



Avian Flu: FAO IN ACTION

ECTAD - Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases



ECTAD's regional activities

FAO is setting up regional and sub-regional networks worldwide to increase coordination and harmonise national plans and activities in the fields of surveillance, diagnosis and socio-economic impact.

FAO's Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Disease (ECTAD) has one regional office in Bangkok and plans for the immediate opening of others in Bamako, Cairo, Nairobi and Gaborone. Mid-range plans are being prepared for additional offices in Latin America, Eastern Europe/Caucasus and Central Asia.

Equipment and goods provided by FAO

FAO has invested donor funds in five major categories: supplies & equipment, human resources, training, studies and support services:

Investment category	US dollars (million)
Laboratory and veterinary supplies and equipment	9.9
Human resources (national and regional coordinators, technical experts)	6.4
Training (laboratory, epidemiology, wildlife)	1.4
Studies (diagnostic reference, field epidemiological studies, wildlife field studies)	0.6
Support services (GOE, courier services)	2.1
Total	20.4

FAO needs USD 308 million to control avian flu – only USD 45 million received

Since the stakeholders' conference in Geneva in November 2005, HPAI has spread rapidly to new regions of the world and current estimates put the figure needed for FAO's three-year contribution to the Global Programme for the Progressive Control of Avian Influenza at USD 308.5 million. As of the end of April, the organisation had received only USD 45.3 million, although promised but not-yet-received funds totalled USD 25.5 million and negotiations were under way for a further USD 34.8 million.

Overall situation	US dollars (millions)
Funds received	45.3
Agreement signed, no cash received	25.5
<i>Total received and approved</i>	<i>70.6</i>
Funds promised	34.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>105.4</i>
Current gap (cash)	263.1
Gap (cash + confirmed)	237.6
Gap (should all pledges be confirmed)	203.1

Of the funds received, FAO has committed a total of USD 20.4 million, or 45 percent of the funds received.

Funding and donor contributions

The figures here represent the total funds received by FAO plus those agreed but not yet received for each donor, expressed in USD million.

These funds have helped FAO:

- supply goods and services to 87 countries as part of its efforts to prevent avian flu
- mobilise more than 100 staff members or consultants on 378 missions since February 2004

Japan	12.4
Sweden	9.5
FAO	9.2
Asian Development Bank	6.5
Germany	6.3
United States	6.3
France	6.0
Switzerland	3.7
Norway	3.6
Vietnam Joint Programme	2.0
Australia	1.9
United Kingdom	1.2
Saudi Arabia	1.0
Netherlands	0.48
New Zealand	0.34
UNDGO	0.16
Jordan	0.05
Total	70.64

as of 30 April 2006

NB. The figures concern only funding to FAO and do not include bilateral support to affected countries/regions.

Regional Highlights

Asia

In Southeast Asia, FAO's avian flu control programme is being managed through the establishment of a strong and efficient regional coordination unit set up to assist national and regional institutions in their prevention and control efforts by:

building the capacity to implement and maintain these options and strategies; and

providing the technical support needed to ensure that the options and strategies can be implemented in a technically sound, socially-equitable and sustainable way.

The total funding currently committed to FAO by the international community for avian flu prevention and control in Asia is approximately USD 30 million in six major projects.



Transport of poultry: Hanoi market, Viet Nam



Poultry housing, Zimbabwe

Africa

FAO anticipated outbreaks of avian flu in Africa with the launching of three regional projects in late 2005 to support country preparedness efforts and coordination. In this framework several strategic and training workshops have been held.

Following the first outbreaks of avian flu in Africa, a total of USD 45 000 each in emergency funds (to begin preparedness and prevention activities) has been provided to Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Tunisia.

FAO has carried out or is planning missions in Mauritania, Egypt, Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Sudan, Uganda, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Zambia and Zimbabwe. On some missions, FAO has worked or will work with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Bank.

Major country programmes

Nigeria – USD 293 000 has been sent to the FAO Representation since the first outbreak in February to hire staff and purchase essential equipment, and a project proposal has been submitted to USAID and other donors for a total of around USD 1.5 million.

Ethiopia – A USD 1.5 million dollar financed by the United Kingdom and the United States is currently under way. The project is designed to strengthen technical capacity, disease surveillance, communication and public awareness, emergency outbreak containment and socio-economic assessment.

Central Asia

FAO has put together an 18-month project worth USD 605 000 to create a regional network for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan plus Afghanistan and Iran. The project will:

- Strengthen the capacity for generating and sharing avian flu intelligence and developing emergency preparedness
- Generate an understanding of migratory bird movement into and within the region and the potential for their contact with domestic poultry
- Build public awareness of the issues related to avian flu risks
- Strengthen avian flu field surveillance and laboratory capacity for diagnosing disease
- Establish information and technology network linkages with other regions

Middle East

In November 2005, FAO launched an 18-month technical cooperation project with Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. So far, emergency technical assistance worth USD 45 000 has been sent to Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in particular:

- FAO – together with the agriculture ministry, other U.N. agencies and the World Bank – has been distributing personal protective equipment and liquid disinfectants and participating in advocacy and awareness campaigns for farmers, following the recent outbreak of avian flu in the Gaza Strip.
- An FAO expert has visited the West Bank/Gaza Strip to assess the current situation, provide an overview of associated risks in the region, oversee implementation of disease outbreak control measures, and provide advice. Following the mission, the expert will prepare project proposals for donor funding to control and mitigate the impact of the disease.

Eastern Europe and Caucasus

With the outbreak of avian influenza reaching Europe in 2005 and 2006, FAO has responded by assisting with assessment and response in affected countries. FAO expert teams have carried out emergency preparedness and joint assessment missions, with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the European Commission, and provided technical assistance, to several countries including Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Funds for emergency preparedness and response totalling USD 45 000 have been provided to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey respectively, while Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro (plus Kosovo) and Ukraine are in the process of receiving emergency start-up funds.

The estimated funding needs for FAO's intended initial support in Europe amount to over USD 5 million for one year, although only half of this has so far been secured and committed to FAO by the donors.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Four regional projects from FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) have been approved – each to the value of USD 500 000 – and are being implemented from April 2006 until September 2007. These projects are for:

- The Caribbean (15 countries): Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Vincent & Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Central America (8 countries): Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.
- The Andean region (4 countries): Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.
- The MERCOSUR region (6 countries): Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Cooperation programmes to study role of wild birds in avian flu spread

One of the objectives of the regional projects of the Technical Cooperation programme (TCP) currently under way in many countries of Eastern Europe and Caucasus, Middle East, West Africa, East Africa and North Africa is to initiate field studies on the role of wild birds in the spread of avian flu. This wildlife component of these TCPs focuses on surveillance activities in key ecological sites representing high risk areas for the introduction of the avian flu virus due to the congregation of wild bird species in their migration from northern climates to southern wintering grounds.

For these activities, FAO has worked with one of its collaborating centres, the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) in France and with Wetlands International (an NGO with global outreach on wild bird conservation).

More than 4 500 wild bird samples were collected in Ethiopia, Chad, Mali, Morocco, Egypt, Malawi, Kenya, Niger, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mauritania. To date, laboratory tests on these samples do not prove that migratory birds play a role in spreading the disease.



Meanwhile, FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) are organising an international conference on avian flu and wild birds in Rome from 30-31 May to exchange scientific information on avian flu and the role of wild birds, to assess the risk of the introduction of the virus to as-yet uninfected areas, and to propose mitigation and preventive measures. The conference is co-funded by FAO, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Norway.

Crisis Management

FAO has created a socio-economic working group within ECTAD to look at the impact of avian influenza on people's livelihoods, well-being and food security. The group is also analysing the effect of the disease on macro issues such as commodities and trade, and is working on the question of compensation for farmers whose poultry are culled to prevent further spread of the disease.

The group, which draws on experts from a number of FAO divisions (including Animal Production and Health, Gender and Population, and Commodities and Trade) and the World Food Programme (WFP) is focusing on vulnerable groups in particular.



Madagascar: Village scene

Communication and awareness

The principal focus of FAO's Avian Influenza Communication Strategy is to deliver the message that its response to the crisis is centred on containing, if not eradicating, the disease among poultry as the best way of reducing the global risk to human health, and of protecting the livelihoods of millions of small farmers. In this context, FAO is working closely with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

However, FAO also plays an important role in the international effort to avert, or at least prepare for, a human pandemic and is therefore working closely with other U.N. agencies to ensure that its messages do not contradict but rather complement those of agencies such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF).

For its own regional and sub-regional offices, FAO has issued a list of messages for different categories of audience – ranging from poultry keepers, veterinarians and culling teams to the general public – regarding recommended best practices to follow that will minimise the risk of spreading avian flu. These messages are intended as advice for countries and, where necessary, can be adapted to fit local situations.

In the context of cooperation with other agencies, FAO, WHO and UNICEF organised an ad hoc meeting in Geneva on 14-16 March to discuss priority behaviour in the campaign to control avian flu. Participants recommended a focused approach to communication, with the emphasis on disseminating information about high risk behaviours and priority practices in the struggle to combat avian flu.

Coordination with the UN system

In view of the new challenges posed by avian flu, the U.N. agencies are preparing a joint plan to address the needs of poorer countries. FAO revised its proposal for a Global Programme in order to assimilate changes in the dynamic process across the globe (e.g. to include the needs of African nations and avian flu prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean).

FAO is participating in the joint U.N. exercise with the World Bank to detail the needs in countries and regions where the United Nations is expected to play a major implementation role in avian flu prevention and control. A concept note - the U.N. plan - is being prepared under the U.N. System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC) and the U.N. Development Group (UNDG) to define how agencies are going to assist nations to prevent the spread of the disease and prepare for a pandemic.

With regard to Africa, further assessments of the needs and strategies for preventing and controlling have been examined in a succession of meetings involving U.N. agencies, the World Bank, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), regional and sub-regional organisations and donors. It was agreed that priority should be given to developing, among others:

- a U.N. plan for agencies to provide technical assistance to strengthen capacities for influenza responses in poorer countries, particularly in Africa
- a funding mechanism through which these agencies can rapidly access sufficient funds to provide the level and quality of assistance required by countries
- a continental plan to be prepared and presented in June in Vienna by the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR) on behalf of the African Livestock (ALIVE) partnership. The plan will be based on the FAO strategy and the needs will be assessed by a team of experts from FAO, OIE and IBAR.

FAO has provided UNSIC and UNDG with inputs for the U.N. plan in the form of an updated version of the Global Programme which reflects the current needs of Africa and prevention activities in Latin America. The Global Programme encompasses a detailed proposal for Africa, focusing on countries most in need. The U.N. plan will span a wide range of activities including animal health and biosecurity, human health, governance, coordination, livelihoods and compensation, continuity of services, and communication.