



Community-Based Surveillance Helps Fight Bird Flu in Vietnam



A farmer being interviewed by the village health volunteer.

in Vietnam are making sustainable progress toward preventing and controlling outbreaks. Every week, village health volunteers in Hai Phong, a province on the northeast coast of Vietnam, travel door-to-door talking to local farmers about bird flu. Using a questionnaire, they collect information from the farmers about local bird sickness and death. Since the project began in September 2006, the volunteers have been able to help identify several outbreaks of bird flu in the province.

The results of the local surveillance are helping CDC, CARE, and local partners educate families in Hai Phong about the disease and how they can help prevent it. CDC and CARE believe that these efforts can reduce local outbreaks among poultry flocks and help prevent illness in people – now and in the future. In addition, the project is helping link local surveillance efforts with the development of national and provincial early-warning systems.

Since 2003, the avian influenza A (H5N1) virus has spread across several continents, causing hundreds of people to become seriously ill, and even die. Vietnam has reported more human cases of the “bird flu” than almost every other country in the world.

But thanks to a collaborative effort between CDC and the international relief and development organization CARE, residents of one region

“This collaboration used the strengths of CDC and CARE to produce better outcomes than either could have hoped for on their own,” CDC influenza expert Meg McCarron said after a site visit to Hai Phong. “CDC provided CARE with technical expertise, while CARE was able to go into the community to implement the project. And we are working together to evaluate plans, measurable outcomes, and reporting.”

CDC and CARE are also planning to use this model to develop similar programs in other provinces in Vietnam, as well as in Laos, Cambodia, and beyond. CDC will continue to contribute to the development of monitoring and evaluation indicators for the technical aspects of the program. In addition, CDC is participating in a review of all CDC-funded CARE programs in Southeast Asia. Successful strategies from each of the programs will be developed into a regional best practices guide that will inform future program development and implementation in the region.

A village health volunteer in Vietnam. Each week, volunteers ask local farmers about poultry health and safety as part of an avian influenza prevention, surveillance and control project in partnership with CDC and CARE.



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