



The Field Building Leadership Initiative (FBLI): ADVANCING ECOHEALTH IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

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HIGHLIGHTS

The first Regional Core Group (RCG) Members meeting and Consortium Agreement signing in Jakarta, Indonesia

The Universitas Indonesia hosted the first Regional Core Group (RCG) meeting of the FBLI program in South East Asia from 17th to 20th December 2013, in Jakarta, Indonesia. The RCG consists of the founding members of the FBLI program, which is funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and aims to promote Ecohealth as a new field in South East Asia. The partner institutions that took part in the program are: Mahidol University, Health System Research Institute (HSRI), Universitas Indonesia, Kunming Medical University, Kunming Institute of Botany, Veterinarians without Borders, and Vietnam Public Health Association.

The meeting marked the milestone of signing the Consortium Agreement (CA) among eight partner institutions, which affirms their commitments in partnership and collaboration. Each country team (Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and China) shared the progress of the two-year implementation of each country team. The side event marked the visit to the study site of the research “Ecohealth and Dairy products: Connecting issues and finding interventions for small-scale farmers in the context of South East Asia” in Pangalengan, West Java, Indonesia. The meeting activity was coordinated by the Coordinating Unit of the program housed by the Center for Public Health and Ecosystem Research (CENPHER), Hanoi School of Public Health and Vietnam Public Health Association.

The Global Health True Leader Training (GHTL) series

The Global Health True Leader Training series attracted 181 participants from 10 countries. The representatives were from the following countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Lao DPR, Cambodia, China, Nepal, and Myanmar.

In Indonesia, the training was held in Makassar from January 17th-26th of 2014. The practicum activities were conducted in 3 villages in the Gowa district in South Sulawesi. Here the participants had a chance to “apply the concepts that they learned from classroom activities to the medical check-ups, livestock supplementation.”

Nineteen participants attended the training in Koh Chang, Thailand from April 18th to 22nd of 2014. This training provided participants with a chance to learn about the unhygienic migrant villages, the public health services in

Koh Chang Hospital, and a surveillance program in Malaria Clinic Koh Chang. In Vietnam, participants were able to observe the biogas system implementation in a small-scale pig farm. The course integrated farming practices in the Hanam province into the framework of the course. In China, YuanMou County the situation of pesticide usage in the plantation farms and its potential environmental health effects and the health facility at both township and village level were the topics of the field site.

This training series indicated the effort of the FBI RCG members, partner institutions, and activities to collaborate different networks such as the One Health Universities Network (INDOHUN, THOHUN, VOHUN in Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam), the Bogor Agricultural University, Vietnam Public Health Association. The training in Indonesia was financially supported by the USAID and IDRC, while the others were primary supported by the IDRC.



UPDATES

RESEARCH:

Indonesia:

In the first quarter of 2014, an important producer of bio-fertilizer in central Java recognized the potential of the resources in Pangalengan, West Java and entered into an agreement with the FBLI to process cow manure into bio-fertilizer. Recognizing the potential value of bio-fertilizer produced from the plentiful cow manure generated in small-scale dairy farms in Pangalengan, West Java, a research trial was set up to determine the fertilizer's effect on the productivity of food crops growing in the area. The field trial is being run on horticultural land growing potatoes among the high country tea plantations in Pangalengan in which part of the land is treated with bio-fertilizer and part is treated with compost. Initial results are extremely encouraging with significant gains in the yields for potatoes. Considering the potential for the conversion of cow manure into valuable bio-fertilizer, and the possibility of developing an independent method for its production, a laboratory research project has been initiated to develop a new bio-fertilizer whose main ingredient is cow manure. This research is proceeding well and should soon have prototype bio-fertilizers ready for testing in field trials. The testing is to be done in the Cipanas and Puncak areas on an existing potato farm.

TOT TRAINING:

Technical advisor hired and almost completed preparation of Global leaders training materials.

Vietnam:

Two surveys were conducted in three communes of Hoang Tay, Le Ho and Chuyen Ngoai in the field site of Ha Nam province. The first one aimed at gaining information on the agricultural intensification and its fluctuation in the period from 2008 to 2013 from 461 households. The second one targeted at assessing the exposure of the locals to biogas' waste and KAP of the locals in using chemical fertilizers. The team also carried the waste water sampling in 10 households during this research period.



An young researcher in FBLI Vietnam team conducting household survey at the field site

China:

290 questionnaires were surveyed for farmers at 8 plantations from January 12th to January 16th 2014. Concerning the use of Ecohealth TOT Manual, eighteen hour Eco-health courses using the book were taught among undergraduates in Kunming Medical University for one term.



Field survey of the FBLI China team in YuanMou County, Kunming, China

CHALLENGES

- The dissemination of the Ecohealth TOT Ecohealth Trainer Manual needs to be assessed before the Translation of the Manual.
- Laboratory test of biomarker of pesticides in China is a bit behind schedule due to the fact the process of laboratory test of biomarker of pesticides will involve various departments and many jobs need to be prepared.

UPCOMING

The Ecohealth 2014 Conference in Montreal Canada

The FBLLI researchers from four research teams will participate in the Ecohealth 2014 Conference in Montreal Canada. We will conduct 15 presentations including, poster, poster-driven, and oral presentation categories. The Pre-conference, "The World Café on Global perspectives World Café on Ecohealth capacity-building" will include presentations on trainings, curriculum building, and teaching methods on Ecohealth, which will be led by Ms. Sonia Fevre.

Assessing the Ecohealth TOT Trainer Manual before conducting the translation of the Manual

The Coordinating Unit will collaborate with Ms. Sonia Fevre and Mr. Bob Williams-M&E consultant, to conduct a survey that will assess the use of the TOT book before developing a detailed translation plan.

Evaluation plan will be presented and implemented

The evaluation plan, compiled by the CU and Mr. Bob Williams, will be presented to RCG members and implemented in the coming months.

Selecting mentors for research teams will be carried out.

China research team

- Trans-disciplinary workshops on environment and health will be held among graduates, undergraduates, and a research team in Kunming Medical University
- Eco-health courses using the Trainer Manual will be taught among undergraduates in Kunming Medical University for one term.
- Laboratory test of biomarker of pesticides

Vietnam research team

- Another Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) and sampling will be carried out in either June or August.
- Collected data will be analyzed and used as material for the upcoming publications.
- The Regional Research Workshop will be carried out and the date will be discussed among RCG.



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