

DPHSWD in Southeast Asia



Accomplishments in Southeast Asia

- Graduated 23 future public health leaders from new field epidemiology programs in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand (FETPV), Singapore and Vietnam.
- Established a web-based journal called Outbreak, Surveillance and Response Journal (osirjournal.net).
- Established Safetynet, a network of FETPs in Asia.
- Expanded the Thailand FETP curriculum to include non-communicable diseases, food, drugs and wildlife.
- Evaluation of the surveillance of tuberculosis in provinces bordering Thailand and Malaysia showed duplication of reporting.

Overview and Goals

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), through its Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development (DPHSWD), began working in Thailand in 1980. Over the next five years, a Resident Advisor was posted in the Thailand Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) to help establish a sustainable and successful Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP). In 2006, the CDC's Global Detection Program in Thailand reposted a Resident Advisor to provide epidemiological and other training and technical assistance to public health professionals to strengthen workforce capacity throughout Southeast Asia.

Key Activities

- Developing training materials and conducting workshops for FETP fellows and mentors on non-communicable diseases, applied communication, One Health, scientific writing, and effective presentations
- Managing OSIR (osirjournal.net), an on-line journal for publication of field epidemiology investigations in Asia and the Pacific
- Expanding FETP curriculum to include animal and wildlife, non-communicable diseases, communication, and management
- Establishing a Center for One Health
- Conducting evaluations of disease surveillance systems in border provinces throughout the region

Building Workforce Capacity

FETPs increase workforce capacity in the region to control and prevent disease transmission. Most graduates continue to work in their national MOHs, many in leadership positions. FETPs in the region vary in length from six months to two years. During that time, residents spend 25% of their time in the classroom and 75% in the field, responding to public health threats, conducting surveillance, research, and investigations.

Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure and Institutions

FETP fellows have conducted scores of outbreak investigations and dealt with many critical public health issues. To address the spread of zoonotic and non-communicable diseases, FETPs have started new training programs which include veterinarians and other public health workers. The different programs provide training in management and leadership to graduates as they become officers in the public health system. The FETP has helped create and evaluate numerous public health surveillance systems to build disease detection and response capacity. In 2009, DPHSWD helped start a web-based journal called Outbreak and Surveillance Investigation Report (OSIR), for the exchange of public health information in Asia. OSIR has since begun to include supporting newly established FETPs in the region.

Future Plans

- Create centers of excellence in Southeast Asia FETPs
- Establish OSIR as a peer reviewed journal in PubMed
- Create a Southeast Asia FETP Alumni Association
- Provide post-FETP training in specialized areas
- Complete a "proof of principle" pilot for surveillance systems that integrate human, animal and wildlife sectors
- Strengthen training for field supervisors and mentors of FETP residents
- Expand curriculum into non-communicable diseases



Nurse taking blood from a wildlife breeding station employee for serological tests for influenza. This "One Health" project examined the occurrence of influenza in wildlife and in workers at national parks and zoos.



Malaysian EIP fellow collecting medical records as part of a joint Thai FETP-Malaysia EIP evaluation of a tuberculosis surveillance system in border provinces in Malaysia and Thailand.



Thai FETP and Lao FEP trainees conducting an evaluation of the surveillance of dengue fever in provinces bordering Laos and Thailand.

Summary of FETPs in Southeast Asia

Program	Program Partners	Year Established	Graduates to Date	Current Residents
Thai FETP	Thailand Ministry of Public Health	1980	190	16
Thai FETP for Veterinarians	Thailand Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Food & Agriculture Org.	2009	5	9
Cambodia Applied Epidemiology (6 months)	Cambodian Ministry of Health WHO	2011	10	5
Lao Field Epidemiology (1 year)	Lao Ministry of Health WHO	2009	16	10
Singapore FETP	Singapore Ministry of Health	2011	12	7
Vietnam FETP	Vietnam Ministry of Health	2009	5	13

Key Partners

- MOHs in Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam
- WHO SEARO and WPRO offices
- Cambodian Applied Epidemiology Program
- Laos Field Epidemiology Training
- Malaysia Epidemic Intelligence Program
- Thai Field Epidemiology Program/Program for Veterinarians
- Vietnam Field Epidemiology Program
- Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET)
- Safetynet
- USAID/EPT Respond Program
- Food and Agriculture Organization
- Thailand Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
- Thailand Department of National Parks
- Thailand Zoological Park Organization
- Colorado State University
- Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance Program

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