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FACT SHEET

Avian Influenza Response: Key Actions to Date

USAID is fully engaged in the U.S. Government's response to this threat by supporting prevention and containment efforts in affected countries and by working with developing nations around the globe to prepare for a possible pandemic. USAID is also working closely with international and private sector partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to ensure a well-coordinated and strategically sound response to this global threat.

Overview of USAID Funding to Date

Working closely with our counterparts at the U.S. Departments of State, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture, USAID committed \$22.1 million in fiscal year 2005 to support efforts to respond to avian influenza. This amount included:

\$13.7 million for Southeast Asia to help contain the further spread of H5N1 in animal populations, reduce the risk of human infections, and support pandemic planning and preparedness

More than \$8.5 million for countries in Europe, Eurasia, and Africa to support early surveillance and diagnosis and to strengthen prevention measures, including communications campaigns, in response to the new risks posed by the expanding animal epidemic

In all, the U.S. Government has pledged to provide more than \$334 million in grants and technical assistance to countries threatened by the virus. This assistance is targeted toward developing national preparedness plans, improving surveillance and response systems, training medical personnel, and supporting communications and public education programs. It includes an additional \$280 million in fiscal year 2006 emergency funding approved by Congress in late December 2005, with \$131.5 million for USAID.

Southeast Asia

These funds are being used to contain the further spread of avian influenza in animal populations; reduce the risk of human infections; and support pandemic planning and preparedness at the country and regional levels. Key activities include strengthening disease surveillance and laboratory diagnosis; training and equipping rapid response teams; and conducting targeted communications campaigns to change behaviors that facilitate the spread of avian influenza in animals and place humans at risk.



SOURCE: USAID/BEN ZINNER

Villagers and domesticated ducks rest in a backyard farm in Kampot Province, southern Cambodia, where the country's four confirmed human cases of H5N1 avian influenza have occurred since January 2005. Source: Ben Zinner/USAID

To minimize the risk of further spread in animal populations:

- In conjunction with FAO, USAID dedicated \$6 million of assistance for Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, and Vietnam to strengthen disease surveillance, laboratory diagnosis, and rapid containment of animal outbreaks. This funding is supporting efforts to train and equip rapid response teams; conduct poultry vaccination campaigns; strengthen national planning and pandemic preparedness; and promote public awareness. Funds are also working to bolster training for animal handlers and laboratory staff and to help detect outbreaks more quickly.
- In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and coordination with FAO, USAID provided \$1.5 million to supply expert technical assistance to contain and prevent animal outbreaks.

To reduce the risk of human infections:

- USAID dedicated more than \$2.8 million for communications campaigns in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, and Vietnam to reduce animal handling practices that place humans at risk and to engage private companies to provide additional resources and incentives for control efforts.
- With WHO, USAID committed more than \$1.6 million to enhance national planning efforts for avian influenza control and outbreak response and for strengthening human disease surveillance systems and laboratories. This assistance also supports the office of the new United Nations coordinator for avian influenza who will lead the efforts of WHO, FAO, and other United Nations agencies.
- In Indonesia, USAID is working with the U.S. Navy's Medical Research Unit to increase technical assistance for surveillance and laboratory analysis.

To further support pandemic planning and preparedness:

- USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance has prepositioned personal protective gear in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam for use in containing animal and human outbreaks of H5N1 infections. As H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks have begun to expand in animal populations beyond Southeast Asia and thus continue to threaten to spark a human flu pandemic, USAID has expanded its focus to support activities in other regions of the world that could be at risk.

Europe and Eurasia

In response to recent outbreaks in animal populations in Eastern Europe - including confirmed human cases in Turkey - USAID technical experts participated in an interagency emergency assessment team with the Departments of State, Health and Human Services and its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and USDA. The team, working with government ministries, WHO, FAO, and other U.S. partners, provided technical assistance to support surveillance and containment efforts in the region. In addition, the team visited Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine.

Based on the team's findings, USAID has already sent emergency shipments of personal protective equipment to the region. A total of 1,500 sets have been shipped to Armenia, 1,500 to Azerbaijan, and 2,000 to Georgia, of which 900 will be made available to support a rapid response regionally.

USAID has also sent a veterinary technical expert to Armenia and Moldova and is deploying an expert to Azerbaijan to provide short-term technical assistance to improve the rapid collection of animal samples and help implement procedures to strengthen surveillance and containment efforts.

USAID Missions in the Europe and Eurasia region (which reprogrammed approximately \$750,000 of their own funds to respond to the avian influenza emergency in late 2005) have assessed the readiness of countries in the region to respond to the threat and are providing technical assistance to develop and strengthen preparedness plans; conduct disease surveillance; and determine immediate needs to detect outbreaks and reduce the chance of further transmission.

In Romania, USAID launched a communications campaign and began to provide training and emergency diagnostic and response equipment for monitoring and controlling avian influenza outbreaks.

Africa

USAID Missions are providing assistance to host governments to convene donors, establish task forces, and develop pandemic preparedness plans in cooperation with other U.S. Government agencies, FAO, and WHO. In addition, USAID is redirecting its disease surveillance program to include a strong focus on detecting and diagnosing avian influenza.

USAID continues to work aggressively to address imminent risks, especially in countries along trade routes and the Rift Valley migratory bird routes, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

In collaboration with other U.S. Government agencies and in-country partners, such as FAO and the WHO Africa Regional Office, USAID has taken the lead in addressing the avian influenza threat in Africa. USAID Missions have designated specific points of contact for avian influenza and are supporting national efforts to conduct surveillance and prepare for outbreaks. The USAID Missions in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, and Senegal have helped coordinate national avian influenza task forces consisting of cross-sector representatives from ministries of health, agriculture, wildlife, and livestock, as well as NGOs and the private sector.

USAID's Missions in Tanzania and Ethiopia have reprogrammed \$675,000 of existing funds to conduct immediate surveillance and testing activities. In addition, eight countries and two regional offices are programming an additional \$1.5 million from the Tsunami Reconstruction and Relief Fund to bolster efforts to monitor and combat the spread of H5N1.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Through its 16 Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean, USAID is working with host governments and other partners - including WHO, the Pan American Health Organization, and FAO - to raise awareness and plan for a potential avian influenza pandemic. USAID Missions are working to assess the pandemic preparedness of host countries and are supporting technical consultations in cooperation with other U.S. Government agencies.

H5N1 has not been detected in any country in the Americas. Importation of H5N1 into the Latin America/Caribbean region via migratory birds - as occurred in Eastern Europe - is unlikely because the region is largely outside migratory bird routes likely to spread the virus. However, there is some concern that trade in live exotic or other commercial birds could introduce the virus.

The Fourth Summit of the Americas meeting, held in Argentina in November 2005, resulted in a commitment by participating nations to finalize flu pandemic preparedness plans by June 2006.

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