

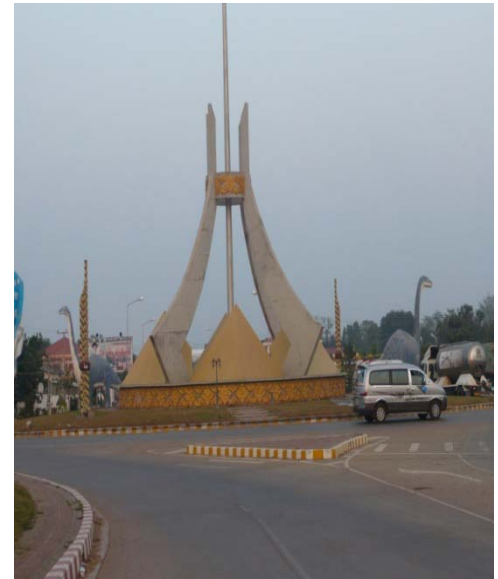
A sunset over a large body of water, likely a river or lake. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. In the distance, a city skyline is visible under the twilight sky. The foreground shows a dark, paved area with some sparse vegetation.

Bird Flu and Pandemic Preparedness Training for Community Leaders in Savannakhet Province

Kaysone and Xaybouli Districts
1-2 April 2010

Background

- Savannakhet is situated in the middle of the country and the largest province (21,774 square km), being bordered by Vietnam to the East, Thailand to the West, Khammouan Province to the North and Salavan Province to the South. It consists of 15 districts namely; Kaysone Phomvihanh, Xayphouthong, Outhoumphone, Phalanxay, Atsaphangthong, Phine, Sepon, Nong, Virabouly, Songkhone, Champhone, Thapangthong, Xonnabouly, Xaybouly, and Atsaphone.
- The provincial capital is Kaysone Phomvihane. The town serves as an active junction for trade between the two countries.
- From Thailand, Savannakhet is a designated international border checkpoint.



Background

- In 2007, the government culled 200,000 poultry in the province to stop the spread of H5N1.
- In 2009, the province registered the highest number of H1N1 cases compared with other provinces.
- Under the USAID supported [Greater Mekong Subregion Responses to Infectious Diseases Project \(GMS-RID\)](#), Savannakhet is one of the key cross-border provincial sites where international dialogue and multi-sectoral partnerships for the prevention and control of communicable diseases including cross-border planning and activities should happen.
- Under the Mekong Infectious Disease –BCC Project, the province is a critical border area identified by USAID that needs technical assistance in strengthening local capacity for cross-border collaboration on surveillance and response for significant communicable diseases to include bird flu, H1N1 and malaria in community setting.

Objectives

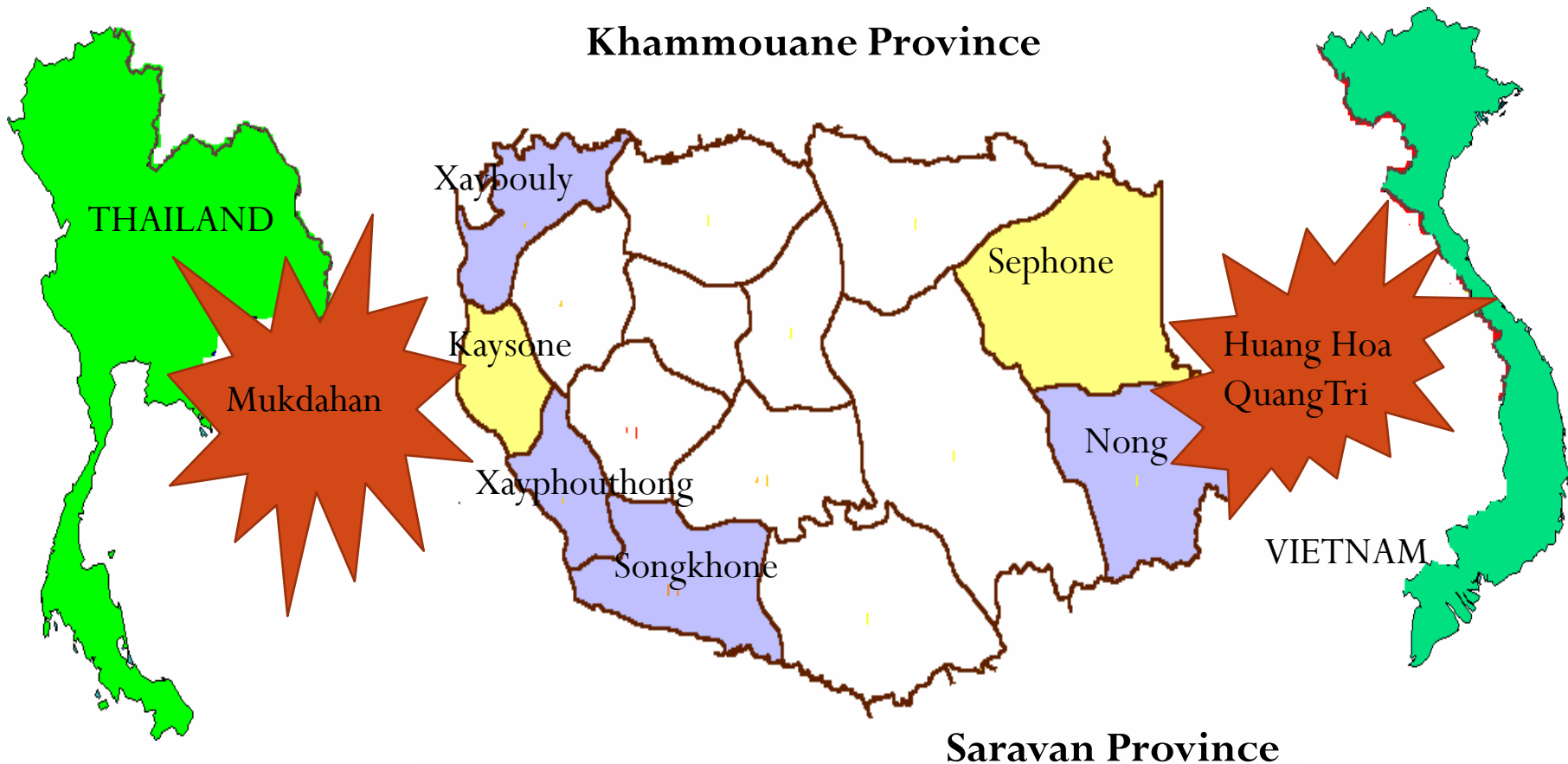
- The training was designed to:
 - ❑ strengthen the capacity of community responders, volunteers, commune and district leaders to plan and respond effectively for possible bird flu and H1N1 outbreaks
 - ❑ orient key community stakeholders and village-level influentials on the issues of bird flu and pandemic influenza 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

Batch 1: Xaybouly & Kaysone

Batch 2 : Xayphouthong & Songkhone

Batch 3: Sephone & Nong



Districts covered (initially)

- **Kaysone district** is at the center of the province and has 94 villages. It has the highest population among the 15 districts. In 2008, the Lao women union trained ____ villages. In November 2009, under the AI-BCC, AED trained 9 villages. An additional ___ villages have been trained under the MID-BCC.
- **Xaybouly district** is up north with 10 villages.

Villages covered

Xaybouly

1. Kenkabaotay
2. Kengkabaoneua
3. Savang
4. Hinnam-oi
5. Nasang
6. Buakhai
7. Paksebangphai
8. Thakham
9. Thakho

Kaysone

1. Huamuangtay
2. Pholsavanh
3. Sayamungkhum
4. Xayaphum
5. Nakae
6. Tha-udom
7. Pakbo
8. Thakham
9. Thansanonoi
10. Thasano

These villages were selected by AED following these criteria: These are situated along or near the border between Savannakhet and Mukdahan. They have not received any training at all about bird flu from the previous projects. They have not been trained on pandemic flu, either.

Participants

Xaybouly

- 36 community leaders who are mostly village chiefs, village veterinarians and village volunteers

Kaysone

- 32 community leaders



Training team



Clockwise —

Dr Phonepaseung from PHD
Vientiane Capital; Siamphone from
AED; and Cecile from AED.

Opening ceremony

Above right: Cecile expresses AED's gratitude for the PHD's acceptance of technical assistance.



Below right: Dr Bongsouvanh Phantavongsah, Deputy director of provincial health department keynoted the opening. *“The impact of bird flu outbreak in the past has been felt by many of us in Savannakhet. It has affected the income of small farmers and food vendors. The H1N1 cases in 2009 also alarmed not only the public but also our hotel industry. Addressing the issues of potential outbreaks is not only the concern of the government, but it is everyone’s concern. With assistance from international partners like AED, we should develop village models of reducing and completely stopping pandemic outbreaks.”*



Great photos



- Among all participants, the Lao Women Union members from villages seemed to know each other.

Above : A pose with the village members of the Lao Women Union

Meet our group and village

- Led by the village chief, the participants introduced themselves and shared some information about their village. One village chief said, “this meeting is a unique opportunity for us to meet other community leaders in our neighboring villages.”



Review of the AI package

“The AI package has been designed for you – community leaders. We are here to guide you how to use the materials inside the packet and to deliver the messages to other people in your community so that they will be aware of the risks and practice preventive behaviors.”



Sharing of experience



Above: He is Hongkham, a village veterinarian from Huamuangtay village of Kaysone district.

- “I attended the training of AED on bird flu in Nov 2009 at the provincial level. I volunteered to come again because I learned that AED will also talk about H1N1. After my first encounter with the trainers last year, I felt more confident to share what I know about bird flu information. I have conducted 2 meetings about bird flu in my village.”

New materials

- The AI flipchart is a new addition to the packet. It is intended for use by trainers and spokesperson in the community. It has a small version in a leaflet format that can be shared to others.
- A video , titled AI News TV Update was shown at the beginning of the AI session. The video elicited interesting questions (rumors and misinformation) about bird flu. All participants received a copy of the video.



Exercise – “ If I were”



- In reference to the AI Package, every village was put into an exercise. “ If I were the village chief (or village vet, or LWU) what am I going to do before an outbreak, during outbreak, and after outbreak? What am I going to say (the message) to a specific audience (select) during these events? How (thru what channel) will I deliver my message?”

Articulation



- *I am the village chief of Pholsavanh. Before outbreak, I will share these materials and messages with my party committee members during our regular village meetings. I will motivate them to look at entry of new poultry in the village. I will promote separation of new poultry from the old ones. I will discourage them to allow traders just come and go into the village.”*

Articulation



- *I am a member of the LWU in the village. I conduct mothers' classes on hygiene. One message I can easily share with mothers before, during and after outbreak, is hand washing with soap and clean water. Hand washing not only after touching poultry but making it a habit especially before and after preparing food for the family."*

Things to know about A/H1N1



- What is A/H1N1?
- How does it differ from seasonal flu?
- How does it differ from swine flu?
- Symptoms?
- How it spreads?

Addressing community perceptions and concerns

- Educate families
- Keep communities informed
- Provide communities the basic health information and actions – or things families can do to lessen the spread of influenza that do not involve medicines.
- Provide the best sources of information and guidance



Actions to fight pandemic flu in the community



Emphasis on 4 flu fighters

- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands
- Keep your distance
- Separate sick people

Basic health practice – Role play



“Hand washing is a universal practice, but we are not conscious to do it properly and every time.”

Acknowledgment



“My colleagues would like to thank AED and the PHD for inviting us (our village) to attend this interesting sharing of knowledge on bird flu and A/H1N1.”

Acknowledgment

AED would like to thank the Provincial Health Department of Savannakhet for the support and coordination extended and to the resource persons/partners from Vientiane Capital and CIEH to make this training a success.