



AIHSP NEWSLETTER

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The Australia Indonesia Health Security Partnership (AIHSP) is a five-year partnership program (2020-2025) between the Australian and Indonesian governments aimed to increase national health security in Indonesia to prevent, detect and respond to public and animal health emergencies from emerging infectious diseases and to improve coordination and capability to address emerging health threats.



The Australia Indonesia Health Security Partnership (AIHSP) Supports Rabies Control in NTT

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The enthusiasm of the residents participating in the Rabies vaccination activity, along with the VAR officers administering the rabies vaccine | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

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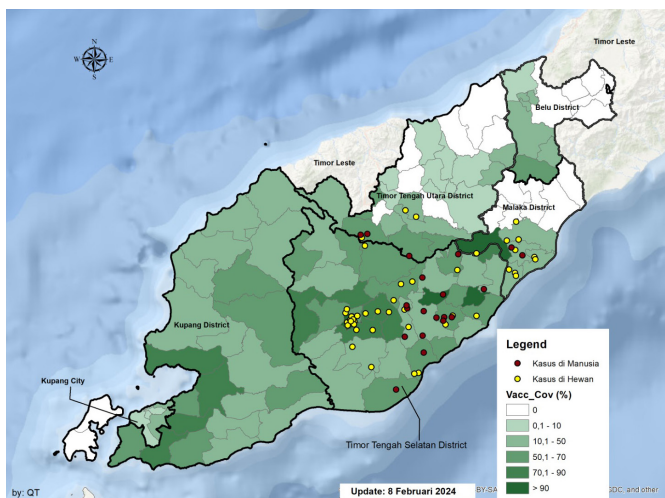
The first ever case of Rabies in West Timor was reported in the district of South Central Timor (*Timor Tengah Selatan: TTS*) in May 2023 and this precipitated an emergency response by the local district authorities with support from the East Nusa Tenggara (*Nusa Tenggara Timur: NTT*) provincial administration. AIHSP has strongly supported the government's emergency response by providing technical assistance, training in dog handling and dog vaccination, designing and delivering Rabies awareness and risk reduction communications materials, coordinating support from other Australian projects and additional direct support from the Government of Australia, as well as facilitating support from international agencies.



“With these post-COVID conditions and limited government budgets, we would like to thank the AIHSP Program for being present on time in Belu. With the presence of the AIHSP program, the prevention and control of zoonoses and new infectious diseases can be carried out jointly with the Belu District Government.”

Rine B. Baria, ST, Head of District Development Planning, Research & Development Agency, Belu District, NTT

The initial response was insufficient to control Rabies on Timor Island and the disease has now spread to three districts, threatening the remaining areas of West Timor. A national Rabies Task Force was established in November to strengthen the control of Rabies in NTT and this became operational in early 2024. AIHSP has coordinated closely with the Task Force at national, provincial, and district levels and has helped to define an operational plan for the progressive control and eradication of the disease. The project has also facilitated the delivery of additional technical support from Mission Rabies, an international NGO with specialist expertise in Rabies control. The Mission Rabies team provided further training in safe handling of dogs and management of vaccines and vaccine cold chains. Importantly, they also introduced an ‘app’ that assists in disease mapping, the prioritising of operational activities, and that also integrates smoothly with iSIKHNAS.¹ The project has dramatically increased the capacity and capabilities of animal health officers to deliver an effective control program.



Map showing the spread of Rabies cases in humans and animals in NTT, data as of 8 February 2024 (recorded by Animal Agency using iSIKHNAS).

¹ Indonesia’s integrated animal health information system

Raising awareness about the dangers of Rabies as part of risk communication activities, through a radio podcast in collaboration with one of the largest media outlets in Kupang, NTT.

Eliminating the threat of Rabies to human health is a critical objective for NTT and it is recognised that, to eradicate the disease, Rabies must be eliminated from dogs and this requires mass vaccination. AIHSP has worked with national staff and academics from Kupang State Agricultural Polytechnic to develop disease control scenarios that model disease control options and their economic efficiencies (cost-benefit analysis). These scenario models are being used to advocate for sufficient commitment of resources to combat this disease in the short term and to avoid the long-term threat to human lives and ongoing costs of ineffective control.



“IEC media is very important to provide information to the public and owners of Animals that Transmit Rabies (*Hewan Penular Rabies: HPR*) so they can anticipate the spread of the Rabies virus. With the support of the AIHSP Program, we can carry out mitigation measures so that the spread of Rabies does not reach Belu district. We also thank the AIHSP Program for the provision of the anti-Rabies vaccine for HPR which has been received by the Belu District Government.”

Rine B. Baria, ST, Head of District Development Planning, Research & Development Agency, Belu District, NTT



Women facing disability are one of a number of groups experiencing a double impact when it comes to zoonotic diseases | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

To Raise Awareness on Rabies Threat to Women with Disabilities

Women facing disability are one of a number of groups experiencing a double impact when it comes to zoonotic diseases. One serious threat to the health of people with disability is rabies—particularly due to their difficulties in identifying or avoiding dog bites. This understanding was conveyed by Ni Ketut Leni Astiti, the Chairwoman of the Association of Indonesian Women with Disability (Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia: HWDI) in Bali Province, during health examinations and rabies awareness activities in commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December.

Ni Ketut Leni Astiti, who had a personal experience of being bitten by a dog in 2020, realised the importance of rabies prevention for people with disability. Using a cane to walk, she found it challenging to run or evade dogs when faced with the risk of being bitten—especially on her calf. After cleaning the wound and consulting with healthcare services, Leni had to undergo rabies vaccination four times over a month. This experience made her aware that mobility for people with disability in obtaining complete vaccinations could be a challenge—especially for those living far from healthcare centres.

With this understanding, Leni, through HWDI, supports the socialisation of rabies prevention for people with disability through her organisation. HWDI has collaborated with the

Social Services and Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries Agencies, and the Australia Indonesia Health Security Partnership (AIHSP) to conduct rabies awareness activities in several districts of Bali Province—such as Jembrana, Bangli, Denpasar City, and Karangasem.

In addition to organising free health check-up events, HWDI regularly provides free healthcare services to its members and people with disability in general. They also offer information on women’s health, including reproductive health, to ensure their personal well-being. On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Leni hopes that people with disability can easily access health information, undergo early health check-ups, and that women with disability receive support to actively participate in community activities.



Ni Ketut Leni Astiti (wearing a red shirt), the Chairperson of the Indonesian Women with Disabilities Association in Bali Province, leads the meeting with enthusiasm in advocating for the rights and welfare of people with disabilities in Bali | Source: AIHSP Documentation.



The One Health Workshop specifically highlights the benefits of the One Health approach in Bali | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

One Health Approach for Global Health Resilience



Global health security is under increasing pressure from emerging infectious diseases, potentially further pandemics, and the impacts of climate change. In response, the existing health systems for human health, animal health, and the environment must be better able to prevent, detect, and reduce the risk of ongoing and emerging health threats.

One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes, recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment. Indonesia has been consistently applying this approach to find leverage points within the health security systems at local, regional, national, and global levels.

To commemorate One Health Day 2023, AIHSP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture (PMK), Bali Provincial Government, and other relevant international institutions/bodies, held a two-day One Health workshop on November 9-10, 2023. Workshop participants come from across the One Health spectrum—human health, animal health and production services and environmental health, academia, NGOs/CSOs, the private sector, and international development partners. The workshop is facilitated by the Bali Province One Health Collaborating Center (OHCC).

“Bali is facing major threats due to pandemics, human diseases, zoonoses, and animal diseases such as rabies and FMD, which have an impact on the regional economy and food security. The existence of a Coordination Team for Control of Zoonotic Diseases and New Infectious Diseases is very important to coordinate efforts based on the One Health approach in Bali Province. Today’s workshop is very strategic as a forum for sharing knowledge and developing collaboration and communication strategies.”

Drs. Dewa Made Indra, M.Si, Regional Secretary of Bali Province

The workshop specifically highlights the benefits of the One Health approach in Bali, setting out the national and Balinese context and benefits of such an approach, providing case studies of opportunities and challenges in implementing One Health, and developing the work plan on risk mitigation measures to be undertaken to combat the ongoing threats to human health and well-being.

“Zoonosis is a shared problem! The spirit of protecting Bali from various threats of disaster, including disease outbreaks (non-natural disasters) is a noble and sacred duty. For that reason, let’s collaborate to strengthen synergy to protect Bali, to be passed on to our children and grandchildren in the future, from Bali to inspire Indonesia and even the world.”

Dr. Drs. I Made Rentin, AP., M.Si, Chief Executive of the Bali Province Regional Disaster Management Agency as well as Secretary of the Coordinating Team for Control of Zoonotic Diseases and New Infectious Diseases, Bali Province



Opening Remarks by Dr. Drs. I Made Rentin, AP., M.Si., Chief Executive of the Bali Province Regional Disaster Management Agency as well as Secretary of the Coordinating Team for Control of Zoonotic Diseases and New Infectious Diseases, Bali Province | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

“Adopting the integrated One Health approach and comprehensive cross-sectoral coordination is recognized as the basis for increasing the effectiveness of the early warning and rapid response system. The Government of Australia and AIHSP believe that the One Health approach can optimize national, regional, and international efforts and achievements in public health, animal, plant, and ecosystem health,” said John Leigh, AIHSP Program Director.

Bali, like other provinces in Indonesia, faces many environmental, human, and animal health challenges. Adopting the One Health approach will give the province the ability to find leverage points within the health security system. National and sub-national public health programs can be designed to use these to push or pull the system in a different direction with the intent to improve health outcomes.



The PSC meeting for the Animal Health Component AIHSP | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

Program Steering Committee (PSC) for Animal Health Discusses 2024 Work Plan

The Program Steering Committee (PSC) meeting for the Animal Health Component of the Australia Indonesia Health Security Partnership (AIHSP) took place on 20 December 2023. This event marked the 4th PSC meeting and was inaugurated by the Director of Animal Health—representing the Director-General of Livestock and Animal Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic Indonesia—and the Minister Counsellor from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in Jakarta.

The PSC serves as a crucial element in the governance and program management structure of AIHSP. It ensures that all program activities receive consideration and approval from the Governments of Indonesia and Australia before implementation. Over the past three years, AIHSP has been instrumental in supporting Indonesia in addressing various animal health issues—providing the basis for the development of best practice models for potential replication and scale-up.

The Director of Animal Health, Dr. Drh. Nuryani Zainuddin, M.Si, highlighted AIHSP's role in supporting the Directorate of Animal Health in controlling diseases such as Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD),¹ Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD),² rabies,³ and other zoonotic⁴ diseases. Dr. Nuryani specifically acknowledged AIHSP's contribution during the emergency response to the rabies outbreak in NTT. Dr. Nuryani said, "AIHSP has provided technical assistance, training, guideline development, and IEC⁵ materials for effective rabies control."

Expressing gratitude for this collaboration, Dr. Nuryani addressed the development of the 2024 work plan. This plan takes into account recommendations for the longer-term future. As AIHSP concludes in January 2025, the main focus will be on activities that are a priority in the program's final year, while also preparing for new health projects being considered by DFAT.

Minister Counsellor for Governance and Human Development at DFAT, Ms. Madeliene Moss, expressed appreciation for the strong partnership between the Government of Australia through AIHSP and the Directorate of Animal Health – Ministry of Agriculture. She outlined key points in the 2024 work plan, focusing on sustainable support for Indonesia's integrated animal health information system (iSIKHNAS), assistance in risk communication, and the provision of rabies vaccines for controlling the rabies outbreak in Timor. Ms. Moss reaffirmed the commitment of the Australian Government to continue support and collaboration after the closure of AIHSP in January 2025.

¹ LSD is a disease affecting cattle. It is caused by a virus.

² FMD is a disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, goats, and pigs.

³ Rabies: A viral disease that can affect the nervous system and is typically transmitted through the bite of an infected animal.

⁴ Zoonotic diseases: Diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

⁵ IEC is an abbreviation for Information, Education, and Communication and is commonly used in the context of health or education programs to denote efforts in providing information, education, and communication to the public or specific groups.

During the meeting, various achievements were acknowledged, including the provision of 1 million doses of LSD vaccine since 2023 through DAFF,⁶ successful collaboration in overcoming trade bans, biosecurity⁷ training for the Ministry of Agriculture staff, and collaboration on bird flu. The meeting also discussed upcoming program plans, including the next DFAT program development, priority work plans for AIHSP Animal Health in 2024, and collaboration with other government sectors, emphasising a smooth transition after AIHSP concludes.

Ms. Moss assured the Australian Government's support for a seamless transition in the health sector program, with progress and options evaluated in the next six months. Consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health will be conducted in preparation for the new program.

Dr. Nuryani responded by detailing the scope of the work plan and collaboration with Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency. She confirmed the Ministry's approval of the proposed AIHSP and BICOLLAB⁸ work plans, ensuring sustained support for iSIKHNAS.

With a strong spirit of collaboration between AIHSP, DFAT, and the Indonesian Government partners, it is evident that this program has made a significant contribution to addressing health security challenges, especially in animal health in Indonesia. Sustained support, including the 2024 work plan, marks a joint commitment to ensuring the continued success of this program. It is hoped that this close collaboration will continue to benefit society and the environment in the future.

⁶ DAFF refers to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry of the Australian Government.

⁷ Biosecurity involves measures taken to protect living organisms from diseases and other health threats.

⁸ BICOLLAB is a collaboration between ACDP's international team and Indonesia's animal Disease Investigation Center (DIC) in Wates, Yogyakarta. ACDP is the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness in Geelong, a division of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

AIHSP Program Steering Committee Meeting Discusses 2024 Work Plan for Human Health Component

As the Australia Indonesia Health Security Partnership's (AIHSP) activities in the Human Health Component come to a close for 2023, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and AIHSP convened the Program Steering Committee (PSC) meeting on 27 November 2023. This meeting served as a crucial moment to report progress and evaluate the active participation of



The Program Steering Committee (PSC) meeting on 27 November 2023 was attended by (left to right): Ms. Prudence Borthwick, Ms. Madeliene Moss, dr. Imran Pambudi, MPH, and Mr. John Leigh | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

related working groups in overseeing AIHSP's contributions and successes during its more than three years of implementation.

The PSC has been a key element in ensuring the quality of AIHSP implementation—operating under the Program Coordinating Committee to achieve the overall vision and strategic goals. The roles and responsibilities of the PSC include setting annual program priorities, reviewing the implementation plan of activities, and managing the risk of program components. This PSC meeting for the human health component is a strategic step in formulating AIHSP program activities in its final year—the fourth implementation year—and exploring potential program designs with the support of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) after the AIHSP program concludes.

provinces, especially since AIHSP has not only strengthened health security at the local level but has also become a global leader in promoting the One Health approach.” He also emphasised the contribution of MoH and regional parties in the implementation of the AIHSP program that has seen them benefit positively from DFAT’s investment in the AIHSP program. Looking ahead, Bapak Imran highlighted the importance of drawing valuable lessons from the technical implementation of AIHSP. “The design of the new program should leverage valuable lessons from the technical implementation of AIHSP—with an emphasis on strengthening primary healthcare for the early detection of health threats,” he added.



AIHSP achieves consensus for the Strategic Plan of the Human Health Component in 2024 | Source: AIHSP Documentation.

Director-General of Disease Prevention and Control, Bapak Maxi Rein Rondonuwu suggested that: “The indicative plan for AIHSP in 2024 should continue to pay attention to, and align with, the transformation of health in its implementation. AIHSP should not introduce new activities but rather focus on continuing the activities that have been implemented so far, to create a legacy that can be continued nationally and in the five provinces of AIHSP’s working area.”

Minister Counsellor for Governance and Human Development at DFAT, Ms Madeliene Moss, expressed her appreciation for the collaboration with local governments: “Strong commitment has been shown at the regional level—enabling program sustainability.” Ms Moss highlighted the technical progress of AIHSP—such as the establishment of the Health Emergency Operations Centre and the application of digital technology for community surveillance.

During the same event, Director of Communicable Disease Prevention and Control, Bapak Imran Pambudi, focused on the importance of the program’s sustainability. He stated: “Flagship programs can provide legacies that can be replicated in other

In closing the PSC meeting, Bapak Maxi expressed his hopes following the end of the technical implementation period of the AIHSP work program in October 2024. He expressed his desire that the process of designing the new phase of the health program by DFAT Australia can refer to the lessons learned by AIHSP in collaboration with the MoH and the health departments of the provinces/districts/cities in five provinces.

The PSC meeting successfully achieved consensus on the Final Indicative Work Plan for the Human Health Component in 2024, validation of progress in activities, and consolidation of input from technical working groups. This not only reflected the success of program implementation but also showcased strong collaboration between AIHSP, the MoH, and local governments. This meeting not only solidifies the commitment to continue the program in its last year of implementation but also establishes a robust foundation for the Indonesian Government to enhance the health security of its people.