



Livestock

Enhancing transboundary livestock disease risk management in Lao PDR

Overview

Laos remains one of the poorest countries in the world with a high rate of rural poverty and threat of food insecurity. Increased livestock health and productivity can improve rural household incomes and livelihoods within the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS).

Large ruminants (cattle and buffalo), small ruminants (goats, pigs and poultry) are increasingly important to rural households, for their multiple uses as a source of food and income, for cultural ceremonies, and as a means of storing wealth. However, the role of large ruminants in draught power for transport and tillage is declining.

Constraints to large ruminant production could be addressed through the adoption of a systems approach to deliver health, biosecurity and production interventions and improved farmer knowledge, attitude and practice.

The constant threat of transboundary animal diseases including foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) limits opportunities for expansion of the livestock industry created by increasing demand from burgeoning international markets, including neighbouring Vietnam and China.



KEY FACTS

ACIAR Project No. LPS/2012/067

Duration: February 2015 to July 2019 (4.5 years)

Target areas: Lao PDR

Budget: A\$1,250,000

Project Leader

Russell Bush, University of Sydney, Australia

Key partners

- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR
- National Agricultural and Forestry Research Institute, Lao PDR
- National University of Laos (NUOL)

ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Anna Okello

Objective

The project's overall aim is to improve smallholder livelihoods by improving transboundary animal disease risk management and enabling the sustainable expansion and development of the livestock industry in Laos.

The project's three main objectives are to:

- Develop and test a 'whole of village biosecurity program' for pigs, poultry, goats, cattle and buffalo.
- Strengthen current disease event reporting and emergency response systems, primarily focused on potential zoning of an FMD-free zone in northern Laos.
- Develop a communication strategy for a widespread public awareness biosecurity campaign, potentially applicable to the Greater Mekong Subregion.

Expected scientific results

- Determination of the prevalence and distribution of livestock diseases of economic importance to develop a comprehensive village-wide biosecurity program.
- Development of disease risk management recommendations based on biosecurity and production interventions and without access to vaccination.
- Development of 'evidence-based' recommendations of innovative animal health and production interventions.
- Development of a program targeting zoonotic diseases in multiple species within a community (village) setting.

Expected outcomes

- Improved livestock health and productivity.
- Increased net incomes for rural households from rural employment and business activities.
- Reductions in rural poverty and increased lifestyle opportunities, including education.
- Opportunities for secondary employment for adults.
- Better-targeted use of feed resources.
- Improved use of livestock manure for biogas production and fertiliser.

