

Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Among Migrants & Host Community: Experiences from functional exercises in Chiang Rai Province

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Pandemic Preparedness Forum

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Background

- **PIP Project is a part of IOM-MOPH Migrant Health Program**
- **Started in 2006 for AHI community awareness raising in migrant & host communities (WHO, EC, UNTFHS support)**
- **Evolved to PIP in 2007 (EC, GoJ support)**



PIP Project Objectives - I

To contribute towards the NSP by:

- Strengthening *awareness on roles & responsibilities* of relevant authorities & organizations,
- Establishing & strengthening *networks* of relevant stakeholders & information sharing systems,



PIP Project Objectives - II

- Assisting GO in developing &/ strengthening *preparedness plans* that include migrant populations,
- *Testing, revising & further developing the plans* through a series of SimEx, and
- *Replicating/adapting* the Chiang Rai model to other priority provinces.



Project Partners

- Appx. 80 → 100+ individuals
- Representing >50 GO/NGO, health/non-health, and community sectors
- From 4 → 6 districts of Chiang Rai:
 - Muang, Maesai, Chiang San, Mae Fah Luang
 - Mae Chan, Mae Suay



2009 Project Activities

- Review outcomes of 2008 SimEx w/ PHO & CDC-Region 10
 - communication & coordination were the key obstacles
- Consultative meetings to prepare 2009 activities
- Agreed to conduct 2 functional SimEx



Objective of Functional SimEx

To test the drafted contingency plan, particularly on the internal & external communication & coordination.



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Scope of the Exercise

- **2 functional exercises w/ role play**
- **11 Aug 09 → a functional exercise w/ >100 representatives from >50 agencies at a hotel venue**
- **13 Aug 09 → a functional exercise w/ the same participants at their workplaces**



1st SimEx (11 Aug 09) - I

- Break into 9 groups
 1. NGOs
 2. Hospitals
 3. Schools
 4. Entrepreneurs
 5. Public utility offices
 6. PH offices
 7. Security & administrative offices
 8. Local Administrative Organizations
 9. War room



1st SimEx (11Aug09) - II

- Assign 1 person in each group to administer the log sheet
- Scenarios cover pandemic phase 3-6, released to relevant group(s)
- Groups discuss & take actions based on the group's decision



1st SimEx (11Aug09) - III

- **Responses:**
 - Use role play for actions related to communications
 - List actions other than communications on the flip charts



Materials

- **Contingency plan document**
- **List of contacts of partners**
- **Government reporting forms**
- **Flip charts & markers**
- **Log sheet**



Debriefing

- **Summary of communication actions**
- **Challenges in coordination/communications**
- **How much the contingency plan help in preparedness/ responses?**
- **Challenges in taking actions according to the contingency plan**



1st SimEx (11 Aug 09)

A Quiet Start....



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After A While !!!



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A hospital staff requested field beds from the military for the field hospital.



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Contingency Plan



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The War Room



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Debriefing



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2nd SimEx (13Aug09) - I

- **Participants at their normal work stations**
- **Only War Room was observed & evaluated**
- **Assign 1 person in each agency & War Room to administer log sheet**



2nd SimEx (13Aug09) - II

- **Scenarios:**
 - covered pandemic phase 4-6
 - were faxed to relevant partners in 6 districts from IOM office
 - were handed to War Room members
- **Coordinate, communicate, and respond based on procedures**



Debriefing (14Aug09)

- **Summary of communications related actions w/ all participants**
- **Challenges in coordination/ communication**
- **How much the contingency plan help in preparedness/ responses?**
- **Challenges in taking actions according to the contingency plan**



2nd SimEx (13Aug09)

The War Room



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Debriefing



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Observers from SEA Countries



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Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - I

SimEx related outcomes/challenges:

- 2 back-back SimEx strategy was useful.
- Need more equipment / bigger exercise management team
- Most agencies responded well.
- Bigger gaps/challenges among non-health sectors



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - II

- Although provided by partners, some contact numbers didn't work (duo-function machine, etc).
- Some agencies still lack alternates.
- Some alternates couldn't respond well;
 - Unfamiliar w/ one's roles & responsibilities, contingency plan, decision making



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - III

- Need alternative means to (cell) phone/fax for communications
- Should prepare pre-formatted messages on precautions & other key messages
- Limited link to migrants



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - IV

- **War Room is the key:**
 - Need appropriate setting & equipment
 - Should arrange regular press release to avoid rumours / false info.
 - Keep regular contact w/ one's agency
 - A lot of communications (out-messages) but less feedback from relevant agencies



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - V

Contingency plan:

- Some agencies don't have internal BCP.
- Need a clearer line of command.
- Community leaders might not have adequate knowledge & skills to educate/communicate with villagers



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - VI

- **Emergency budget;**
 - Was overly expected as solution to disaster/pandemic response
 - Is for all types of disasters
 - Has to be prioritized & planned
 - Need alternatives
 - Not the only answer



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - VII

- Should promote the use of PCU to avoid overcrowded hospitals
- Lack guidelines for stockpiling of food & household items



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - VIII

- Hierarchy limited internal and/or inter-agencies coordination.
- Confusion of R&R of sub-sections/ units within an agency, e.g. military



Outcomes, Challenges & Recommendations - IX

- Should organize future SimEx focusing on Heads of Agencies
 - Advocacy for future collaboration
 - Improve their knowledge & skills
- Should involve also local Red+ offices
- Should invite neighbouring provinces to future SimEx for networking



Next Steps:

- **Develop a summary SimEx report**
- **Update contingency plan**
- **Share update contingency plan & SimEx report w/ partners & others**
- **Request Governor's endorsement**



With Sincere Thanks To:



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