USAID | DELIVER PROJECT

USAID Launches Avian Influenza Regional Distribution Center in Thailand

Photo credit: USAID/RDMA, Hal Lipper

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Funded by the Avian and Pandemic Influenza Unit at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT and its sub-partners procure, distribute, and track a variety of avian influenza (AI) commodities. As part of its strategy to help contain AI worldwide, the project has established a Regional Distribution Center (RDC) in Bangkok, Thailand.

Larger than a soccer field, the modern warehouse is located near Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Chachoengsao Province. The RDC will be stocked with pre-positioned supplies (placed in the region before they are needed), which will allow a faster response to outbreaks in the Southeast Asian countries.

On March 18, 2008, the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, Eric G. John, launched the RDC in Bangkok. Joining the ambassador, leading influenza experts said the center could save lives by providing the materials needed to contain the deadly H5N1 virus, which has killed at least 245 people worldwide.

"The Regional Distribution Center in Thailand will help ensure that countries in Asia will be able to take fast action to counter avian influenza without endangering the lives of the rapid-response teams," said Ambassador John. He also stated that the RDC re-enforces the U.S. Government's support for the prevention and control of AI in Asia and the importance of having Thailand as an ally in the fight against AI.

The RDC stockpiles personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination supplies, and laboratory kits that are used to respond to emergency requests during outbreaks in either animal or human populations. With 24 hours notice, the supplies can be airlifted from the RDC to AI hotspots. Because of the center, the region is now much better prepared to contain and control AI outbreaks.

The USAID | DELIVER PROJECT, Task Order 2, was awarded on March 21, 2007, to manage the USAID Avian Influenza International Stockpile (AIIS) and to distribute avian influenza commodities to recipient countries around the world. By ensuring the availability of these commodities, the project supports surveillance, decontamination, and outbreak response activities in countries at risk for and currently experiencing an avian influenza outbreak.

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