



Lao PDR

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**ASEAN Rabies Consultation Meeting
Development of ARES Implementation Plan**

Rabies situation (Year 2023-present)

- According to reported data from the National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology, from 2023 to current , There were 12 cases of dog bites, leading to 12 deaths;
- Based on reported data from the National Animal Health Laboratory from 2021-2024, 56 (71.8%) of 78 suspected dogs tested positive for rabies;
- Dog vaccination is carried out to control rabies in dogs. However, the rabies vaccination rate in dogs is still low (<10% across the country) and insufficient to control the disease.
- Human vaccines are available from central supply to district health facilities across the country.
- In addition, the surveillance and reporting system for rabies in both animals and humans needs to be improved.
- The National Animal Health Laboratory is the only laboratory able to diagnose rabies in animals. There is no laboratory in the country able to diagnose rabies in humans.

Key interventions and achievements (Year 2023-present)

- National strategic plan on Rabies prevention and control from 2020-24 and key activities were identified under the focus area “Zoonosis”, as part of national workplan on EID, PHE and health security 2016-2020;
- Human and animal health surveillance are in place since 2009;
- Technical working group rabies Committee (2021)
- Pilot community-based surveillance launched in Xayabouly (2023).
- National Animal Health Laboratory is in place for rabies diagnosis;
- Dog vaccination is carried out to control rabies in dogs every year during World Rabies Day Celebration and Lao National Vaccine Day in November;
- Human vaccines are available from central supply to district health facilities across the country;
- Strong collaboration and coordination between the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest (MOAF) and the Ministry of Education and Sport (MOES).

Main challenges

- Human cases of dog bites receive vaccination without sending dog samples to the laboratory, which makes accurate data collection and diagnosis of rabies cases challenging;
- Rabies diagnostic facilities for animal health only available at the central level, and there is no laboratory for human cases;
- Lack of continued awareness of rabies prevention among the targeted population;
- Limited free animal rabies vaccines and human rabies vaccines are not available at health center;
- Dog population data and rabies wildlife surveillance are unavailable;
- High cost for rabies diagnosis;
- Rabies dog vaccines rely on imports from other countries;
- Lack of human resources on animal health;
- Limited funding support on rabies elimination from both animal and human health.

Recommended solution

- Develop regulation on animal owner to bring their animal to get vaccines based on Livestock and Veterinary Law in 2016;
- Enhance mass dog vaccination across the country;
- Provide free Post Exposure Prophylaxis in areas with the highest rabies reports;
- Strengthening animal and human health surveillance;
- Strengthening animal health and human health lab diagnosis;
- Strengthening human case management including using human vaccines;
- Continue to raise awareness in the schools and people in the community;
- Continue to raise advocacy among decision-making for funding support rabies elimination

Way Forward

- Review/update Rabies strategic plan 2020-2024
- Priority activity for this year:
- rabies integrated into primary/secondary curricula in 8 provinces, world rabies day...
- Pilot community-based surveillance launched in Xayabouly (2023).
- . Scale Vaccination: Target 70% dog coverage in high-risk provinces; advocate for subsidized PEP.
- Capacity Building: Train district staff on lab sample collection and reporting.

THANK YOU

