



Mandate Spotlight: 061 Cambodia, MAFF

Promoting Safety in Livestock Production and Food Animal Trade

Location: Cambodia

Beneficiaries: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) Cambodia; ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL)

Consultant: TDV Global Inc.

Start: July 2022

End: November 2023

GAC Contribution:
CAD 189,500

Context

There are over a hundred million hectares of agricultural land in the ASEAN region, making it a major producer, supplier, and exporter of meats, raising a considerable number of livestock used for food consumption. As a result, intra- and extra-regional exports of livestock and poultry products from developing ASEAN Member States, including Cambodia, are important to individual farmers and their countries' economies.

Global concerns on antimicrobial resistance have caused some trading partners and competitors to consider implementing restrictions and prohibitions on using certain antimicrobials for subtherapeutic or nontherapeutic purposes in animal production and have been debated at the WTO. Although antibiotic use in animals has not been a significant factor affecting ASEAN trade, evidence suggests that if no corresponding actions are taken to assess the appropriate use of antibiotics and antimicrobial use, importing country restrictions on the use of these drugs could become an issue in the future and potentially affect ASEAN exports of livestock and poultry products.

Antimicrobials/antibiotics are used for animal therapy and disease prevention and control across the ASEAN region. However, their widespread and inappropriate use could contribute to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in livestock. Should livestock diseases become untenable due to AMR, it could threaten the livelihoods of farmers and all parties involved in the agri-food value chain, including women, who comprise about a third of agriculture workers in the ASEAN region. Worst of all, AMR, if not addressed, can result in foodborne illnesses in humans that are more difficult to treat, which could have widely negative socio-economic effects.

Brief Description of the Mandate

This mandate provided inputs into the development and implementation of relevant activities with measurable and accountable outreach, including the Strategic Plans of Action (SPAs) on Livestock 2021-2025 and the ASEAN Guidelines for the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials in Livestock under the purview of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL), which is comprised of government representatives from the 10 ASEAN Member States. This was achieved through a comprehensive study aimed at ASEAN policy-makers to enhance their understanding of the current use of antibiotics in livestock production and antimicrobial drug usage in food animals in Cambodia as well as the ASEAN region. This study included practical recommendations that could be implemented, such as developing regional standards for antibiotic use and creating an AMR surveillance system. Further, this study will inform the future development of the Protocol for Animal Vaccine Testing Network among ASEAN Reference Laboratories, which is a critical deliverable for the ASEAN livestock sector in 2032.

Selected Key Results

- A comprehensive study report on the uses of antimicrobials/antibiotics in livestock production and antimicrobial drug usage in food animals across the ASEAN region, including a series of practical recommendations aimed at developing regional standards for antibiotic use, the creation of an AMR surveillance system, and inputs into ASEAN Member States Strategic Plans of Action (SPAs) on Livestock.
- 2 Knowledge Products were produced, including (i) a template on how to fill out the EU/AMR questionnaire and (ii) a brochure on ASEAN Agricultural Workers and AMU.
- A final dissemination event where the study was presented to 28 members (9 females, 19 males) of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock.
- Over 75% of participants participating in the final dissemination event reported an increase in knowledge on the current uses of antimicrobials/antibiotics in livestock production and antimicrobial drug usage in food animals across the ASEAN region and the implications of improper use of AMR.

Environment & Climate Change

Through the study the significance of AMR being a shared responsibility between human and animal sectors was emphasized, including the importance of a multi-sectoral global and coordinated response. Furthermore, the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee has been discussing the growing concerns around antimicrobial resistance that is causing some trading partners and competitors to consider implementing restrictions and prohibitions on using certain antimicrobials for subtherapeutic or nontherapeutic purposes in animal production. By emphasizing these points in the report, ASEAN Member States' awareness was raised about the ongoing international debates surrounding this topic.

Gender and Social Inclusion

Through the study, several key next steps regarding effective and sustainable engagement in gender and social inclusion were highlighted, including:

- Women livestock producers in the ASEAN region have limited access to information compared to men. There is a need for accessible education and related services to inform women producers of best practices in a timely manner.
- While many women livestock producers are already part of women's agricultural or business-focused groups, this may be an effective means of knowledge translation and dissemination should they be excluded from mainstream networks.