

Summary of the Consultative Planning Workshop on:

Designing a Short Training Course on Contemporary School Health, Nutrition and HIV Prevention Programmes in South East Asia

3-4 March 2011, Bangkok, Thailand

Organiser: Faculty of Tropical Medicine (FTM), Mahidol University, Thailand.

Co-organisers: Hashimoto Initiative, National Centre for Global Health and Medicine (NCGM) / Consortium for Global School Health Research (JC-GSHR), Japan and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD), Imperial College London, UK.



Objectives of the Workshop

In response to the school health and nutrition (SHN) needs of South East Asia, it was jointly proposed in 2010 that current training activities would be built upon through the development of a collaborative short course on SHN for the region.

The combination of the expertise in parasitic disease control of the Asian Centre of International Parasite Control (ACIPAC) and Mahidol University's Faculty of Tropical Medicine, technical expertise from the Hashimoto Initiative and the National Centre for Global Health and Medicine (NCGHM), and the programmatic experience in school health of the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) aims to provide a strong platform for this activity.

Many approaches in parasitic disease control in Asian countries already involve elements of the four core pillars of the FRESH framework: *i) policy development ii) water and sanitation iii) school based services and iv) life skills education* and a short course in SHN would deliver a programmatic dimension to these efforts.

In view of the preparations for this targeted capacity building activity it was agreed between the organisers that a consultative workshop would be held in Bangkok on the 3 - 4 March 2011 with key SHN representatives from the Ministries of Education (or Health where applicable) in South East Asia. Taking a bottom up approach, delegates were asked to:

- 1) **Identify emerging school health challenges in the region.**
- 2) **Discuss training needs at multiple levels.**
- 3) **Develop a tailor-made curriculum based on points 1 & 2.**
- 4) **Discuss the training course's management modalities.**

Conclusions of the Workshop

A variety of governmental and non-governmental actors from South East Asia attended the workshop with representatives from Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam. Representatives from Cambodia had to withdraw shortly before the workshop and sent their apologies. School health specialists from Sri Lanka, regional non-governmental representatives and technical specialists from the co-hosts of the workshop: Mahidol University (Thailand), the National Centre for Global Health and Medicine (Japan) and the Partnership for Child Development (United Kingdom) were also present over the two-day workshop.

The workshop featured presentations on regional SHN needs including individual presentations from all the present government representatives. Current key topics in school health and nutrition such as Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) and community linkages within programmes were also presented to the delegates. Situational analysis sessions for each country within the region were held to identify challenges and training needs; the resulting information was then fed into the development of a curriculum with regards to both Home Grown School Feeding and SHN in general.

The following key elements and topics for the school feeding section of the syllabus were drawn from the situation analysis sessions with representatives of ministries of education and health in the South East Asia region:

- **Institutional support/capacity:**
 - Methods of sensitisation: To generate stakeholder support for establishing or strengthening a school feeding programme, participants identified the need for adequate materials, processes and skills to effectively generate buy-in at the strategic level between decision makers, ministries, donors and the wider public.
 - Identifying government structure needs: For successful implementation of any school feeding programme it is required that an appropriate government structure is designed and established to adequately support the associated programme model. Therefore stakeholders recognised the need for skills and assistance to

formulate, manage and mainstream an efficient and effective government structure for programme implementation.

- Develop and rollout of training packages: To ensure selected programme models are implemented effectively at all levels a range of training packages will need to be designed and rolled out, as such implementers have requested capacity building in the area of training development and delivery.
- Determining programme costs: For accurate programme budgeting it is important that the associated costs, cost drivers and cost containment be understood by programme stakeholders, therefore the represented countries requested support in understanding tools and processes available to determine programme costs.
- **Programme Design:**
 - Programme objectives (health outcomes etc): Stakeholders highlighted the need for programme objectives to be context specific, reflecting the true needs of the target beneficiary groups. Participants were keen to understand more about the methodologies available to accurately formulate programme objectives to address identified beneficiary needs, across areas of education, health and agriculture.
 - Programme targeting: Ensuring school feeding programmes reach those identified within the programme objectives, stakeholders identified the need for training on the processes to develop an accurate targeting criteria and methodology.
 - Implementation methods (developing pilots, associated costs): Globally a variety of school feeding models exist, exhibiting unique associated costs, government structures and methods for reaching beneficiaries. Stakeholders requested training on developing effective programme designs and methods for their pilot.
 - Ration design (shelf life, availability, nutrition). Stakeholders identified the need for support in developing nutritionally adequate school meals using ration design tools and training packages training for programme implementers. This would involve reviewing the nutritional objectives and methods of delivery and sourcing, to facilitate the anticipated provision of nutritious meals to beneficiary schoolchildren.
 - Monitoring and evaluation tools (management information system, nutritional surveys): Accountability through transparency is crucial for stakeholder confidence in each programme as well as resource mobilization and management. Developing and strengthening structures and processes to strengthen programme accountability has been observed as an important area of training by stakeholders.
- **Funding:** Sustainable long-term funding streams are integral to programme longevity, stakeholders requested training on methods of forming, managing and sustaining such funding streams.
- **Community Participation:** It was suggested by stakeholders that training to develop their capacity to design structures that formally include the role of the community in the implementation of school feeding programmes would be highly beneficially. Content of such training can be drawn from examples from other programme models.

Following productive discussions over the course of the workshop the following draft curriculum (*see over*) for the short course has been put together based on feedback and responses to the presented information:

	Morning Session	Afternoon Session
Day 1 Policy and Implementation	<i>Opening Session Global Situation (L) Regional Situation (L)</i>	<i>Policy Implementation (L&WS)</i>
Day 2 School Feeding (Thailand's Key Topic)	<i>School feeding (L) - Global strategy & programmes - Thai experiences</i>	<i>School feeding (WS): - Institutional support - Programme Design - Funding - Community Participation</i>
Day 3 School Visit	<i>[Visit to schools & projects in Ratchaburi Province]</i>	
Day 4 Advanced School Health Topics	<i>Community Linkages (L) School Health in HE (L) Other advanced SHN topics (L)</i>	<i>Workshop on regional planning (WS)</i>
Day 5 Training Needs Identification	<i>Constructing a school health action plan for each country: - Country SHN analysis - School feeding analysis (WS)</i>	<i>Presentations and Discussion</i>

L = Lecture
WS = Workshop

Field Visit

Prior to the workshop, representatives of the planning committee visited two schools, a community health centre, a tropical disease research centre and a regional hospital in Thailand's Ratchaburi Province. The visit, conducted in a day, took in presentations from school teachers and pupils on school health initiatives and presentations from medical professionals on research and treatment of tropical diseases in the area.

The field visit was organised with a view to planning a similar excursion for the participants of the proposed short course later in the year. The facilities and projects visited were highly relevant to the prevention of tropical diseases in the region. With regards to scaling up the visit to for the short course more time could be spent on viewing school feeding operations and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities to round out the content with regard to the short course syllabus.

Next Steps for the Asian Short Course in SHN

Following agreement from the organisers and participants of the workshop it was unanimously decided that the short course will be held in mid-November 2011. Invites will be focused on countries in South East Asia but will not be exclusive of other countries in the region that could benefit from the learning and networking that the short course will provide.

As agreed from the outset, Mahidol University will provide expertise in parasitology and course planning in Thailand, NCGM (and the newly formed JC-GSHR) will provide technical inputs to the design of the course while the Partnership for Child Development will contribute their expertise in planning short courses in SHN to this exciting new training course for the region.

For more information on this course visit www.schoolsandhealth.org