



PROGRAM UPDATE

Future of Smallholder Poultry Production in Cambodia and Lao PDR: Uncertainty and Future Prospective

In August 2008 the John D. Rockefeller 3RD Scholars Program of Winrock International held an open grant competition for applied research to assess the socio-economic factors affecting prevention and control of Avian Influenza (AI) in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

The winning research team, selected in November, is led by Mr. Suon Seng, Executive Director of the Center for Development-Oriented Research in Agriculture and Livelihood Systems (CENTDOR), Phnom Penh. To implement the research, Seng recruited a multi-disciplinary research team that includes Mr. Lim Soviet of CENTDOR; Mr. Holl Sinal of the National Veterinary Research Institute (NaVRI), Phnom Penh, Cambodia; and Dr. Khampouth Vongxay, Department of Livestock and Fisheries, Vientiane, Lao PDR.



Cambodia, May 2009: The JDR 3RD team, lead by Suon Seng (standing, center), presented their research to a multi-stakeholder group of donors and implementing agencies during their inception workshop at the National Veterinary Research Institute (NaVRI) in Phnom Penh.

Research Focus

The team's research project, entitled "*Future of Smallholder Poultry Production in Cambodia and Lao PDR: Uncertainty and Future Prospectives*" will assess the key factors influencing trends in smallholder poultry production in Cambodia and Lao PDR. Seng and his team will investigate the socio-economic impact of AI outbreaks and control measures on smallholder livelihoods in the two countries, to better understand future prospects for the informal poultry sector. The team will recommend specific programs and interventions for the purpose of improved policy formulation to support smallholder poultry producers. The team's research hypothesizes that multiple-agency interventions to promote improved bio-security measures as a long-term AI control strategy have not resulted in community behavior changes, because of factors including lack of a participatory, consultative process, and top-down communications.



Lao PDR, July 2009: Focus group discussion with women in Somasa-ard Village, Bolikhamxay Province. JDR 3RD team members, from L: Mrs. Khamta, Livestock Dev't & Animal Feeds Ctr; Mrs. Vilayvanh, Nat'l Animal Health Ctr; Mr. Tongkham, Nongteng Plc & Poultry Breeding Station.

Progress to date

Fieldwork began in July. In Cambodia, 35 household surveys will be conducted in each of four villages in five provinces which represent sub-urban, rural, AI-outbreak and AI-free areas, with varying poultry and duck-rearing practices. In Lao PDR, 25 household surveys will be conducted in each of four villages in four provinces with a similar diversity of characteristics. Preliminary results from Cambodia indicate that risky poultry rearing behavior is widespread even in communities that have had recent AI outbreaks, due to a lack of awareness about the disease, and fears about the economic impact of culling campaigns.