



## **APAIR Coordinating Office**

### **The First 6-Month Report and Planning Update**

For the period from January to June 2007

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The APAIR - Coordinating Office's Update Report by 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007 highlights activities in the following areas:

(1) The six research themes

- Three proposals were approved for funding
- Two proposals are still in finalizing process
- One proposal is the stage for identifying more country participation and project advisor

(2) Other activities

- Website development
- Logo design
- Events

(3) Follow-up activities

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## **1. The six research themes**

### ***1.1 Three proposals were approved for funding***

#### **The Wild Bird Surveillance Project**

This is one of the first two proposals (the wild bird surveillance and the socio-economic impact) was approved for funding five months ago (in January, 2007) with a total grant of 631.847 USD. However, the process of getting country clearances is very slow for this project. Up to now, only two teams such as Thai and Indonesian teams have given in their government clearances to IDRC. The Vietnamese Government clearance has been recently sent to IDRC. The Chinese team is still waiting for the Ministry of Science and Technology to approve the endorsement for this project. Thus the participating institutions have not yet been given the Memorandums of Grant Conditions" (MGC) to be signed, and consequently, the funds have not been transferred to these institutions.

This group consisted of the team members from four countries (Thailand, China, Indonesia and Vietnam), led by Thailand. Four key institutions participated in this project are: (i) Faculty of Veterinary Science, Mahidol University, Thailand; (ii) Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences; (iii) Division of Zoology, Research Center for Biology, Indonesia Institute of Sciences and (iv) National Institute of Veterinary Research.

*The Socio-Economic Impact Project:*

The Socio-Economic Impact collaborators in this project include: (i) researchers from College of Humanities and Development, China Agricultural University, (Leading Institute); (ii) Indonesian Centre for Agricultural Socio Economic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS), Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia; (iii) Center for Agricultural Policy (CAP), Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agricultural and Rural Development (IPSARD), Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development of Vietnam and (iv) Department of Veterinary Public Health, Faculty of Veterinary Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Similar to the wild bird group, the socio-economic impact study was approved for funding in January, 2007, with the grant of 629,974 USD. However, more time needed to obtain the government clearances than expected and therefore until 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007, all 4 country members for this project have signed their respective Memorandums of Grant Conditions (MGC). The official Commencement Date for this project is 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007. At the present, the money was transferred to the respective national institution bank accounts.

Currently, each country team is developing questionnaire. The first cross country inception workshop will be held in August 2007 in Beijing to harmonize methodology, including the questionnaires.

*The Backyard Chicken Project:*

Researchers from five countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam) jointly conducted this study with Thailand is a team leader. Five key institutions involved in this project are: (i) College of Economics and Management, Nanjing Agricultural University, China; (ii) Directorate General of Livestock Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Indonesia; (iii) Ubon University, Thailand; (iv) National Institute of Animal Husbandry, Hanoi, Vietnam and (v) Center for Livestock and Agricultural Development, Cambodia.

Most of the key researchers (6) were present for a face-to-face meeting which was held in Bangkok from 18-21, February, 2007 with the assistance of David Waltner-Toews, from Canada, and Dr. Hein Mallee, from IDRC. The final proposal was

submitted to IDRC in March, 2007 and the team got the approval for funding in May 2007 with the grant of CAD 1.23 million.

Currently, the process of obtaining the country clearances is initiating. Two national research institutions (2/5) handed in their government clearances to IDRC by May 2007, include Ubon University, Thailand and Center for Livestock and Agricultural Development, Cambodia. These two institutions have signed the MGC and payments were made. China and Indonesia have still not received the Government clearance and for Vietnam, the MGC is being finalized for their signature. Hopefully, this process will be completed by June, 2007.

The next inception workshop is going to be organized in Indonesia when the project funds are disbursed to all five national institution bank accounts, hopefully in July.

### ***1.2 Two proposals are still in finalizing process***

#### ***The Policy Analysis Project:***

Three countries (Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam) led by Thailand jointly participated in this project. Five key institutions involved in this project, include: (i) Faculty of Public Health, University of Indonesia; (ii) Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand; (iii) Health Systems Research Institute of Thailand; (iv) Ministry of Science and Technology, Vietnam and (v) Animal Husbandry Association, Vietnam.

Four key researchers from three countries attended a face-to-face group meeting, which was held in Bangkok on 1 February 2007, with the facilitation of Dr. Hein Mallee from IDRC. The key project activities were identified during the meeting. The link of a set of the activities and budgets to implement such identified activities were discussed. After the meeting was organized, the proposal was revised accordingly and sent back to IDRC. However, budgets of all three countries need to be revised at the request of IDRC because some budget items need to be changed before getting an agreement of the final budget. The final proposal was handed in to IDRC by the first week of June, 2007. It is expected that the project will be approved within June.

Currently, the group has initiated on applications for the government clearances. Similar to the other projects, the three participating institutions will be given the "Memorandum of Grant Conditions" (MGC) by IDRC. It is anticipated that the fund may be transferred to three national institution bank accounts in July when all MGCs are returned to IDRC.

In addition, the group had taken an opportunity in the Policy Analysis Training Workshop in Bangkok to draft a work plan for their study. The group has agreed that an inter-country inception workshop will be held in the third month of the project implementation after three country training workshops for their national researchers and initial document search are conducted.

*The Control Measure Project:*

Three countries (China, Thailand and Vietnam), led by China jointly conducted this study. Three key institutions participated in this project are: (i) Department of Preventive Veterinary Medicine at China Agricultural University; (ii) National Institute of Veterinary Research, Vietnam and (iii) Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

A face-to-face meeting with 5 researchers under assistance of Dr. Les Sims from Australia was organized in Bangkok from 3-5 February, 2007. During the meeting, a set of control measures was identified and discussed. Some recommendations for improvement of the proposal was proposed and got agreement among the participants.

The proposal was revised by Dr. Les Sims and was sent back to all group members in the Middle of May 2007 for their considerations.

The group members were also given comments from Dr. Dominique Charron and Dr. Ana Boishio (EcoHealth team) to their proposal in the first half of June. General comments were made that the proposal is in good shape. However it needs to add some information by team members based on specific comments recommended by these two reviewers. Currently, group members are discussing and contributing their ideas to improve their proposals. Hopefully, the proposal will be finalized and give in to the IDRC by the end of June, 2007.

***1.3 One proposal is in the stage for identifying more country participation and project advisor (Risk Behavior)***

The current version of the proposal was developed with the lead from Vietnam. Thailand is the other country that has indicated interest and has identified a team to participate in this research. However, at least one more country should be identified. The country participation will contribute to building up the network in each country as well as the partnership at large.

An agreement on Risk Behavior study was made between Dr. Suwit Wibulpolprasert and Dr. Andres Sanchez that includes the identification of more researchers from

other countries and a project advisor to help the group to improve their proposal, including research methodologies and the design of the intervention.

Through these processes, it is recognized that there are many reasons for project delays, because no other researchers among the countries were nominated. The evidence is that two emails requesting the nomination of researchers were sent to the appropriate persons and country coordinators in three countries (China, Cambodia and Indonesia) to urge them to nominate someone who is suitable to risk behavior study, however, no responses have been obtained since that time.

Three project advisors were identified though the Internet, but none of them have met the requirement of with the right mix of regional experience and skill to guide the research teams in the finalization of the proposal.

Lack of interests of the countries and appropriate advisor, the project could not get under way. Dr. Andres has a plan to visit Cambodia to explore the possibilities to get Cambodian counterparts to involve in the project.

## **2. Other activities**

### ***2.1 Website development***

- Two groups of web developers were identified and two quotations for APAIR website development were evaluated by CO and IDRC;
- A contract on website development was prepared and signed with one group which presented to the CO that it has the required professional skill, personal and technical resources.
- The prototype of the website has been sent to all participants of the Partnership. However, no feedback has been obtained yet;
- The final work Product will be available by the middle of July.

### ***2.2 Logo design***

A set of draft logos has been sent to the participants of the Partnership for comments. However, the final idea on the logo was agreed. A leaflet of the APAIR will be published. Hopefully, IDRC will approve a budget for this activity.

## **2.3 Events**

### ***(i) Informal SC meetings held in Bangkok, 31 January 2007***

Taking the opportunity of the presence of the SC members to attend the Prince Mahidol Awards Conference (PMAC) which was taken place from 1-2 February, 2007, an informal SC meeting back-to- back with PMAC was held in Bangkok on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007.

The objective of the meeting were to (i) review the situation/progress of the six research projects; (ii) discuss the support for the downstream process and mechanism to track the process; discuss possible use of output from the project and other issues.

During this informal meeting, the SC decided that the next meeting would be in Bali, Indonesia in September.

The meeting note was sent to all SC members in February 2007.

### ***(ii) The 2007-September SC meeting postponed***

It was decided by the SC that the next SC meeting would be in Bali in September, 2007. However, the later discussions revealed that there were many meetings at that time. Also, it was also thought that it is too early for the research teams to come to the meeting and present findings, since most of the studies are still to start. It was therefore decided that the meeting would take place later in the year. APAIR Coordinating Office sent a note to the appropriate persons informing them about the postponement of the meeting.

It is also agreed that the next SC meeting should combine between the progress of avian influenza research projects and wider consultation on other matter relating to the other emerging diseases. Some possibilities for collaborating with AUAID to organize a joint meeting are being discussed between IDRC and AUAID. In this meeting, new people will be invited to participate in to do brainstorming about new research areas.

### ***(iii) Two teleconferences between CO and IDRC conducted***

On March 9, 2007 and on 18 May 2007, two teleconference meetings were conducted between CO and IDRC (Hein, Jackie) to exchange the information on the current situation of the Partnership activities and CO. Future meetings of this type will

continue to foster updating information and better communication between CO and IDRC.

***(iv) APAIR's attendance at a modeling meeting in Beijing (11-13 May 2007)***

Dr. Frank and Dr. Duan, representatives of SC participated in this meeting, which was organized by Canada-China collaborative program. CO had communicated with Dr. Frank and a brief of the meeting was summaries below:

The meeting was hold in Peking University. There were 9 formal lectures from leading scientists with a variety of backgrounds including Chinese CDC, Public Health Agency of Canada, the School of Public Health of Fudan University/Xian Jiaotong University, and a number of mathematical/statistical institutes in both countries. There were excellent representations from both medical and modeling aspects for four major diseases recognized by the Chinese government on TB, Hepatitis, Schistosomiasis and HIV well matched by the expertise and interests of the Canadian group in the spatial spread of diseases, evolution of emerging virus, impact of immigration, drug-resistance of HIV, vector-borne diseases and environmental impact on disease transmission. The meeting recommended a China-Canada Conference on Disease Modeling in Shanghai (5 days in May of 2008), followed by a Canada-China Forum on Modeling the Impact of Climate Change on Water-borne and Vector-borne Diseases in Nanjing

The MITACS, the Canadian Mathematical modeling project had some preliminary discussions with APAIR (Dr. Frank and Dr. Duan) at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and we hope this will lead to some collaboration in the fields of bird flu and pandemic influenza.

***(v) A Policy Analysis training workshop was organized***

This workshop was conducted on 24-26 of May 2007 at The Royal Princess Larn Luang Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop was co-funded by the Health Systems Research Institute of Thailand (HSRI) and the Canada IDRC. Objective of the workshop was to raise knowledge and skill on policy analysis for policy and of policy related to AI preparedness to researchers. The workshop was attended by 25 participants from three countries (one from Indonesia, one from Vietnam and the rest from Thailand). The workshop covered theoretical concepts and methods of policy analysis and exercises to policy analysis related to their research findings to allow the participants to put their newly learned skills into practice.

The full workshop report, including a workshop agenda, a list of participants, papers of group presentations and training materials provided by two key speakers is available in APAIR Website, <https://www.arped.org/documents>

### ***3. Follow-up activities***

According the work-plan updated at the regular basis by CO, the following activities should be given priorities in coming months.

- Prepare regular reports to update the implementation progress of the Partnership.
- Make a list of all workshops schedules planned by 6 groups and be prepared to attend some of them.
- Make news on AI to share with other based on research on the Internet.
- Prepare a proposal for funding for the APAIR CO operation in 2008
- Prepare a plan for a APAIR meeting to be held later this year to review progress of project implementation and discuss strategic direction of the partnership.
- Synthesize comments from the partnership to finalize the work product of the APAIR website.
- Prepare a presentation for the Global Health Research Forum 11, which will be held from 29 October - 2 November 2007, in Beijing, China
- Search literature related to AI studies published by well-known journals to give to the six groups as their references.

### ***4. Recommendations***

- Systematic discussions between the APAIR CO and the national research institutions should be improved in order to share update information on the progress of the project implementation.

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