

Mid-term Review of the Stop Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses (STANDZ) Initiative MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Initiative Summary

Initiative Name	Stop Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses (STANDZ) Initiative		
AidWorks initiative number	INJ703		
Commencement date	20 May 2011	Completion date	30 June 2016
Total Australian \$	A\$12.87 million		
Total other \$	-		
Delivery organisation(s)	World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)		
Implementing partner(s)	World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Sub-Regional Representation for South East Asia (SRR-SEA)		
Country/Region	South East Asia, with a focus on the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)		
Primary sector	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Rabies Control / Veterinary Services		
Initiative objective/s	<p>To reduce the impact of emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), transboundary animal diseases (TADs) and zoonoses on food security, human health, and livelihoods in South East Asia.</p> <p>To strengthen animal health systems and improve the performance of Veterinary Services in South East Asia in the prevention, control, and eradication of FMD and Rabies.</p>		

Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Objective/s:

- To assess whether the current state, structure, and implementation of STANDZ will enable it to reach its end-of-program objectives by June 2016.
- To validate the STANDZ program theory of change as well as theories of change of the respective four program pillars, including underlying assumptions.
- To identify key intermediate (intended and unintended) outcomes from STANDZ work to date.

Evaluation Completion Date: 3 April 2014

Evaluation Team: Jonathan Hampshire (Team Leader) and Royce Escolar (Senior Regional Program Manager for Health, DFAT)

DFAT's response to the evaluation report

- DFAT views this as a good quality independent report that is consistent with the current DFAT Monitoring and Evaluation Standards. The report directly addressed key evaluation questions outlined in the agreed Evaluation Plan and provided realistic recommendations to DFAT and OIE to improve STANDZ efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability during the remaining term of the program until 2016.

- DFAT is in general agreement with the report findings and recommendations, which did not propose any major changes in the STANDZ scope of work and governance arrangements.
- DFAT support to STANDZ is strongly linked to Australia's national biosecurity interests in protecting its borders from an estimated \$51.8 billion in losses over 10 years from a sustained FMD outbreak. The report underscored that Australia's investment has prevented the spread of FMD in targeted hotspot areas in the GMS, most notably in Burma. However, STANDZ, as a regional program, can only address a modest portion of the resource and capacity demands of least developed countries in the GMS to effectively control and eradicate FMD.
- The review noted that the STANDZ program design was overly complex and that its Theory of Change was obscured by how the program components were originally structured. Similarly, the M&E and gender equality components of the design were assessed to be overly ambitious and too theoretical and complex to serve as a practical guide to a technical implementing partner with nascent institutional capacity on these two issues. Overall, this compromised the ability of the OIE SRR-SEA to effectively plan, monitor, and report on the work undertaken and results achieved under STANDZ that meets DFAT requirements.
- Nevertheless, the review underscored that OIE SRR-SEA has been effectively implementing key elements of the original STANDZ design and provided examples of key program outcomes to date. The review also confirmed that OIE is widely regarded as a valuable and responsive partner by its national and regional counterparts. In addition, the report assessed OIE as a cost effective and efficient vehicle through which to channel funding.
- The report recommended that OIE should strive to maintain its comparative advantage as a technical and standard-setting agency. The review was strongly supportive of the larger programmatic in-country interventions (e.g. FMD control in Laos and Myanmar and Rabies control in the Philippines) but cautioned that further expansion beyond these projects might compromise OIE's comparative advantage. The review stressed that OIE SRR-SEA is not a donor nor is it set up to directly manage or supervise complex field operations.
- DFAT investment through OIE is addressing key aid effectiveness principles. OIE is in itself a sustainable institution and has a clear focus on supporting systems strengthening within regional and national level institutions. Sustainability of key activities supported by STANDZ (post-2016) remains largely dependent on availability of future funding, from Australian or other sources. Mobilising additional financial support from national governments within the region, particularly for regional coordination activities on such issues as FMD control, should be a key program focus from now until the end of STANDZ in June 2016.

DFAT's response to the specific recommendations made in the report

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<p>1. It is recommended that a new STANDZ component structure be agreed by members of the STANDZ Steering Committee. This should be used as the framework for guiding all future planning, monitoring and reporting work on STANDZ supported initiatives.</p> <p>A re-design of the program will not be needed as all key elements of the original STANDZ design will remain. This re-configuration will aim to reflect the reality of how the programme is managed in practice, and will support improved monitoring and evaluation.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The proposed revision of the STANDZ component structure is in line with OIE SRR-SEA activity implementation arrangements. Adopting the revised component structure will simplify and improve program monitoring and evaluation (M&E).</p> <p>The revised component structure will delineate the program into four key areas of work (e.g. FMD, Rabies, Veterinary Systems Strengthening, and OIE institutional capacity). The previous structure was overly complex as it combined different components of FMD and Rabies work across two program components.</p> <p>This proposed revision does not alter the program objectives of STANDZ as outlined in the original design document.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post will request OIE to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Revise the STANDZ component structure as per the review recommendations, noting that OIE may propose minor changes in the phrasing of the components. b) Submit the revised component structure to the STANDZ Steering Committee for endorsement. c) Start using the endorsed revised component structure in its M&E and financial reporting in the six-monthly STANDZ progress report due for submission to DFAT in July 2014. 	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post</p> <p>OIE Paris and SRR-SEA</p> <p>STANDZ Steering Committee (e.g. DFAT, OIE Paris, Australia Department of Agriculture)</p>

<p>2. It is recommended that the following elements of the STANDZ program should be given priority over the second half of the implementation period:</p> <p>a) Continued support to FMD control efforts, in particular priority should be given to: (i) the work of the SEACFMD Sub-Commission and its working groups; and (ii) implementation of the planned pilot vaccination programs in northern Laos and in Myanmar (if Myanmar is ultimately deemed to be feasible).</p> <p>The preparation / improvement of Regional and National FMD plans and the conduct of FMD related research and studies in CLMV countries should also continue to be supported as time and resources permit.</p> <p>b) Continued support to strengthening Veterinary Services (focused on the CLMV countries), in particular top priority should be given to: (i) facilitating follow-up to PVS Evaluation and PVS Gap Analysis findings; and (ii) supporting the collection, data sharing, analysis, and use of animal health information, particularly through the WAHIS and ARAHIS systems.</p> <p>Promoting actions that support adoption / use of 'OIE Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum' and 'Day 1 Competencies' by selected Veterinary Education Establishments; and assisting with the establishment of Veterinary Statutory Bodies in selected countries should also continue as time and resources permit.</p> <p>c) Continued support for rabies eradication efforts and the One Health approach focusing on dog vaccination, in particular top priority should be given to: (i) implementation of the planned pilot vaccination programme in the Philippines (and possibly one other country); and (ii) rabies research / information generation - including following up on the oral rabies vaccine trial in Thailand, and preparing a baseline of information pertinent to rabies control and elimination in the region.</p> <p>Support for One Health coordination meetings and related activities and for preparation and / or improvement to rabies eradication plans should also continue as time and resources permit.</p> <p>d) Continued support for SRR-SEA capacity development in program and fiduciary risk management, in particular implementation of enhanced systems and procedures for budgeting, financial administration and reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation, and the quality assurance of key SRR-SEA / STANDZ products and services.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT requested the review to identify priority activities to guide OIE SRR-SEA in narrowly focusing its technical, financial, and management resources to activities that can provide concrete development results against STANDZ program objectives.</p> <p>Second-tier activities, while important, require long-term policy and capacity building interventions. The success of these activities also depends on other institutional and external factors beyond the direct control of the program. DFAT proposes that OIE SRR-SEA consults the STANDZ Steering Committee in terms of potential expansion of these second-tier activities given the already demanding work load required to implement priority interventions.</p> <p>DFAT acknowledges that FMD control has been the top priority component for STANDZ followed, in descending order, by Rabies control and veterinary services strengthening. This is consistent with Australian Government interests, the historical work and comparative advantage of OIE in the sector, the STANDZ design intent, and partner government demand.</p> <p>DFAT views the program and fiduciary risk management capacity of OIE SRR-SEA as particularly crucial at this stage in the program life given substantial investments linked to the roll-out of larger programmatic interventions in Lao PDR, Philippines, and Myanmar. We encourage OIE Paris and SRR-SEA to further strengthen its budgeting, financial administration and reporting, and M&E systems.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post will request OIE Paris and SRR-SEA to:</p> <p>a) Ensure that these priority activities are reflected in their annual work plans until 2016.</p> <p>b) Focus technical, financial, and management resources (including on M&E) to priority activities in priority countries.</p> <p>c) Focus progress reporting on these priority activities starting with the six-monthly progress report due for submission to DFAT in July 2014.</p> <p>d) Advise the STANDZ Steering Committee on plans to manage program and fiduciary risks (including clarifying audit and fraud management procedures) related to in-country programmatic activities on FMD and Rabies control.</p> <p>The STANDZ Steering Committee will regularly monitor OIE SRR-SEA implementation of the above.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post</p> <p>OIE Paris and SRR-SEA</p> <p>STANDZ Steering Committee (e.g. DFAT, OIE Paris, Australia Department of Agriculture)</p>
<p>Tool: Management Response Template (registered # 158)</p>	<p>page 4 of 8</p>		

<p>3. It is recommended that the following actions be considered:</p> <p>a) Discontinue the Advisory Committee meetings, and instead engage with a broader pool of STANDZ partners through other ongoing meetings and consultations.</p> <p>b) Clarify the role of Steering Committee members in the quality assurance and approval process of both Small Grant Facility (SGF) applications and the planned larger programmatic interventions (e.g. Laos FMD, Philippines rabies and possibly Myanmar FMD). In addition, the use of (independent) peer / expert review of the larger programmatic interventions should be clarified, to help support the quality of design and subsequent implementation.</p> <p>c) OIE HQ should expedite the process of producing its updated administrative procedures at the earliest opportunity in ongoing consultation with SRR-SEA (among others). OIE-HQ should also clearly respond to the questions and issues already raised by SRR-SEA staff in two documents (namely the written comments provided on the draft procedures manual of May 2013, and the report of the DA secondee of September 2013).</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees with the discontinuation of the Advisory Committee given its limited value to date owing to the availability of existing mechanisms for OIE to consult with other external program stakeholders.</p> <p>DFAT, however, notes that a broader stakeholder consultation may be required towards the end of 2015 to inform Australia's future role and potential support for this sector after the end of STANDZ in June 2016.</p> <p>OIE SRR-SEA has been adopting a quality assurance and approval process involving the STANDZ Steering Committee in relation to the Small Grants Facility (SGF) and the planned larger programmatic interventions in Lao PDR, Philippines, and Myanmar. There is value in formally documenting and reminding all STANDZ Steering Committee members of this process.</p> <p>DFAT sees good value in an independent expert peer review of the larger programmatic interventions to ensure that STANDZ-supported activities are technically sound, are addressing priority gaps of countries, and are not duplicating existing efforts of governments and other development partners.</p> <p>DFAT views 3(c) as an internal issue for OIE HQ to address. DFAT will, however, require OIE confirmation that this issue does not and will not affect its ability to implement STANDZ.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post will:</p> <p>a) Propose that the STANDZ Steering Committee formally endorses the discontinuation of the Advisory Committee as per the review recommendations.</p> <p>b) Request OIE SRR-SEA, as the secretariat of the STANDZ Steering Committee, to document the process being followed for quality assurance and approvals of SGF and larger programmatic interventions. This document should be shared to all Steering Committee members before the next Steering Committee meeting in August 2014.</p> <p>c) Request OIE SRR-SEA to provide STANDZ Steering Committee members with copies of project reports from partner governments implementing in-country programmatic activities (as soon as these reports become available). OIE SRR-SEA is also required to immediately report to the Steering Committee any fraud cases and activity-related risks as they arise.</p> <p>d) Request OIE SRR-SEA to inform and obtain STANDZ Steering Committee advice and endorsement of its plans for the independent expert peer review of planned in-country programmatic interventions.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post</p> <p>OIE SRR-SEA</p> <p>STANDZ Steering Committee (e.g. DFAT Bangkok, OIE Paris, Australia Department of Agriculture)</p>
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<p>4. It is recommended that:</p> <p>a) OIE continue to seek additional voluntary contributions from diversified sources to the World Animal Health and Welfare Fund, including contributions that can be used for supporting some of the core operating costs of the SSR-SEA (including staff).</p> <p>b) Prior to the end of 2014, a preliminary 'Exit Strategy' should be drafted by the STANDZ Steering Committee. The preliminary strategy should identify what needs to be done and by whom in order to effectively plan for the possible cessation of STANDZ funding in mid-2016.</p> <p>c) Prior to the end of 2015, OIE should absorb some of the core operating costs currently funded by the Australian government (including some salaries) as a demonstration of its commitment to maintaining SSR-SEA operational capabilities.</p> <p>d) It is recommended that DFAT should continue some level of support, to at least maintain its engagement in regional FMD control efforts through to 2020, the end of the current regional FMD roadmap. Prior to the end of 2015, DFAT should aim to make a decision on whether or not it will continue to support the operations of SSR-SEA through to 2020, and if so the likely scope of that support.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT supports a more diversified funding source for OIE SRR-SEA core operating costs. Currently, while Thailand is providing in-kind support through an office space, most of the OIE SRR-SEA administrative and technical staff (including core staff) is fully funded by DFAT through STANDZ. DFAT has identified this as a key risk on sustainability during its annual Quality at Implementation assessments.</p> <p>DFAT agrees to the recommendation on the Exit Strategy and proposes to discuss the broad features of this Exit Strategy with the other STANDZ Steering Committee members in the next Steering Committee meeting in August 2014. We propose that an initial draft be ready by December 2014 for final endorsement in the Steering Committee meeting scheduled in March 2015.</p> <p>The Exit Strategy will include an agreed timeframe within 2015 for OIE to cover some of the core operating costs of the OIE SRR-SEA, currently funded by DFAT through STANDZ.</p> <p>A clear intention of future support from Australia to OIE SRR-SEA by December 2015 is supported as this will allow OIE SRR-SEA and partner governments to more appropriately plan for activities or implement project closure procedures.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post will:</p> <p>a) Seek agreement from other STANDZ Steering Committee members on the major features of the STANDZ Exit Strategy by August 2014</p> <p>b) Ensure that a draft Exit Strategy is available by December 2014 for final STANDZ Steering Committee endorsement by March 2015.</p> <p>c) Monitor achievements of the agreed Exit Strategy milestones, including on OIE funding support to SRR-SEA core salary and operating costs.</p> <p>d) Inform OIE, by December 2015, of Australia's intention of support to regional FMD control efforts after the end of STANDZ in June 2016.</p>	<p>DFAT Bangkok Regional Post</p> <p>STANDZ Steering Committee (e.g. DFAT Bangkok, OIE Paris, Australia Department of Agriculture)</p> <p>OIE Paris</p>
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<p>5. It is recommended that:</p> <p>a) The further development of monitoring and reporting systems should be undertaken within the framework of the new component structure as outlined in Recommendation 1. Once the new component structure has been agreed, OIE will subsequently need to adapt its budgeting, financial management and reporting coding accordingly.</p> <p>b) The primary focus of all M&E efforts should be on the utility of the management information generated for SRR-SEA and DFAT, not theoretical ideals.</p> <p>c) The services of an M&E specialist should continue to be used through to the end of 2015, on a retainer contract with a review of performance at the end of 2014.</p> <p>d) The overall scope of work of the M&E specialist should be kept broad (to allow for flexibility in determining what is really working / useful), but this also means that the consultant needs to be carefully managed.</p> <p>e) The M&E Concept Paper prepared by the current M&E Specialist in January 2014 should be used as the initial basis for discussing and agreeing on the broad scope and focus of M&E consultancy inputs over the next year or so. However, there are some elements in the current proposal that may not prove to be so practical and/or useful, such as the proposed tracer studies and the use of impact diaries. Stakeholder surveys can be useful, but need to be appropriately designed and delivered to get reasonable response rates and make the efforts worthwhile.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>OIE SRR-SEA, with DFAT inputs, has already started the process of refining the STANDZ M&E framework based on the draft recommendations of the review.</p> <p>DFAT agrees to the underlying principle of utility in relation to M&E efforts. With reference to Recommendation 2, DFAT would like to reiterate that M&E resources and reporting should focus on priority activities in priority countries.</p> <p>DFAT agrees to the continued use of the M&E Specialist to assist OIE SRR-SEA staff in operationalizing the STANDZ M&E system. We view the management of the M&E Specialist as an internal OIE program management issue.</p>	<p>Actions on Recommendation 5(a) are directly linked to proposed actions under Recommendation 1.</p> <p>While DFAT can provide inputs as requested by OIE, we view Recommendations 5(a) to 5(e) as directed to OIE for their management response and action.</p>	<p>OIE SRR-SEA</p>
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<p>6. It is recommended that DFAT expectations with respect to gender mainstreaming / equality be moderated, given that this was given disproportionate (and overly theoretical) emphasis in the STANDZ design.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it is recommended that SRR-SEA continue to give specific attention and focus to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Collecting and reporting gender-disaggregated data relevant to those participating in key SRR-SEA supported events; b) Promoting equality of access and opportunity to SRR-SEA sponsored events with key counterparts (e.g. by encouraging them to nominate women for such things as secondments to SRR-SEA and participation in key meetings and training events) c) Ensuring gender issues are specifically addressed in the TOR for relevant studies and small grants (e.g. socio-economic studies on FMD control, strengthening of Veterinary Services) and subsequently disseminating gender related findings; d) Ensuring gender and socio-economic issues are appropriately addressed in the scope of work / grant funding agreements for the larger programmatic interventions (e.g. in initial project proposals, the development of communication strategies, and M&E priorities); and e) Continuing to promote gender equity in their own workplace. 	<p>Agree</p> <p>The review findings on OIE SRR-SEA capacity on gender equality mainstreaming is in line with DFAT internal assessments contained in its most recent Quality at Implementation report for STANDZ.</p> <p>DFAT also acknowledges that OIE SRR-SEA has already established internal strategies and systems to address DFAT's requirement on gender mainstreaming. DFAT expects that OIE SRR-SEA will continue to deliver and report against the five specific areas of attention and focus identified by the review – i.e. 6(a) to 6(e).</p> <p>DFAT will continue to support and work closely with OIE SRR-SEA to ensure gender equality is appropriately mainstreamed in STANDZ-supported activities.</p> <p>There is also scope for the M&E Specialist to assist the OIE SRR-SEA staff in capturing gender outcomes of key activities.</p>	<p>This recommendation is mostly directed at OIE SRR-SEA with DFAT Bangkok to monitor compliance.</p>	<p>OIE SRR-SEA DFAT Bangkok Regional Post</p>
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