

The Pathway to Elimination of Dog-Mediated Rabies in Cambodia

Background

Rabies is a vaccine-preventable viral disease that is transmitted to humans from infected animals. Once clinical symptoms occur, it is virtually 100% fatal. In about 99% of human cases, the source of infection are domestic dogs. Rabies occurs in over 150 countries worldwide and about 40% of deaths occur in children below 15 years of age.

Following exposure to a potentially rabid animal, access to post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is imperative. Successful rabies prevention and control relies on the engagement of multiple sectors and local communities to build awareness, conduct mass dog vaccination campaigns, improve access to PEP services as well as strengthen surveillance and diagnostic capacity.

Cambodia's dog bite rate is estimated at 375,000 annually leading to about six rabies cases per 100,000 people per year – the equivalent of a staggering 800 cases annually. Awareness and access to life-saving PEP is limited, as is dog vaccination coverage, surveillance and diagnostic capacity.

Our Approach

The overall aim of the Cambodian Country Portfolio of the Global Programme for Pandemic Prevention and Response, One Health, which is slated to run until March 2024, is to (a) support the Royal Government of Cambodia in its efforts to eliminate human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030 in alignment with the global strategy “Zero by 30” and (b) to strengthen the capacity of the National Animal Health and Production Research Institute (NAHPRI).



Project name	Global Programme for Pandemic Prevention and Response, One Health
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Cambodia
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS)
Duration	January 2021 - March 2024

The project activities aim to demonstrate the feasibility of all key elements of the newly revised national rabies elimination strategy and show how these may be implemented sustainably at comparably low cost using the existing structures within the human and animal health sectors in selected provinces in Cambodia. Based on these practical experiences, a concept is developed for stepwise rollout nationwide including a cost estimation.

All activities are implemented jointly by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries alongside other partners.

Integrated Bite Case Management in Battambang Province

Integrated Bite Case Management is a surveillance method performed jointly by the human and animal health sectors which ensures veterinary evaluation of a potentially rabid animal and adequate management of all humans exposed.



Ung Prahors
E-mail: prahors.ung@giz.de

Ruehe Bettina
E-mail: bettina.ruehe@giz.de

Left Photo: Pupils in elementary school are the main target group for rabies education

Right Photo: A dog is vaccinated against rabies

Mass dog vaccination in Battambang Province

The project's mass dog vaccination campaign in Battambang will target an estimated 100,000 dogs after a cascade training for Village Animal Health Workers to be vaccinators at the community level.

Rabies PEP service integration in Kampot Province

Following a cascade training of Kampot Provincial Referral Hospital staff by Institut Pasteur du Cambodge (IPC), a newly procured stockpile of human rabies vaccine and immunoglobulin is provided free of charge to human bite victims presenting to the hospital's emergency services.

Awareness Raising and Education

All activities are accompanied by tailored awareness raising activities. A massive open online course on rabies is being developed for school-teachers under the leadership of the School Health Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

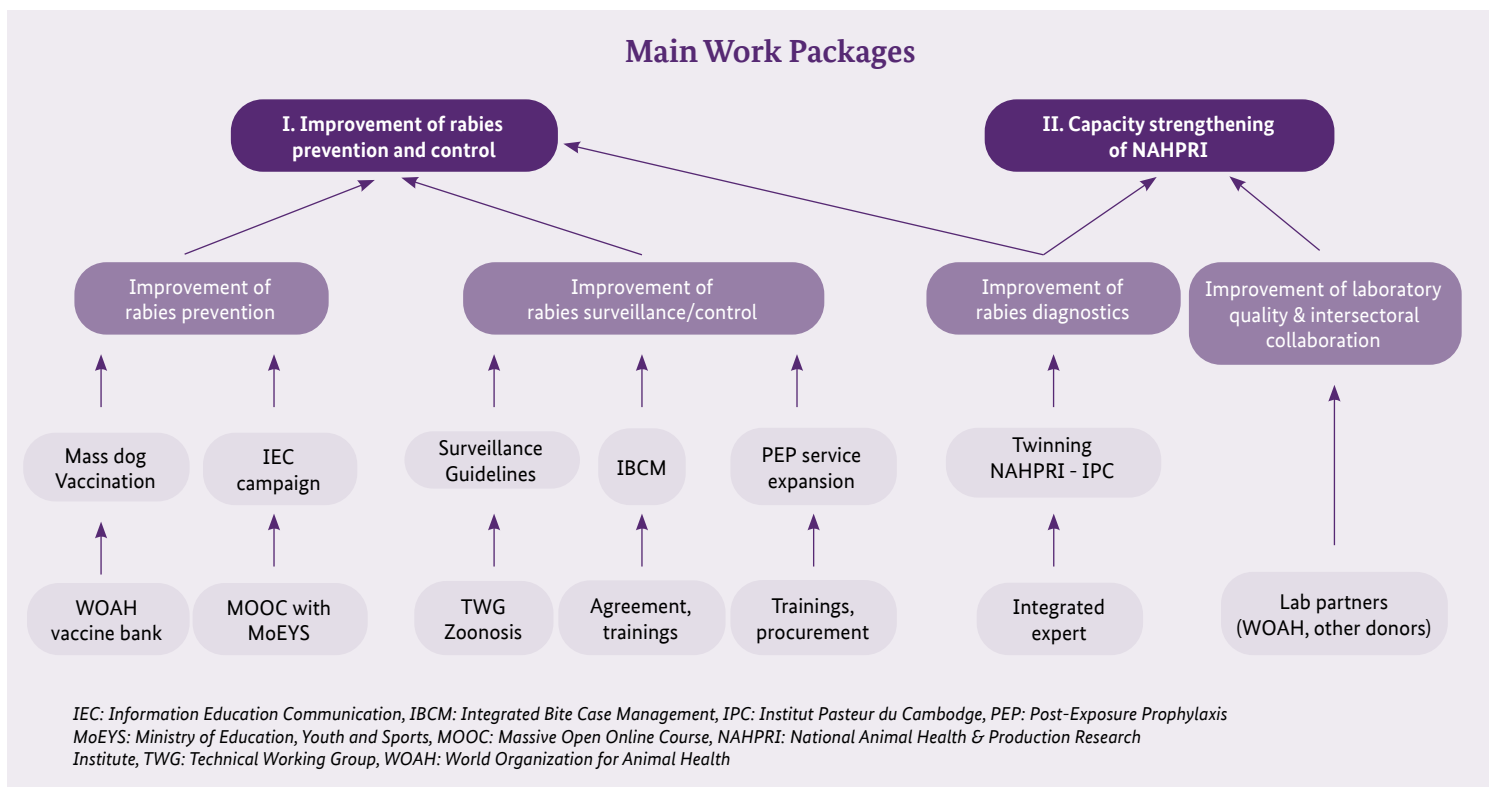
Capacity Strengthening at NAHPRI

The capacity for rabies diagnostics at NAHPRI is being strengthened via a twinning activity with IPC. Additionally, support is provided for the development of the NAHPRI Strategic Plan 2023-2030 and other lab-related activities.

Achievements

The project ensures collaboration between the human and animal health sectors at the national, provincial, district and community levels. The expected achievements include strengthening of diagnostic capacity and, in the designated provinces, an increase in rabies awareness, access to PEP, dog vaccination coverage, and surveillance capacity.

By achieving this, Cambodia will be better equipped to contribute to the global rabies elimination goal. Moreover, by strengthening especially the animal health sector as well as cross-sectoral collaboration, the project generates benefits that extend beyond rabies to other zoonoses whose prevention and control equally require a One Health approach.



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Global Programme for Pandemic Prevention and
Response, One Health
c/o National Institute of Public Health
#2, Street 289, Khan Toul Kork
P.O. Box 1238, Phnom Penh
Kingdom of Cambodia
Phone: + 855 23 884 476
Fax: + 855 23 884 976
www.giz.de - www.giz.de/kambodscha

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