

MID-BCC – Communications for Change in Infectious Diseases in Greater Mekong Subregion



Community Leaders' Training to Reduce the Risk of Avian Influenza

Luang Namtha Province, Lao PDR

April 19-21, 2011



Geographic info

- The province is bordered by other Lao provinces Bokeo in the south-west, Oudomxay province in the south-east, by Myanmar in the northwest and China's Yunnan province in the north-east with the border crossing at Boten a special economic zone that serves as depot of goods from China.
- Luang Namtha shares a 140 kilometer land border with China
- Its northwest frontier with Myanmar follows a 130 kilometer stretch of the Mekong River.

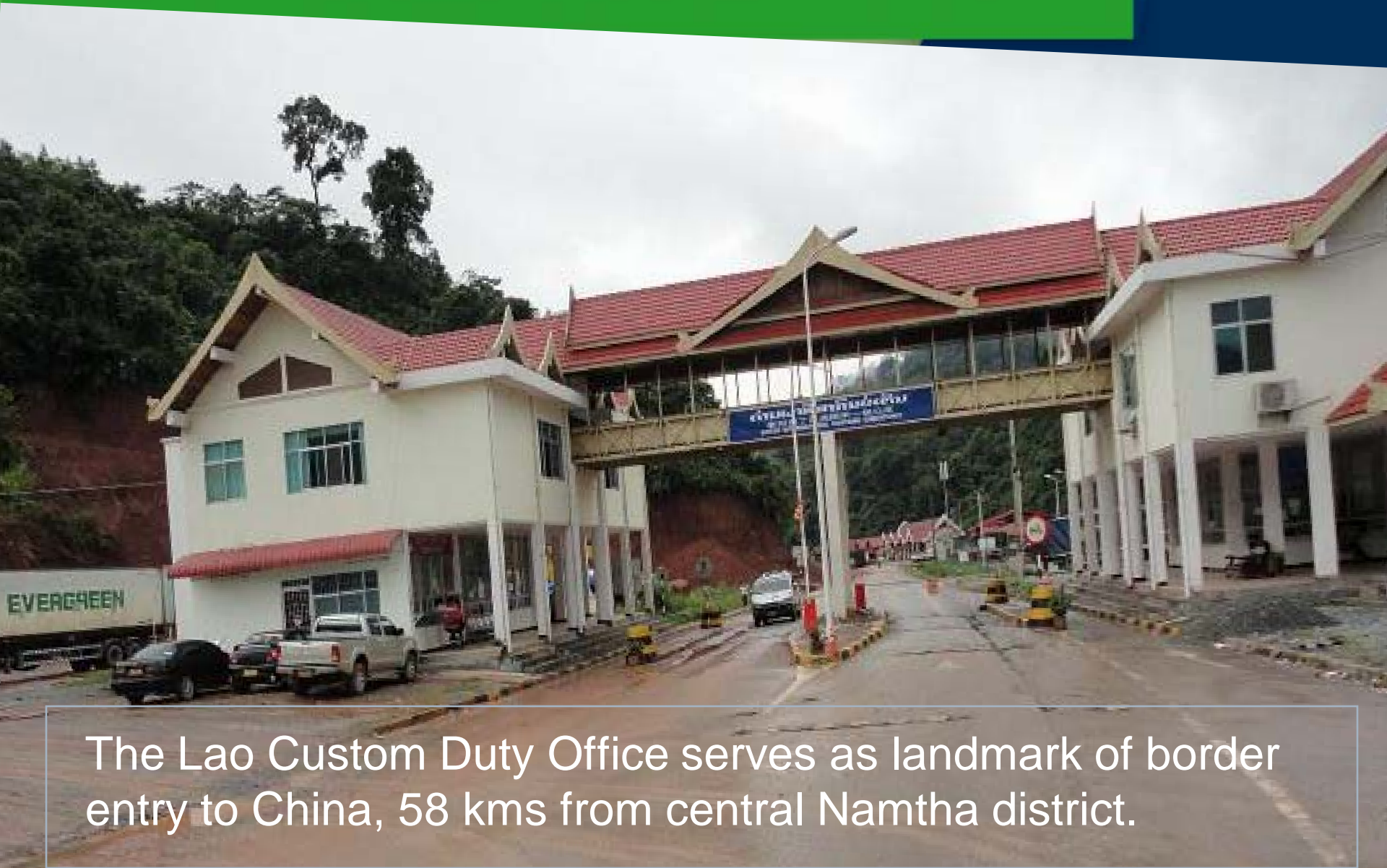
Luang namtha

Luang Namtha Province is divided into 5 districts (or *muang*) - Namtha, Nale, Vieng Phoukha, Long and Sing that are further divided into 380 village units.

A photograph of a dirt road in a rural village. The road is wide and unpaved, stretching into the distance. On the left, there are several small buildings with corrugated metal roofs. A motorcycle is parked under a simple structure. On the right, there are more buildings and lush greenery, including banana trees. In the background, there are large, hazy mountains under a clear sky. The overall scene depicts a typical rural setting in a developing region.

Dirt and winding roads connect one district to another.

Luang namtha



The Lao Custom Duty Office serves as landmark of border entry to China, 58 kms from central Namtha district.

Luang namtha



Roads leading to the border with China are better constructed since China government improved access roads to trade and market.

Objectives of the training

- Strengthen the capacity of community responders, volunteers, commune and district leaders to plan and respond effectively for possible bird flu outbreaks
- Orient key community stakeholders and village-level influential on the issues of bird flu and deliver key prevention messages thru the use of IEC materials
- Increase involvement of communities and villages in planning and implementing surveillance and reporting, bio-security and communication activities

Cross-border Districts Covered

- ❑ Muang Sing is predominantly mountainous with forest and upland swidden farming. It has a population of 34,411 people, half of them belong to Akha ethnic group.
- ❑ Muang Long is mountainous, west of Muang Sing that shares a 50 km-long border with Myanmar. There are 31,842 inhabitants. Approximately, 60 percent of the people belong to Akha ethnic group.
- ❑ Namtha, where the provincial capital is located, has the highest population of 48,301 inhabitants. About 60 percent of the people are Khmu.

Participants



18 Community leaders and health workers from 3 villages of Long district

Participants



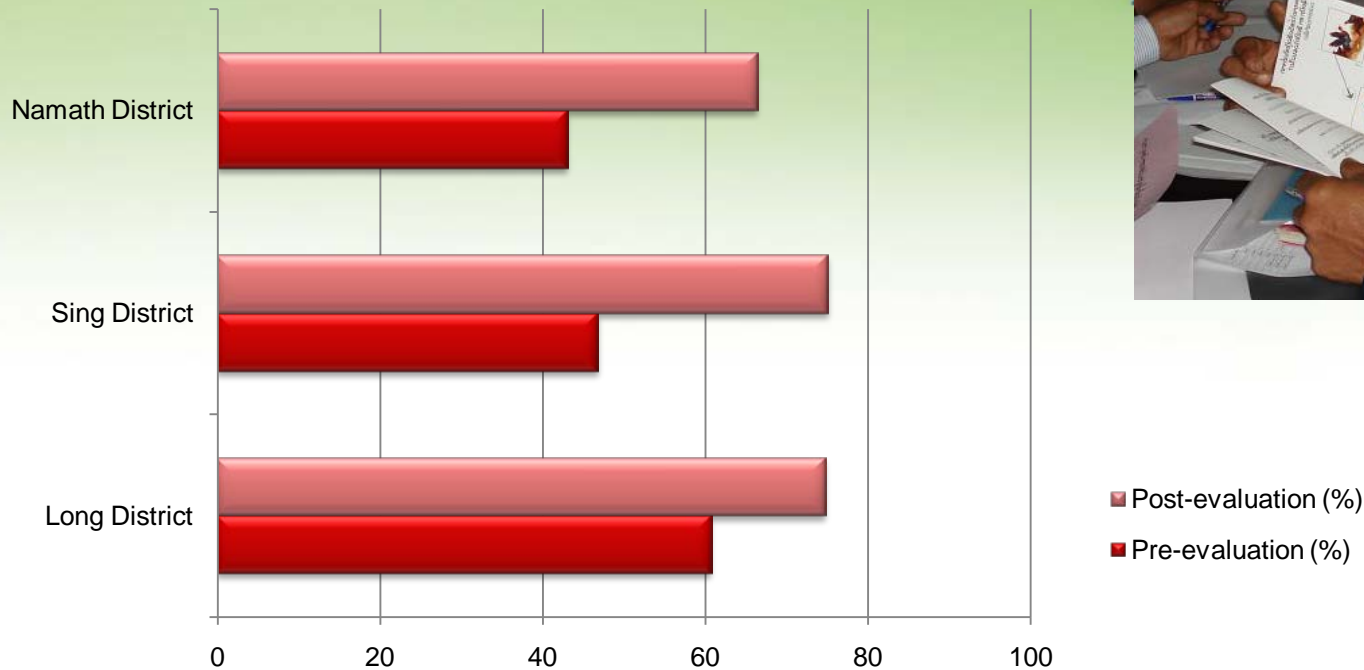
20 Community leaders, health workers and agriculture officers in 3 villages in of Sing district. District Health Officer, Dr Khamchanh Kattiyavong graced the opening.

Participants



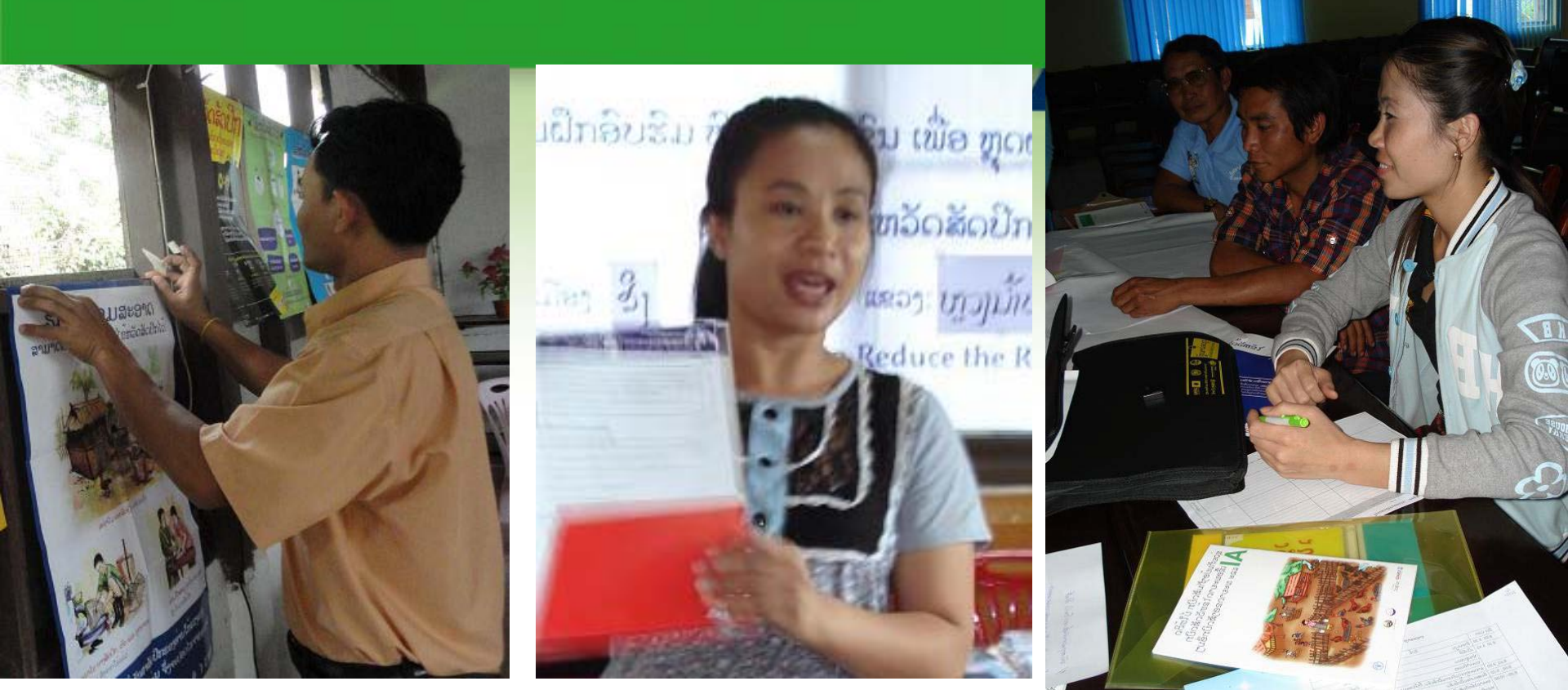
29 Community leaders, agriculture and health workers from 6 villages of Namtha district

Knowledge about AI



Results of pre- and post-evaluations showed that the participants' knowledge about bird flu improved after the training. Participants from Namtha who experienced the 2008 outbreak claimed that they have heard information about AI from the district health promotion team.

AI package



The main training material is the avian influenza training package which contains posters, flyers and videos which were produced by the AI partnership spearheaded by NEIDCO.

AI Flipchart



It has been designed for use by village veterinarians and agricultural extension staff.

Training methodology



Demonstration – to practice the proper hand washing steps

Training methodology



Role plays – to illustrate community leaders' role in mobilizing community members to protect village from bird flu



Training methodology



Participatory and interactive adult learning to engage participants in action planning

Addressing language barrier



Engaging the participation of community leaders who speak Akha language

Sharing and distribution of materials



All districts received copies of the AI materials



Closing

“ PREPARE is always better than RESPOND. After this training, as community leaders, you are more equipped to provide correct information about bird flu in your villages . I expect that you will coordinate more with the district surveillance team. ”

--- Somsanith Chanthakham
District Health Officer, Namtha



Acknowledgment



AED would like to thank the warm welcome, cooperation and support of Luang Namtha Provincial Health Office and the smooth coordination extended by the District Health Offices of Muang Long, Sing and Namtha.

End of Mission

