

Avian Influenza Behaviour Change

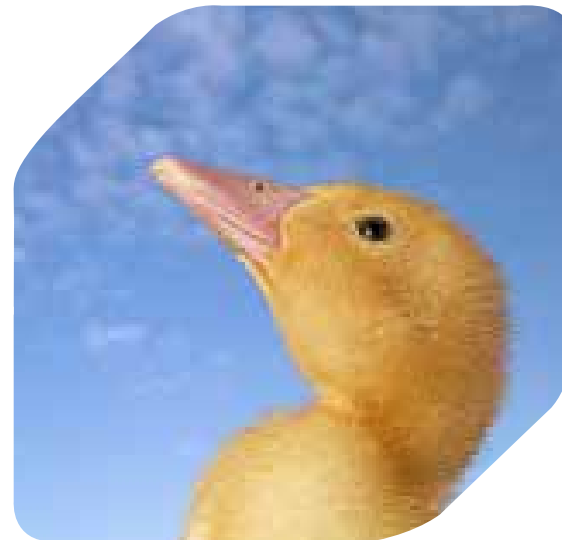
Laos, country report

Qualitative Findings

Prepared for
AED

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June 2008



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Background



- The U.S. Agency for International Development has awarded AED a global Task Order to conduct behavior change communications activities on avian influenza prevention and containment as well as human pandemic. Target audiences of these communication activities are small rural backyard poultry farmers (Sector 4), small commercial poultry farmers (Sector 3), and commercial farmers and poultry processors (Sector 2), consumers of poultry, and business officials and other stakeholders, and health and veterinary staff
- TNS has been commissioned to conduct qualitative and quantitative research in three countries – Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao – among rural and dense urban backyard farmers (sector 4); market vendors and poultry sellers and poultry growers (Sector 3); and stakeholders in the public and private sector; and NGO's and Media workers that are critical to the containment and prevention of HPAI (high pathogenic avian influenza)

- **Exploratory qualitative research was the most suitable research for this phase of the research**
 - Qualitative in-depth interviews
 - Conducted with specified farmers as well as the following stakeholders:
 - Central Government Officials (GO's)
 - Village / Opinion Leaders
 - Animal Health Worker (district level)
 - Animal Health Worker (local level)
 - Human Health Worker (district level)
 - Human Health Worker (local level)
 - NGO's / Media

- **The qualitative phase was conducted in all 3 countries in 3 different provinces (at the district and local level) per country**
 - Vietnam: Nam Dinh, Nghe An and Hau Giang
 - Cambodia: Kandal, Pursat, and Kampot
 - And Laos: Champasack, Savannakhet, and Vientiane

Sample split – Laos

35 Qualitative IDIs in total

Key Informants	Champasack	Savannakhet	Vientiane	Total
Backyard poultry farmers	3	3	3	9
Small commercial poultry farmers	3	3	3	9
Central government officials			3	3
Village/opinion leaders	2	2	2	6
Animal health worker (district level)	1			1
Animal health workers (local level)		1	1	2
Human health worker (district level)		1		1
Human health workers (local level)	1		1	2
NGO		1		1
Media			1	1
Total	10	11	14	35

Summary

Summary (1)

- Two out of the 3 provinces have experienced an AI outbreak, and having been faced with an outbreak first hand is a factor that plays a major role in people becoming concerned about AI. It is that realization that it could affect me or my family that prompt people to take action. With out that experience, people are more complaisant and AI does not register as a major concern as there are too many other day-to-day concerns to worry about including other diseases, lack of income, or not being able to afford schooling for the children.
- Thus it is not surprising that farmers keenly feel the danger of AI as a result of their experience. This has raised awareness and made them more active when it comes to preventative measures. But they are not aware of all preventative measures and some tend to go against ingrained habits. Thus more effective behaviour change is necessary to break their habits and ensure they are strongly enough concerned about AI's importance.
- Whilst AI is noted by farmers at the top of their health concerns, it is not always mentioned spontaneously as the most dangerous disease by all stakeholders. Other diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and AIDS/HIV are presenting major challenges in Laos
- Farmers can clearly articulate that AI is a dangerous poultry disease that can spread to humans, with the consequence being death as there is no treatment

Summary (2)

- Stakeholders have AI on their list of priorities, but not at the top (with the exception of health workers) until prompted. Again, the fact that there has been outbreaks seems to support the idea that action is more likely to happen when outbreaks happen. It is a reactive mindset.
- As stakeholders are more concerned about other diseases than AI, it is reinforced that the communication task in Laos is also about ensuring that AI is kept at the 'top of the priority list'.
- The fact that the beneficiaries are more spontaneously concerned than the stakeholders with regards to AI is different to the other countries where we find the reverse
- There appear to be other 'competing' issues which are gaining more of their attention
- Stakeholders/ NGOs and Media can continue to help by contributing to mobilization on awareness raising about AI at all levels. What is needed is more frequency of communication and increased focus on a few key preventative methods, these are mentioned as key success factors for the future
- Key triggers for communication include prompting some of the distinct aspects of AI in that there is no cure from it and that it can spread in multiple ways, both through infected food, poultry and humans. When these aspects are discussed and highlighted it triggers respondents to become more concerned about AI.

Main Findings



Understanding the Target Audience

Backyard and Small Commercial Poultry Farmers

Understanding their lives and profiles

- **Family size:**
8 people per family on average (minimum=4, maximum=12)
- **Social class:**
From low to medium levels
- **What they normally do to take care of their family:**
70% engaged in agriculture (crop and livestock production)
30% running small business (trading)
- **What kind of birds/ poultry do they raise:**
Mostly native chickens, ducks and turkey
- **Key differences between Backyard and Small Commercial Poultry Farmers:**
In bigger cities, Commercial Poultry Farmers are better off than Backyard Poultry Farmers
- **Key differences between provinces:**
 - **Note, 2 out of the 3 provinces (Savannakhet and Champasack) experienced AI outbreaks**
 - **There was in fact an AI outbreak in Vientiane as well, however we selected the District which was not affected by the AI outbreak, ie Sikhottabong District (located in central Vientiane Capital, an urban district)**
 - **However, we found no notable differences between all 3 provinces**

Overall concerns in life

Farmers Overall Concerns

As expressed by farmers

In order of ranking:

- Health of people in the family
- Family's income
- Education of children
- Social customs
- Safety

■ Family health concerns are the top priority

- It is the basic fact that if you are sick you cannot work (and if you cannot work, your survival is in question)

■ Beyond this comes the other aspect of day to day survival, income

■ Thirdly is children's education

- All believe that education determines their children's future in terms of the job they can get

■ In terms of social customs and safety,

- these primarily relate to concerns about drug addiction and its social implications and in the case of safety, road and fire related accidents are the main issues

Poultry Farmers – key concerns in life

Ranking	Overall Concerns	Reasons	Explanation
1	Health of people in the family	Cannot work when get sick or unhealthy	<i>“If I get sick, cannot work, cannot earn, moreover I spend a lot of time and money for treatment and can cause family fall in debt)”</i>
2	Family’s income	Low income, depends on agriculture	Low Income depending on agriculture: most of farmers income comes from selling their livestock and surplus farm produce, such as rice, vegetables and selling NTFPs (non timber forestry products), however their income varies depending on the climate and soil fertility. thus their income is both low and not permanent and stable Farmers are trying to increase their income through increasing their production yield and creating off farm income generating activities
3	Education of children	Afraid if they are not highly educated they cannot get a job	
4	Social customs	Many cases of violence in the society (mainly drug related)	Drug addiction, (ie. amphetamine addiction) amongst youngsters and adults in society, especially in big cities, leading to violence and said to be the cause of robbery, raping and fighting gangs are a major concern across communities in Laos. Unemployment and lack of drug awareness are felt to be the causes
5	Safety	Many kinds of accidents happening in society	Road accidents: many cases of road accidents in Lao, especially in big cities; main roads. Carelessness and poor adherence to traffic regulations felt to be the cause Fire accidents: many cases of fire accidents too; carelessness and poor housing and prevention measures felt to be the cause

No major differences found between backyard poultry farmers and small commercial poultry farmers

How Stakeholders are Addressing Farmers' Overall Concerns (1)

- **All stakeholders realize the key concerns of their communities and can fairly consistently list the farmers concerns as shown overleaf and what they are doing to proactively address each**
 - Overall, they try to help by
 - Encouraging and facilitating solutions
 - Disseminating information and mobilizing their communities to practice it
 - Improving living condition of communities through capacity strengthening

How Stakeholders are Addressing Farmers' Overall Concerns (2) *Summary*

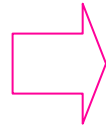
	What they do to help
<p><u>Stakeholders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Income 2. Education of children 3. Health 4. Social customs 	<p>Increase production for market</p> <p>Promote education</p> <p>Awareness raising on health care*</p> <p>Provide vocational training</p>
<p><u>Health workers</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health 2. Education of children 3. Income 4. Social customs 	<p>Awareness raising on health care*</p> <p>Promote education</p> <p>Increase production for selling</p> <p>Provide vocational training</p>
<p><u>NGO and Media</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Income 2. Health 3. Education of children 4. Social customs 	<p>Increase production for market</p> <p>Awareness raising on health care*</p> <p>Promote education</p> <p>Provide vocational training</p>

•Includes AI, "AI is regarded as part of the health issues at the moment in Lao PDR"

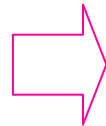
Health Concerns

■ **Ranking of key health concerns by farmers:**

1. AI
2. Liver disease
3. Malaria
4. HIV/AIDS



- **AI comes in at the top health concern of farmers due to its seriousness and impact on both animals and humans**
- **As noted, 2 out of the 3 provinces surveyed have experienced an outbreak in the past which has helped frame the mind of farmers about the danger of AI**



- **Following AI comes specific diseases that have been experienced and that are serious in nature**
- **The health concerns found in Laos are much more specific than in Vietnam and Cambodia,**
 - **ie. for Vietnam, whilst AI, epidemics (eg. Blue Ear), cancer and lung disease are mentioned, so are the overall issues of older person's health care and environmental sanitation**
 - **Likewise in Cambodia, illness prevention, chemical elements on food, general disease, unclean water, sanitation, children with disabilities all come before dengue fever and typhoid are specifically mentioned**
- **Thus we note these specific diseases are dominating people's health concerns in Laos**

Poultry Farmers - Health Concerns

Ranking	<u>Health</u> Concerns	Reasons
1	Avian Influenza	Realize the seriousness and danger of AI to animals and subsequently humans, ie. understand that it can spread from one to the other and is not treatable, and causes death
2	Liver Disease	Many people died because of this disease
3	Malaria	It is a seasonal disease, and it can occur anywhere
4	HIV and AIDS	Realize the seriousness and danger of this disease; this disease cannot be cured

No major differences found between backyard poultry farmers and small commercial poultry farmers

Summary

Stakeholders
1. Malaria
2. AI
3. Liver disease
4. HIV and AIDS

Health workers
1. AI
2. Malaria
3. Liver disease
4. HIV and AIDS

NGO and Media
1. Liver disease
2. HIV and AIDS
3. AI
4. Malaria

■ Ranking of key health concerns of farmers by stakeholders:

- Similar to the farmers the stakeholders note the specific diseases farmers are faced with, however malaria is ranked above AI and in the case of the NGO and Media, liver disease and HIV/AIDS
 - Note, malaria is a regular occurrence in Lao and affects many lives in the community
 - It is ranked above AI due to this direct experience with the disease vs AI which is felt not to have affected lives in the community, or only minimally in comparison
- It is only health workers who rate AI at the top of the list in sync with farmers, as they are more aware of the serious nature of and implications of AI

AI Understanding

AI understanding – Amongst Poultry Farmers

- **Most farmers understand that AI is a very dangerous disease to animals and humans; no vaccine can be used for treatment of this disease**

- **It is understood that chickens, duck and birds are affected**
 - however nobody knows the reason why this kind of animals can be affected by AI

- **The following symptoms are known:**
 - In poultry: inactive, and then die suddenly without any reason
 - In humans: have fever, difficult to breathe, headache, cough
 - It is understood that you can bring affected poultry in from the outside (eg. buying from markets)
 - And that touching infected poultry, eating infected poultry meat; through air and breath of affected person is the way AI is transmitted

- **There are no key differences among sector 3 and 4 nor provinces**

- **When ranking with other concerns (both overall and health concerns) AI is number 1**
 - *“As it is very dangerous to animal and human life”*

■ **Yes an outbreak happened in their community**

- Outbreaks occurred in 2004 in Savannakhet and in 2007 in Champasack

- The first action farmers took was to inform the village leader and VVV. In turn, the village leader and VVV informed to DAFO and PAFO respectively, in order to find the solution/define prevention measures

- **The following actions were taken:**
 - Bury dead poultry and destroy others;
 - Spread lime powder around the poultry's pen;
 - Transport of poultry in and out of the areas was banned;
 - Information was broadcast about the outbreak through TV and radio;
 - The affected areas were proclaimed as emergency areas

- **Has anything changed as a result in terms of how AI is treated?**
 - Most realized they knew only some part of the prevention measures; now are more careful

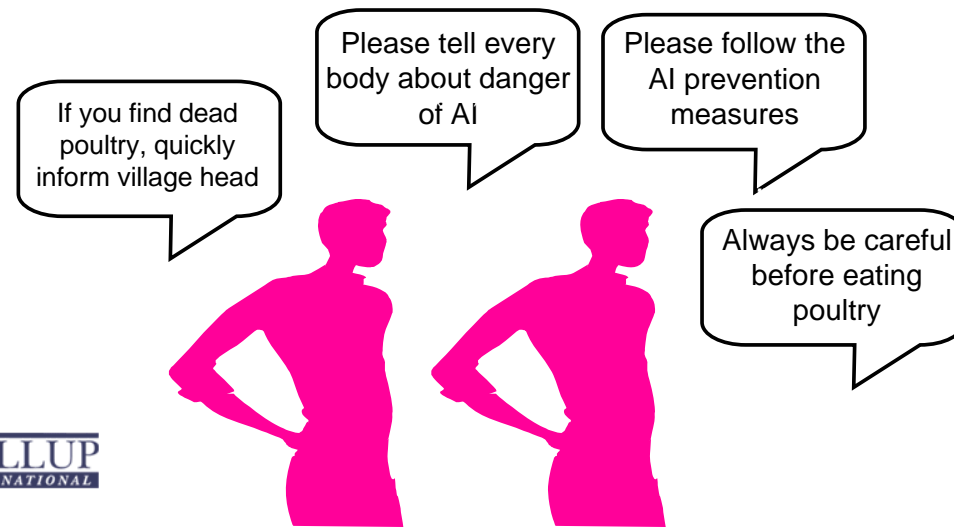
Reasons farmers are concerned about AI

■ **Keys reasons to be concerned about AI:**

- Serious and dangerous disease
- AI can spread to humans and other animals
- It can be spread by infected animals and humans
- Person who gets sick from AI will die..
- ...There is no vaccine / medicine can be used for treatment of AI
- It can contaminate foods

■ **Farmers can come up with several reasons to be concerned about AI**

- **Noting its seriousness; the danger of spreading and lack of antidote**
- **When looking at the comments of the 'respondents' we see practical messages combined with the need to still spread the word about the danger of AI**



Reasons farmers are not being concerned about AI

■ Key reasons for not being concerned about AI:

- Never experienced AI before

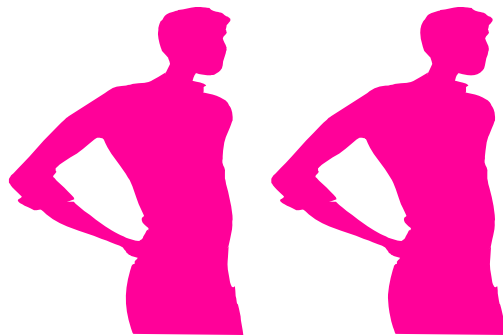
- The barrier of not having experienced AI is the key reason listed for not being concerned about it, highlighting the challenge that 'seeing is believing' particularly as we note that in Laos there are other serious diseases such as liver disease etc causing deaths
- When we look in to the 'bubble talk' exercise, we see that despite noting AI as of the utmost concern, there is a fundamental lack of care about AI and a level of disbelief (disbelief that AI is also a problem for people)
- The fact that no human deaths were talked about in relation to the experienced outbreaks, coupled with a lack of exposure to the disease in Vientiane demonstrates that ultimately, AI is being relegated to 'normal status'
- Thus it is critical that AI is made more believable and critical through communications

AI is just normal disease of livestock

AI might not be a problem for people

Just go ahead to eat, there is no problem

Don't care about AI



- **When prompted, stakeholders understand that AI is a new animal (poultry) disease, and that it can spread to humans and other animals and is very dangerous to human life**
 - When redoing the ranking according to their understanding about the people in their community, AI was ranked as the first priority for their health concern
 - Key reasons being that it cannot be treated and there is no cure; that it can be spread through food (ie. eating affected poultry) and that it can be spread by both infected poultry and infected people (ie. easily spread in multiple ways)
 - “*Close to their daily life*” (in the sense that it affects livestock, income, food source)
 - Ie. when reconsidered, the implications of AI become more real and close to daily life versus ‘top of mind’ health concerns, in which case other diseases that are having a more current day-to-day impact (such as malaria) come to mind first.

- **All stakeholders were consistent here in all areas**
 - Thus we can see that when AI is prompted it gains a level of concern that would support the importance of working to further increase awareness through communication

Prevention & Response

- **All believe the reasons they have to prevent AI are:**

- In order to keep livestock free from AI
 - To break / cut the route of AI to animals and humans
 - To stop the outbreak of AI to other areas
 - To minimize the risk of AI outbreak
- With no key differences among segments (target respondents)

- **Farmers can list out the signs and symptoms of AI in humans as follows:**

- Headache
- Fever
- Difficult to breathe
- Tightness of chest
- Muscle ache

- **Their source of information is the Department of livestock, human health office / hospital, information center**

Understanding Stakeholder Roles

Key understanding about their roles

- What they do to take care of their people in the community:

Central Government Officials: responsible for general strategic planning, formulate development policy, regulation and guidelines to improve livelihood of the people

Village Leaders: responsible for implementation of activities at village level, to ensure all implemented activities are in line with government guidelines and policies

- Key differences btw central Government Official and Village/ Opinion Leaders:

Central Government Officials: responsible at national level

Village Leader: responsible at village level

- No key differences between provinces (all provinces have the same government systems)

Health Workers / Animal Workers

Key understanding about their roles

Human Health Workers

- Awareness raising on health issues and introducing appropriate health care and disease prevention measures at all levels is their main task in taking care of their people in the community
 - Problems they usually face:
 - Lack of funds to conduct healthcare campaigns and lack of understanding of the people > due to their education
 - What can they do to help?
 - Capacity strengthening for local health workers, including communities
- Key differences btw central district level and local level:
 - District Level:** responsible for following up and monitoring of activity at village level
 - Village Level:** responsible for dissemination of information regarding health issues and prevention measures to their communities in the village
- No key differences between provinces

Health Workers / Animal Workers

Key understanding about their roles

Animal health Workers

- Animal health workers take care of their community by providing technical support on animal husbandry when needed and disseminate information on animal health issues and prevention measures to the community

- Problems they usually face:

- Lack of funds and lack qualified staff at district level

- What can they do to help

Focus on capacity building at a community level

- Key differences btw central district level and local level:

District Level: responsible for following up and monitoring of activity implementing at community level.

Village Level: responsible for dissemination of information, regarding animal health issues and prevention measures to their communities in the village

- No key differences btw provinces

Communication – Stakeholders

- **Our target audience note there has been a number of campaigns and initiatives about how to deal with AI already**
- **Information about AI has been informed and disseminated through Local Radio, TV, Newspaper, Village Animal Health Workers**
- **Awareness raising about AI has been conducted at the community level by organized outreach campaign teams**

- **Media used:**

Posters, Video, Brochures / Leaflets, Animal health care manual

- How did it work?

Well

- **Level of success of the campaign**

High

- Why?

People understood more and are aware of AI's dangers and prevention measures.

- **Key learning about the campaigns**

More often would be better!

- Using simple messages and a simple/focused range of media is also suggested for the future success of campaigns

- **No key differences among district levels and local levels noted**

appendix

AI Measures list- Farmers

AI Measures list (1)

List of measure	Aware YES/ NO	Do it YES/ NO	Triggers, barriers and how to activate this measure
Never allow poultry in the house	YES	YES	Keeping poultry in the pen is necessary for this to occur
Penning / fencing to prevent the spread of AI	YES	YES	
Disinfecting the cage regularly	YES	YES	
Keeping duck and chicken separately	YES	YES	
Keeping new poultry away from old poultry for 2 weeks	YES	YES	
Washing hand with soap before and after taking care of poultry or handling birds / bird products	YES	YES	Availability of water can impact whether or not this measure is undertaken
Not letting children come in to contact with birds	NO	YES	Whilst not aware that this is an AI preventative measure, it is a practice anyway
Washing hands before handling / preparing any food for self or the family to eat.	YES	YES	

AI Measures list (2)

List of measure	Aware YES/ NO	Do it YES/ NO	Triggers, barriers and how to activate this measure
Using mask and gloves when handling poultry	NO	NO	For all these, it is a habit <i>not</i> to do them, thus the awareness of these actions as key preventative measures and the importance of doing so must be strongly impressed upon farmers to break habits
Changing and washing clothes after taking care of poultry	NO	NO	
Changing clothes / shoes when coming from another farm or market.	NO	NO	
Having visitors who enter the farm clean the soles of their shoes, bicycle tyres before entering	NO	NO	
Cleaning equipment, shoes, etc used for poultry management after every use	YES	NO	

AI Measures list (3)

List of measure	Aware	Do it	Triggers, barriers and how to activate this measure
	YES /NO	YES /NO	
Not eating duck or geese blood pudding	YES	YES	
Not eating birds that are sick	YES	YES	
Seeking care from proper health care with 24 hours for symptoms that match the formal definition for symptoms for AI in humans	YES	YES	
Reporting an event via proper communication channels that might indicate an outbreak of human AI infection	YES	YES	The communication system/process could be a barrier against this occurring
Reporting possible AI outbreaks amongst poultry via proper communication channels	YES	YES	

Thank you!