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Progress implementation of the SMART-ASEAN project

January to June 2023

1 Background

Strengthening the capacity of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) mechanisms to prevent, detect, and respond to zoonotic diseases with pandemic potential using the One Health approach is crucial to prevent future pandemics.

Establishing and operationalizing the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Animal Health and Zoonoses (ACCAHZ) and its networks.

To expedite the process, FAO, with the support of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and in partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat, is implementing a regional project titled “**Strengthening Mechanisms in Animal-health for a Resilient ASEAN**” (SMART-ASEAN). The project was launched at the 43rd ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Meeting in October 2021. The project also reinstated the ASEAN Regional Support Unit (ASEAN RSU) team as the implementor of the project.

The implementation of several project activities, including meetings and workshops that were conducted during the reporting period, was achieved through the lead country mechanism in ASEAN, where FAO, through the SMART ASEAN project, signed Letters of Agreement (LOA) with the Government of Thailand and the Government of the Philippines to support their commitment to ASEAN in animal health and zoonoses activities, also benefiting the delivery of the SMART ASEAN project outcomes.

The Australian Government, through DFAT, approved the no-cost extension (NCE) of the SMART ASEAN project until 31 May 2024 (12 months). The extension is crucial to give the project sufficient time to achieve the intended outputs and outcomes. Subsequently, the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL) and Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) approved the NCE of the SMART ASEAN project until 31 May 2024 on 17 April and 22 May 2023, respectively.

2 Key achievements

Key achievements during the reporting period (January – June 2023) based on the outputs are as follows:

Output 1:

The first offline SMART ASEAN quarterly meeting was conducted between FAO, ASEC, and DFAT on 29 March 2023 at the FAO office in Bangkok, Thailand.

FAO also had meetings directly with divisions in ASEC, such as the Environment Division, Health Division, and the Poverty Eradication and Gender Division.

Output 2:

SMART-ASEAN developed the following documents, which were discussed and approved by the 20th ACCAHZ Preparatory Committee Meeting:

- terms of reference for the ACCAHZ Executive Director;
- draft of the transition plan for the ASEAN Veterinary Epidemiology Group (AVEG), ASEAN Laboratory Directors' Forum (ALDF), Avian Influenza Group for ASEAN (AIGA), and the ASEAN Communication Group on Livestock (ACGL) to ACCAHZ;
- ACCAHZ resources mobilization;
- ACCAHZ 5-year Strategic Plan;
- first Governing Board concept note; and
- ACCAHZ launching plan.

The project also supported conducting the final ACCAHZ PrepCom Meeting on 27–28 March 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Output 3:

The project developed the ASEAN Post-2020 Framework on Avian Influenza Control in ASEAN and supported the consultation workshop and the second ASEAN Influenza Group for ASEAN (AIGA) Meeting on 14–17 March 2023 in Manila, Philippines.

Output 4:

The Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) analysis report on the implementation of the SMART ASEAN project was finalized.

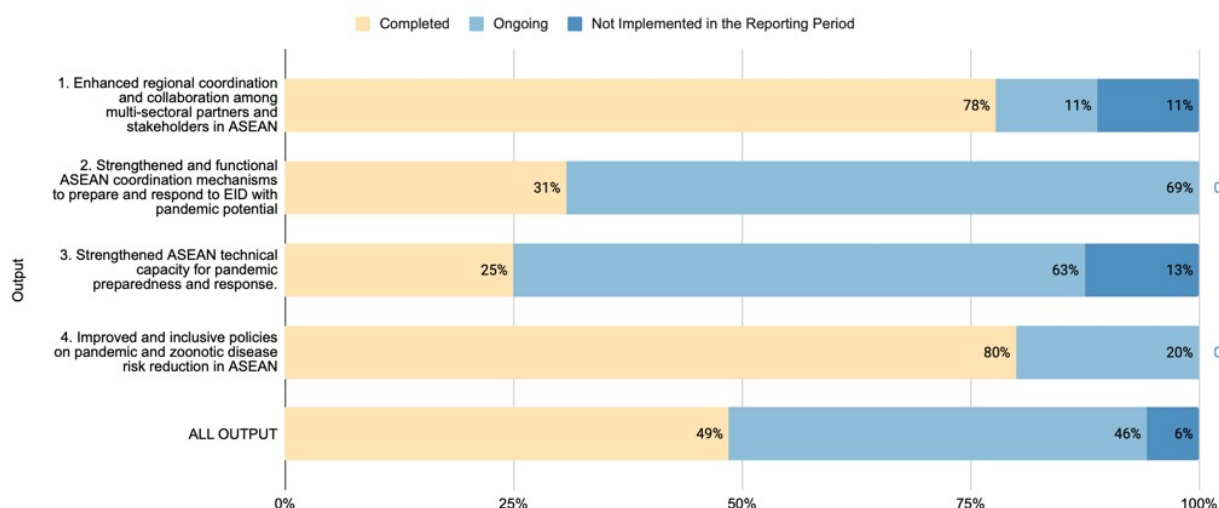


Table 1. Project Outputs.

3 Key activities

Conducted one in-person quarterly coordination meeting between FAO, ASEAN Secretariat and DFAT to update on the status of the project implementation and plans. Organized separate monthly discussions with DFAT and ASEAN Secretariat to review work progress, identify issues and challenges, and agree on follow-up actions needed. Also visited the ASEC office on 24–27 January 2023 and conducted offline meetings with the relevant divisions: Food, Agriculture and Forestry (FAFD), Poverty Eradication and Gender (PEGD), Health (HD), and the Environment. (ED) The meeting discussed implementing the SMART ASEAN project, including exploring possible cooperation related to One Health.

The SMART ASEAN project continued supporting the finalization of a Letter of Agreement (LOA) between FAO and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB). The LOA will cover the period of four months, with the amount proposed as USD 31 000 (approximately AUD 46 000). All SMART ASEAN project-funded activities (and project partners) will be appropriately acknowledged, branded, and profiled through various visibility channels.

The SMART ASEAN project and FAO ECTAD in Indonesia attended the **Multisectoral Consultative Meeting of the ASEAN Leaders' Declarations on One Health** on March 15–17, 2023, in Bali, Indonesia.

The SMART ASEAN project provided technical and financial support to conduct the ASEAN Plus Three Field Epidemiology Training Network (ASEAN+3 FETN) and ASEAN Veterinary Epidemiology Group (AVEG) simulation exercise on **Joint Multisectoral Outbreak Investigation and Response (JMOIR)** on 13–15 June 2023 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The SMART ASEAN project provided financial and technical support to conduct the **20th ACCAHZ PrepCom on 27–28 March 2023** in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting served as the final PrepCom Meeting for ACCAHZ preparation. ASEAN RSU developed the following documents, which were discussed during the meeting: the ACCAHZ Executive Director TOR, the ACCAHZ 5-year Strategic Plan, the first Governing Board concept note, and the ACCAHZ launching plan, which has incorporated the recommendations of the GEDSI review to include GEDSI issue in the relevant ROPs and TORs of the ACCAHZ. The documents were finalized at the meeting and will be further submitted to the ACCAHZ Governing Board for endorsement.

The SMART ASEAN project developed the transition plan for the relevant subsidiary mechanisms, such as

- Avian Influenza Group for ASEAN (AIGA);
- ASEAN Veterinary Epidemiology Group (AVEG);
- ASEAN Laboratory Directors Forum (ALDF); and
- ASEAN Communication Group on Livestock (ACGL).

The project is also responsible for ASEAN priority diseases, to ACCAHZ. The draft has been developed and discussed at the 20th ACCAHZ PrepCom Meeting. The ACCAHZ PrepCom agreed that the document would be revised in accordance with the structure of ACCAHZ, including the TORs and rules of procedure (ROPs) of the four working groups to reflect the reporting line from the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL) to ACCAHZ.

With support from the SMART-ASEAN project, the consultant has finalized the **M&E tools for the Regional Strategic Framework for Veterinary Epidemiology Capacity Development and Networking in ASEAN (ASEAN Epi Framework)**. As for the M&E tools to review the Regional Strategic Framework for Laboratory Capacity Building and Networking in ASEAN (ASEAN Lab Framework) are still being developed. The consultant is also developing the M&E tools to review the ASEAN communication framework.

As part of the core group coordinated by the World Organisation of Animal Health (WOAH) and consisting of ASEAN RSU, ASEC, and ASEAN lead countries, FAO, through the SMART ASEAN project, provided input to the **revision of the ASEAN Rabies Elimination Strategy (ARES)**, the revision of the ASEAN ASF Control Strategy and the TOR for the ASEAN ASF Task Force, and supported the PPR Guideline's development.



Figure 1. Workshop for the ASEAN Post-2020 Framework on Avian Influenza Control in ASEAN.

The SMART ASEAN project provided funding and technical support to conduct the **workshop to develop the Post-2020 Framework on Avian Influenza Control in ASEAN and to conduct the second meeting for AIGA** on 14–17 March 2023 in Manila, the Philippines. The support was provided through the LOA with the Philippines. The project provided technical inputs to the draft Post-2020 Framework on Avian Influenza Control in ASEAN and facilitated the workshop. The draft was further discussed during the second AIGA meeting, where ASEAN Member States (AMS) agreed to review it internally before adoption through an ad-referendum process. AIGA agreed to submit the draft to ASWGL for endorsement.

ASEAN RSU developed a policy brief on the outcomes of the value chain consultant's review of the **"Evidence-based Risk Management along the Livestock Production and Market Chain"** in Viet Nam and Lao PDR's livestock production and market chain.

The GEDSI consultant continued the work by interviewing the FAFD and ACCAHZ focal points from Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand. The interviews were the final step to finalizing the report, which had already been submitted to the SMART ASEAN team. The consultant also developed the **short policy brief and infographic** for the report.

Building on the SMART ASEAN project **GEDSI analysis report**, the SMART ASEAN project continued to collaborate with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), to plan for conducting a literature review on the impact of past interventions on GEDSI issues related to ASEAN animal priority diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, rabies, African swine fever (ASF), foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and neglected zoonoses. ACIAR agreed to collaborate with ASEAN through facilitation from the SMART ASEAN project to conduct the literature review. In support of preparation for the literature review, the SMART ASEAN project developed the terms of reference (TOR) for the consultant.

4 Priorities for the next reporting period



Figure 3. The 20th ACCAHZ PrepCom Meeting

Conduct another in-person quarterly coordination meeting between FAO, ASEAN Secretariat and DFAT and continue the regular monthly discussions with DFAT and ASEAN Secretariat

Support the finalization of the LOA between FAO and ACB and ensure that the activities under the LOA are implemented

Technical support the conduct of the 1st ACCAHZ Governing Board meeting

Support the government of Malaysia in their preparation to have the ACCAHZ launching back-to-back with the ACCAHZ networking session

Submit the M&E tools to review the ASEAN Epi Framework, the Post-2020 Framework on Avian Influenza Control, a policy brief on the outcomes of the value chain consultant's review of the "Evidence-based Risk Management along the Livestock Production and Market Chain" in Viet Nam and Lao PDR's livestock production and market chain, the policy brief of the GEDSI analysis report to the ASWGL

Submit the M&E tools to review the ASEAN Lab Framework and ASEAN Communication Framework to ALDF and ACGL, respectively, before submitting to the ASWGL for endorsement

Support Indonesia as the host country in conducting laboratory and epidemiology workshops to discuss the M&E tools for the Lab and Epi Frameworks back-to-back with the introduction of the Surveillance Evaluation Tool (SET)

Continue the engagement with ACIAR, the Poverty and Eradication Gender Division and Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division of ASEC, and ASWGL on implementing GEDSI research and other GEDSI review actions for the SMART ASEAN project

Figure 2. Multisectoral Consultative Meeting of the ASEAN Leaders' Declarations on One Health on March 15–17, 2023, in Bali, Indonesia.



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