

JOINT PROGRAMME ON AVIAN AND HUMAN PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

The issue:

Viet Nam was among the first countries in Asia to report the highly pathogenic avian influenza A(H5N1) virus (HPAI) and remains one of the worst affected in terms of human infections, with 119 confirmed human cases and 59 deaths. The virus has had a direct measurable impact on Viet Nam's economy.

The Government has established national coordination mechanisms and applied control measures to limit the circulation of the virus in poultry. Human health services have been strengthened and public communications campaigns carried out.

However, the virus appears entrenched with scattered poultry outbreaks and human cases occurring, and ongoing financial and technical support are needed to address the evolving situation and ensure a long-term response.

The joint programme:

- Responding to the request of the government, UN agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF and WHO) worked with relevant ministries to develop a joint programme in support of a comprehensive, integrated and multi-disciplinary response to HPAI.
- Phase I of the joint programme provided support for emergency activities from October 2005 through July 2006. Phase II is expected to run until 2010 in line with the period covered by the OPI. The focus is on technical assistance, capacity-building support and the provision of an effective channel for international assistance in direct support to the overall implementation of the OPI.

Unique features:

- This joint programme was the first and largest developed in the context of the current UN reform initiative in Viet Nam. It has served as a flagship activity and learning ground for 'Delivering as One' in Viet Nam.

KEY FACTS

BUDGET: USD 24,574,591

Of which:

- Phase I: USD 6,926,599
- Phase II: USD 17,647,992
- 8 donors provided funds via the administrative agent, with a further 3 donors providing parallel funds direct to participating UN agencies.

PROGRAMME DURATION: 2005 – 2010

- Phase I: Oct 2005 – July 2006
- Phase II: Jan 2007 – Dec 2010

UN PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

- UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, WHO

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development (MARD)
- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ministry of Education & Training (MOET)

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES:

- Ministries & Government agencies
- Provincial and local public health and veterinary authorities
- Poultry producers
- Civil society
- Mass media
- The education system
- The general public

- During the emergency phase, the joint programme provided an effective and flexible mechanism for the rapid mobilization and delivery of significant donor funds and technical assistance at a very critical time.
- The current capacity-building phase supports close cooperation between several UN agencies and Government counterparts in an emerging programme area where cross-sector collaboration is extremely important. Support was also provided to the national response to the pandemic (H1N1) in 2009.
- The close collaboration and mechanisms developed through the joint programme were utilized to provide effective UN system support to the Government to host the International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza: The Way Forward (IMCAPI Hanoi 2010).

Key outcomes:

- Phase I of the joint programme helped to strengthen national preparedness for a human pandemic through development and implementation of the national preparedness plan, and addressed priority gaps through: (a) support to vaccination of poultry; (b) post-vaccination surveillance; (c) strengthening targeted HPAI surveillance and response in animal and humans; (d) protecting humans involved in the poultry vaccination programme; (e) a nationwide communication campaign; (f) research to evaluate the efficacy of a new vaccine in ducks; and (g) support to the coordination and monitoring of donor and government activities. UN agencies also supported the Government along with other international partners to develop the National Integrated Operational Program on Avian and Human Influenza 2006-2010 (OPI).
- The expected outcome of Phase II is reduced risk of a global HPAI pandemic emanating from Viet Nam and, through supporting the implementation of the OPI, enhanced national and local capacity to manage outbreaks of diseases caused by human and animal pathogens that have the potential to develop into epidemics.
- Key outputs of Phase II include: (a) enhanced coordination between Vietnamese and international agencies supporting implementation of the OPI; (b) progressive control of HPAI in domestic poultry and enhanced national and local capacity to detect and respond to outbreaks of zoonotic and other diseases in animals; (c) strengthened national and local capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from public health emergencies caused by infectious diseases such as HPAI; and (d) increased public awareness generally and within specific groups on critical HPAI-related risk factors resulting in effective behavioural changes.
- An independent review of the joint programme was conducted in 2009. Work is now underway to identify and plan for necessary UN system support from 2011 onwards.

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UNITED NATIONS VIET NAM

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