



USAID
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AVIAN INFLUENZA

Program Update: Pandemic Planning

In order to mitigate the consequences of a pandemic caused by a highly pathogenic influenza virus, USAID has developed an aggressive package of interventions geared toward pandemic prevention. Recognizing the need for countries to develop robust pandemic plans, USAID is supporting objectives outlined in the Declaration on Humanitarian Cooperation in Pandemic Preparedness and Response signed in October 2007 by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), agencies of the United Nations (U.N.) system, and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). This support includes increased provision of financial resources and technical assistance for pandemic plans in countries most susceptible to the effects of a pandemic. The singular objective of these efforts is to limit excess mortality during a pandemic.

To implement its ambitious agenda, USAID is providing up to \$30 million over the next three years to the IFRC and a group of private organizations, including the CORE Group, InterAction, and the Academy for Educational Development. In addition, USAID will grant up to \$35 million over the same period to support a coalition of U.N. agencies. Together, this innovative partnership will work with national government authorities in up to 25 countries that are considered the most vulnerable to the consequences of a pandemic. The partnership will provide assistance to help these countries develop comprehensive plans for mounting an effective humanitarian response during a pandemic.

In coordination with national governments, the partnership will map the resources available within each country to respond to the needs of affected communities and households. Existing guidelines for the treatment of influenza and other potentially fatal illnesses, such as bacterial pneumonia, malaria, HIV/AIDS, and chronic diseases, will then be adapted to meet the needs of each country. The partners will also help countries to develop a set of non-pharmaceutical interventions aimed at reducing transmission of the influenza virus. Large numbers of "first responders" drawn from national Red Cross/Red Crescent societies, NGOs, and U.N. agencies, in addition to other members of civil society and national and local government officials, will be trained. A series of simulation exercises will also be held to test the potential effectiveness of pandemic plans. In addition, USAID will seek to ensure that all affected communities continue to have secure access to food and water, and that individuals are able to resume their livelihoods as soon as possible following subsidence of a pandemic wave.

These activities build upon USAID's ongoing pandemic prevention efforts and commitment to strengthening national pandemic preparedness plans in Asia and the Near East, Africa, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. As its pandemic planning and preparedness program continues to expand to meet developing needs, USAID will continue to work closely with its partners to ensure that country-specific priorities are addressed and that national plans include built-in flexibility to accommodate the unpredictable nature of pandemic-capable viruses.



Zandra Andre/USAID

Children play in a rural Nigerian village during a field visit by health experts following outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in poultry in 2006. USAID's pandemic planning efforts are geared toward ensuring communities in areas most vulnerable to the effects of an influenza pandemic have access to food, water, and uninterrupted provision of care for other diseases, including HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.