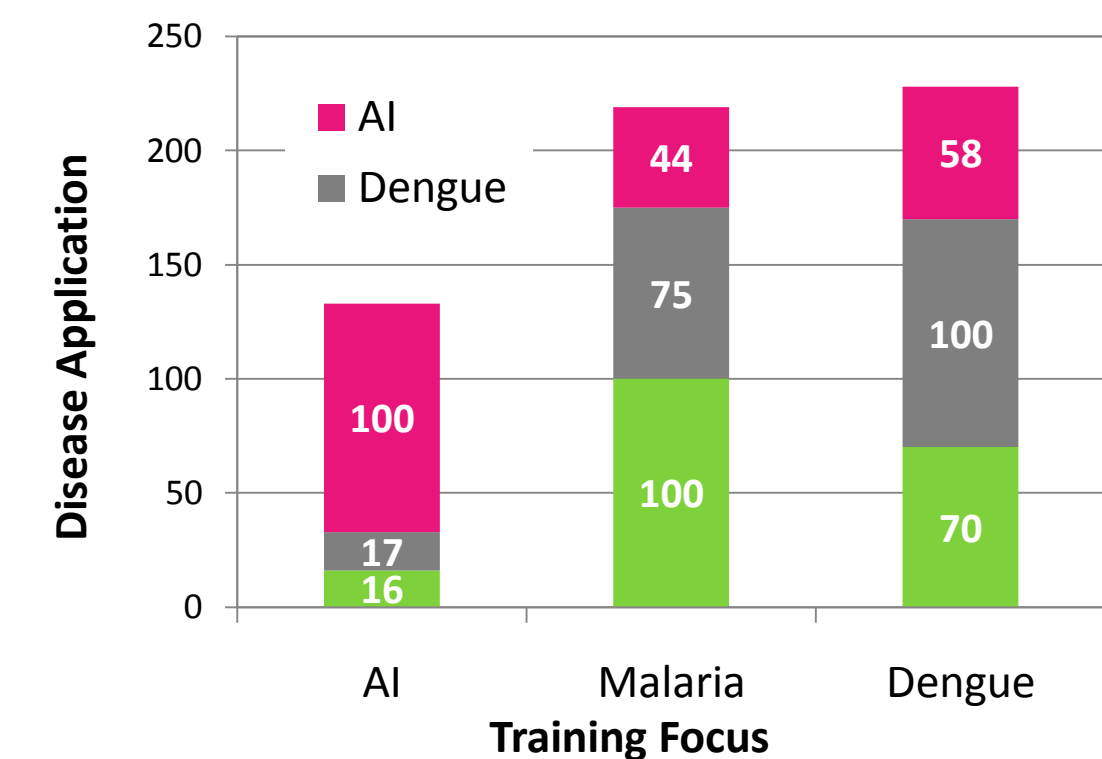


Results

MID-BCC trained a total of 574 community leaders who were mostly village chiefs, village health volunteers, village veterinarians, youth leaders, and Lao Women's Union leaders.

During the first quarter of 2011, MID-BCC undertook an impact evaluation to gauge the effectiveness of the trainings and to capture any communication activities that were conducted as a result.

A total of 272 trained community leaders were selected from the participants list.



- What is learnt in a training focused on communication can also be applied to other thematic areas, such as specific diseases. When looking at how the training has translated into different disease messages, it is evident that participants have gone beyond the focus of the training and applied what they learned to other diseases as well.
- Those who undertook training for malaria or dengue have applied their communication skills to other diseases to a greater extent compared to those who did training on AI.

Conclusions

Ensuring effective communication in engaging community participation rests on critical factors and interventions:

- Making resources/funds available to cover community activities
- Facilitating collaborative relationships between/among key players who can be responsive quickly (village heads, health staff, vets, LWU)
- Fostering networks that mobilize social support

Acknowledgment

The Provincial Health Departments of Champassack, Savannakhet, Luang Prabang, Lunag Namtha, and Bokeo would like to thank the Provincial Health Office of Vientiane Capital and CIEH for the overwhelming support in making the series of community leaders' trainings a success.