

Concept note for Joint Simulation Exercise Regional Work Shop in Myanmar, November 27-29, 2019

BACKGROUND

The International Health Regulations (2005) is the principle document governing the response to public health emergencies that pose an international threat and which were revised in 2005 and became binding international law on June 15, 2007. According to IHR, all the state parties must develop the core capacities including point of Entries capacity for all time (routine) as well as requirements for surveillance and response to all kinds of public health emergencies. Among the GMS countries, Myanmar is implementing the International Health Regulations (2005) to detect and response timely to all public health hazards.

The GMS countries, Myanmar, Lao, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, are vulnerable to outbreaks of emerging diseases and regional cooperation, communication and joint actions is vital to ensure a coordinated response to common threats among countries. Improving cross-border communication is an important measure to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases and other potential public health issues. Cross-border and regional public health information sharing protocol and practices can enhance real time cross-border information sharing and coordinated response to public health issues.

In order to assess capacity, level and practices for outbreak communication and collaboration across neighboring countries, a scenario based on an outbreak of Avian Influenza (AI) and Pandemic Influenza will be developed to simulate how communication and information sharing among different players should be optimally conducted for surveillance and response. US-CDC, WHO and Public Health England will take part in development of scenarios and simulation exercise as parts of technical supports well as facilitators and evaluators. This exercise will give assessment results for required actions of GMS countries in order to improve communication and cooperation for surveillance and response among the countries.

SCENARIOS OF SIMULATION EXERCISE

An avian/novel influenza outbreak exercise (tabletop exercise and field visits) will be conducted

OBJECTIVES

- To enhance capacity of surveillance and response teams to deal effectively with outbreaks
- To strengthen communication and disease information sharing networks between GMS neighboring countries
- To promote joint surveillance and outbreak response between Myanmar, Lao, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam

Expected Outputs

- describe the current global influenza threats and the importance of novel influenza virus detection;
- explain the role of sentinel versus event-based surveillance in detecting novel influenza virus infections;
- explain the steps to take in rapid response to a cluster of infections in humans or poultry and know how to elevate through appropriate channels;
- explain the importance of maintaining influenza laboratory diagnostics, and what specimens to prioritize;
- educate clinicians on the importance of empiric use of antivirals for prompt treatment of severe illness or high-risk people with suspect influenza;
- Identify key coordination areas of focus in point of entry referral of human cases of influenza, and in the management of poultry and animal influenza infections
- provide guidance on communicating information to the public during an emergency;
- coordinate with international partners on risk communications, surveillance, and outbreak response, and
- Identify legal, political, logistic, and, human capacity barriers to be addressed to promote stronger cross-border coordination.

Proposed Participants

National-level and provincial delegates from Myanmar (host country), Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand represent that work in the area of:

- 1) epidemiology, surveillance and response and/or POE specialist;
- 2) laboratory specimen collection, transport, and testing;
- 3) human clinical management; and,
- 4) Veterinary surveillance/response.

Each country was proposed to delegate five persons (covering focus areas above); one from an important border province and four persons that represent those focus areas in the central government level of each country.

There would also be representatives of key international development partners such as ADB, CDC, WHO, OIE, FAO and possibly others.

Proposed Period

- 27 – 29 November 2019

Proposed Location

- Summit Parkview Hotel
350 Ahlone Road, Ahlone Township, Yangon (Myanmar)

Funding Agency

The workshop package will be charged from Greater Mekong Sub-region Health Security Project Myanmar.

- Host country will fund travels, accommodation and daily substantial allowances for her government officials and national PMU from GMS-HS projected budget
- Participated countries will pay their travels, hotel accommodations and daily substantial allowances by their countries and ministry
- Developing partners and ADB will pay their travel, hotel accommodations and daily substantial allowance by their organizations

Responsible Organization

- Central Epidemiology Unit, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health and Sports, Myanmar

Contact Information

Central Epidemiology Unit (CEU), Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health and Sports

- Dr. Nyan Win Myint
Deputy Director, CEU
Email: drnwmyint@gmail.com
Phone: +95-9-459149477
- Dr. Yan Lin Aung
Assistant Director, CEU
Email: yanlinaungdoph85@gmail.com
Phone: +95-9-5116026

GMS-Health Security Project Management Unit, Myanmar (GMS-HS, PMU)

- Dr. Tint Maw
Deputy Chief Technical Advisor
Email: dtmgdada@gmail.com
Phone: +95-9-258593776
- Dr. Tay Zar Soe
Planning, Monitoring and IT Expert
Email: dr.tayzarsoe85@gmail.com
Phone: +95-9-448007788

Brief Agenda

- This activity would take place in and around Yangon.
 - **Day 1** would be an introduction to influenza and the global situation, and include plenary talks and discussion.
 - **Day 1 (9am – 3pm): Plenary talks will be provided on the following topics:**
 - Current challenges in influenza (Joshua Mott)
 - Influenza surveillance, preparedness and response (Bill Davis).
 - Role of Indicator and Event-based Surveillance in Pandemic Early Warning (Joshua Mott)
 - Establishing a Rapid response Team (Prabda Praphasiri)
 - Core concepts in point of entry coordination (Nuttapong Wongjinda)
 - Epidemiologic Case Investigation of novel influenza in humans (Bill Davis)
 - Veterinary surveillance and response (Ong-Orn Prasarnpanich):
 - Novel Influenza A Clinical Case Presentation and Clinical Course, and use of antivirals (Mitesh Desai)
 - Human laboratory specimen collection and testing (Malinee Chittagarnpit)
 - **Day 1 (3pm – 5pm) Introduce and start Day 3 Tabletop**
 - **Day 2(9am – 4pm) site visits:**
 - The attendees would group by specialty and would undertake site visits to a provincial hospital, a poultry market, an airport point of entry site, and the national influenza laboratory. Following a tour of the site, attendees would have a room to work in where they would go through short cross-border coordination scenarios.
 - Subject matter experts providing plenary lectures in each of these areas on Day 1 would lead scenario-based discussions at each location.
 - A rapporteur would record gaps and coordination needs identified that their own countries might consider in these locations.
 - During site visit and homework: The attendees would prepare country-specific power point slides addressing key coordination issues identified in the areas of human surveillance and response, animal surveillance and response, clinical management, and laboratory needs.
 - They would receive a PowerPoint template in advance
 - The template would include key coordination issues identified for future action; or possible as areas to focus on in a future exercise.
 - **Day 3 (9am – 3pm) full day tabletop:**
 - This will be an avian/novel influenza outbreak exercise including a fictional scenario. Attendees would serve in their assigned specialty groups (epi, lab, clinical, vet) and sit at a table with their own country partners.

- The exercise scenario would include an outbreak of avian/novel influenza in poultry/humans, with both training and coordination concepts included. Questions to each table would test knowledge of international response guidance, and pose open questions about key issues in cross-border coordination within each of the specialties represented.
 - A rapporteur and moderator would be assigned to each country group. Similarities and discrepancies in answers between countries; and between responses and international response guidelines; would be noted in order to highlight gaps in capacity or coordination to address in the future.
- **Day 3 (3pm-5pm) closing presentations by countries:**
 - During the day attendees from each country would edit the template started on Day 2 and add additional Day 3 components. They would then make a short presentation of key coordination issues for their country to address, and give a presentation to the others to close the meeting.
 - In this presentation they would prepare an example of their own response activities, and highlight strengths, and gaps to be addressed in areas of human and animal surveillance and response, human clinical management, and laboratory capacities for presentation back to the group.