



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

**Sepone and Nong Districts
26-27 May 2010**

Background

- This training was the last of a series conducted in Savannakhet, the province which is situated along the border of Vietnam to the East and Thailand to the West.
- Two districts in Savannakhet were selected along the border of Quang – Tri province and Huang Hoa district in Vietnam.

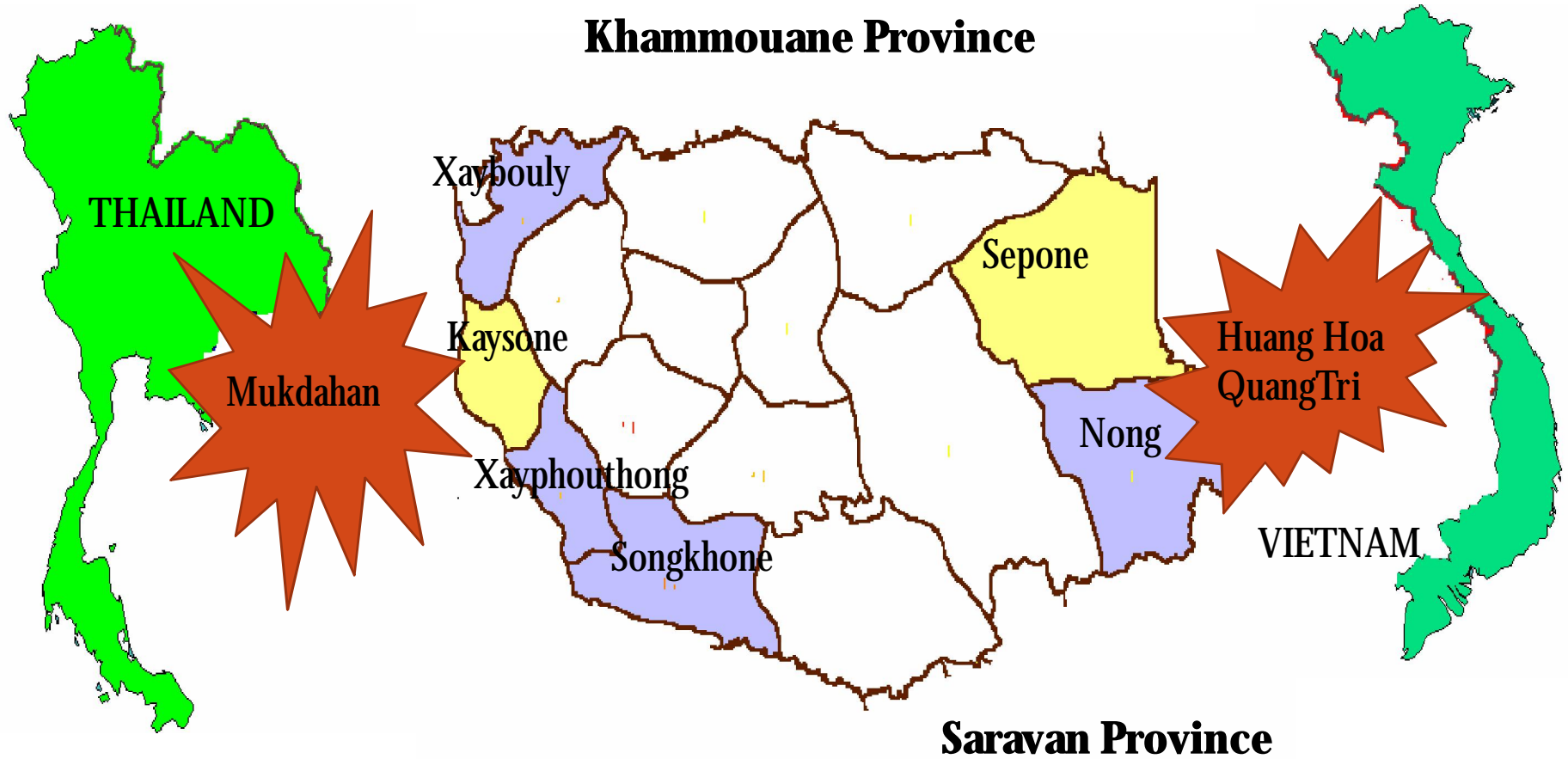


Cross-border Districts

Batch 1: Xaybouly & Kaysone

Batch 2 : Xayphouthong & Songkhone

Batch 3: Sepone & Nong



Objectives

- The training was designed to:
 - q strengthen the capacity of community responders, volunteers, commune and district leaders to plan and respond effectively for possible bird flu and H1N1 outbreaks
 - q 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.
 - q increase involvement of communities and villages in planning and implementing surveillance and reporting, bio-security and communication activities.

Districts covered

- **Sepone district** is 180 kms away from the center of Savannakhet. It has 88 villages. It is populated by ethnics groups called “Kri” and “Mangkong.” Ms Konsamuth from the district health hospital claimed that pneumonia is common among all ages. From January to May, they have recorded 377 cases. She said that malaria is most serious. Only in May 2010, the hospital has registered 70 cases. From January to this period, they have recorded a total of 366 cases.



Mr Air Elavanh and Ms Konsamuth from the district hospital of Sepone.

- **Nong district** is 63 kms away from Sepone. It is composed of 73 villages. Inhabitants belong to the “Kri” and “Ta-oi” ethnic groups. According to Mr Shone Thong, head of the information and education office of the district health hospital, malaria is the most prevalent disease in the district. Second is diarrhea. Third is pneumonia. *(Personal interview)*



An interview with the district hospital staff.

Villages covered

Sepone

1. Laviang
2. Kahan
3. Kalat
4. Dansavane
5. Sadun
6. Maiphathana
7. Phuang
8. Kiang
9. Mahat
10. Kalang
11. Katuphyai
12. Katupnoy

Nong

1. Paliangjatsan
2. Palornam
3. Danvilai
4. Palorbok
5. Oiy
6. Tantiv
7. Palorsuan

These villages have not received any training at all about bird flu and pandemic flu from the previous projects.

Ethnicity and literacy

- The Ta-oi ethnic group in Nong speaks the Mon – Khmer language and is regarded as one of Vietnam's indigenous groups. The Ta Oi call themselves Taoih, which means "highlanders." By family clan , marriage and family relationship and language, the Ta-oi people of Savannakhet originated in Huang Hoa district, Quang Tri Province of Vietnam.
- The Mangkong people of Sepone speak a branch of the Mon-Khmer language called Bru. According to a government survey, 25% of them are able to read, including only 12% of women. More than 75% of Mangkong people in Laos have never attended school at any level.
- The Kri people claim themselves to have families migrated from the Ta-oi district of Saravan province (south of Savannakhet). They speak a language that is unknown. They are recognized by the Lao government as the third smallest ethnic group.

Training venue



The training was conducted at the Agriculture and Forestry Training Center of Savannakhet province.



Participants

Sepone

- 36 community leaders who are mostly village chiefs, village veterinarians and village health educators/volunteers.



Participants

Nong

32 community leaders who are also village chiefs, village vets and village health volunteers.



Training team



Cecile poses with the staff of the Provincial Health Department.



Medical staff of Sepone and Nong district hospitals.

Opening ceremony

Dr Kinally from the EPI Office of Savannakhet Health Department opened the training session. He invited Cecile of AED to give the message on behalf of AED.



Meet our group



- “ I am the village chief of Katupyai. I came here with three representatives from my village - the LWU, village veterinarian, and health volunteer. ”

AI TV update video

- The participants found the avian influenza TV update video interesting and informative.
- They never saw any episode of this video from November 2009 to March 2010.
- They claimed that they do not receive clearly Lao Star Channel given the forested area of their villages.
- Few of them do not have televisions at home.



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?

Literacy problem



Very few of the participants can read the Lao-translated materials. Generally, the participants read and speak *Lao Tung*, which is different from the *Lao language*. During the group exercise, members of the training team helped them read the materials and write their thoughts.

Sharing



“We are veterinarians. During outbreak, we will ask for people's cooperation to report to village chief cases of poultry deaths in number. We will promote no-movement of dead poultry from the village to other places. We will motivate people to look at entry of new poultry by traders in the village.”

Sharing



“We are members of the LWU in the village. Before, during and after outbreak, we will promote hand washing with soap and clean water after touching poultry. To mothers, we will remind them to cook their chicken meat and eggs well.” We will also remind parents not to allow the children touch poultry.”

Energizer



A traditional song and dance by the Lao Women Union members.

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?



What families can do to lessen the risk



- Provide communities the basic health information and actions that 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 practices



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



“Coughing and sneezing, let’s do it with our sleeves.”

What we heard about H1N1 vaccine

“In our district hospital in Sephone, we finished vaccination to target groups in less than 10 days.” - *Ms Konsamuth*

“In Nong, we successfully completed vaccination in two weeks. We did not encounter any adverse effects after vaccination.” - *Mr Shone Thong*



Message recall and call to action



“Yes! We can do the four flu fighters.”

Lessons

- The experience drawn from training this group of participants from Sepone and Nong opened new possibilities to develop more interactive and interpersonal communication strategies and materials to address ethnicity and literacy.
- This group of training participants also provided insights to the project to give focus to another health issue such as Malaria.



Acknowledgment

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