



**International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza,
Hanoi, 20 – 21 April 2010**

Summary, Achievements and Next Steps

Report prepared by UNSIC

Summary

The 7th International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza (IMCAPI) was hosted by the Government of Vietnam on 19-21 April 2010. This conference brought together over five hundred delegates from seventy-one countries (including at least thirty delegates from the ministerial level), twenty-one international and regional organizations and twelve non-governmental organizations. Organized over three days, the first day of the conference was dedicated to technical discussions and the second and third days to ministerial discussions. The conference marked a significant turning point for tackling animal and pandemic influenza, moving from emergency response approaches to long term sustainable approaches.

Achievements:

- Conference objectives were achieved including Ministerial affirmation of the need to sustain efforts to address Highly Pathogenic Influenzas (including H5N1) and other high impact threats through one health strategies, as well as the importance of adequate readiness for pandemics and other high impact threats to human health through continued strengthening of institutional capacity for contingency planning and response at national, regional and global levels.
- Endorsement of the 'Hanoi Declaration' and validation of 'The Way Forward' Strategic Framework for Action.
- Preparation of documents to support conference discussions including the draft 2010 United Nations/World Bank Global Report on Animal and Pandemic Influenza;
- Strong interest in sustaining a global coordinated response to avian and pandemic influenza in the face of emerging disease threats, including a proposal from Mexico to host a 2011 meeting.

Next Steps:

- Maintain momentum, building on what has been achieved through existing systems, broadening collaboration and ensuring long term financial and political commitment;
- Maintain a sense of urgency to strengthen surveillance and response systems and pandemic preparedness capacity;
- Draw on established principles and technical knowledge through practical actions at local and national levels, with global leadership.

UNSIC Follow Up Plans:

- Finalize the United Nations/World Bank Global Report on Animal and Pandemic Influenza;
- Coordinate – as requested by UN System bodies – on options for supporting Member States as they take actions relevant to the Hanoi Declaration and the Conference Document 'The Way Forward: A Framework for Action'.

IMCAPI Overview

The Hanoi IMCAPI 2010 was the 7th in a series of inter-ministerial conferences that have taken place since 2004. Bringing together over five hundred delegates from around the world, this conference discussed the extensive knowledge that has been gained through global responses to influenza H5N1 and pandemic H1N1, and proposed ways forward to consolidate and sustain international efforts to control major animal and pandemic influenza risks beyond 2010. Presentations and discussions at the IMCAPI were focused around four main objectives:

Objective 1: Ministers reaffirm the need for sustained appropriate efforts to address Highly Pathogenic Influenzas (including H5N1), and other high impact health threats arising at the animal-human-environment interface between now and 2030, through one health strategies at national, regional and global levels.

Objective 2: Ministers reaffirm the importance of adequate readiness for pandemics and other high impact threats to human health between now and 2030 through continued strengthening of institutional capacity for contingency planning and response at national, regional and global levels.

Objective 3: Ministers agree the following options for a forward strategy (between now and 2030) to implement:

- Sustained and appropriate responses to Highly Pathogenic Animal Influenzas including H5N1;
- World-wide readiness to respond to pandemics and other high impact health threats arising at the animal-human-environment interface;
- National, regional and global capacity (including institutional mechanisms) to assess and address drivers for the emergence of high impact health threats (including zoonotic diseases) at the animal-human-environment interface

Objective 4: Ministers start to discuss how this forward strategy could be resourced, implemented and monitored.

Through both the Technical and Ministerial meetings, there was strong conference participation and robust discussion, demonstrating the strong interest and energy from countries and international organizations for sustaining the global coordinated response. The conference agenda focused on three technical streams, and provided analysis of the actions and institutional arrangements needed to sustain momentum. The following summarizes key messages that were articulated in the discussions:

1. The Way Forward: Sustainable responses to H5N1 HPAI and other zoonotic diseases.

IMCAPI participants noted with concern that the public health threat from H5N1 HPAI continues, and emphasized the importance of long term political commitment and leadership at all levels. Vietnam and other affected countries also noted the need to maintain healthy poultry populations to sustain livelihoods, and that countries need to not just continue but expand efforts from progressive control to eventual eradication of H5N1 HPAI in domestic poultry. Countries can draw on experiences and systems that have been developed through focused work on H5 to address other influenza viruses as well as other existing zoonotic diseases and emerging zoonotic pathogens. Participants noted that as long as the H5N1 HPAI viruses (and other influenza viruses) continue to circulate in poultry, the risk of a pandemic remains. This continuing threat demands a strengthened multisector pandemic preparedness. There is a need for increased focus on the animal-human interface to (i) delay the spread, (ii) reduce the impact and thus morbidity and mortality, and (iii) stop or slow down the emergence and occurrence of a new pandemic virus at this interface through improved surveillance, and sustained capacity building and training. Some of the constraints for control include: competition for scarce resources, ongoing weaknesses in governance, veterinary services and biosecurity measures, weak linkages with the private sector and the

inability to control movement of livestock. There was consensus that approaches need to be comprehensive involving the whole of society, and shifting from emergency responses to sustained efforts through one health approaches with more attention being given to the social, economic and livelihood aspects. Participants agreed that there was still much to be done, and that there was a need for sustained political and financial commitment and consolidation of efforts.

2. The Way Forward: Readiness for Pandemic and other high impact threats to human health.

Major achievements noted by IMCAPI participants included recognition that investments for preparing for H5N1 HPAI were helpful for the response to Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 such as enhanced communication for risk reduction, surveillance mechanisms and laboratory capacity. There was recognition of the substantial and unprecedented levels of global cooperation, although it was also clear that responses have been complicated for many countries with inadequate health services. Several challenges were identified including the need for broad-based surveillance for zoonotic diseases, maintaining interest and investment in H5N1 and other threats at the animal-human interface, culturally adequate IEC approaches, and timely vaccine production and deployment. Key areas identified for the way forward included multisectoral approaches, moving towards all-hazard approaches and the need to avoid complacency, while sustaining momentum and broadening collaboration.

3. Working more effectively at the animal-human-environment interface: Developing a One Health Approach.

Participants discussed the issues of interacting health domains and drivers for the emergence of diseases including increasing levels of environmental, population, food and institutional risk. The risks involved in the emergence and spread of infectious diseases are not well understood; further work is needed to understand and respond to these risks more effectively. With growing acceptance of One Health approaches that were initially proposed in the ‘One World One Health Strategic Framework’ at Sharm el Sheikh (2008), there was strong recognition for the need to improve interactions between key sectors, move beyond a single disease focus, build networks and support capacity building based on lessons learned from H5N1 HPAI over the past few years. Key actions to be encouraged include addressing poverty reduction and sustainable development with equity – particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized – and increasing resilience, strengthening data collection and the evidence base, strengthening communication in all its forms, and ensuring better integration of the Paris principles. There were calls for sustainable and predictable resources, systems strengthening, multi-sectoral integration and cooperation across governments, NGOs, UN system and the private sector, and expansion of regional cooperation and networking.

4. Open House Session for Ministerial Discussions on the Way Forward

Many countries expressed strong support for the Hanoi Declaration during the Open House discussion session, and the Government of Mexico indicated its interest in hosting a global meeting in the future. There were calls for more capacity building support and concrete structures for developing countries with limited resources to prepare for a pandemic: developing poor countries “need action and need it fast”. African delegates noted the high burden of preventable, treatable and neglected diseases which continue to affect development of the continent (eg HIV, Rift Valley and Ebola), and the increasing risks due to population increases, climate change, lack of resources, technology and privatization. Other delegates raised concerns about compensation policies to ensure compliance with reporting, the need to ensure strong collaboration between agriculture and public health sectors and the need for more resources to address systems through a One Health approach.

5. Actions and Institutional Arrangements Needed to Sustain Momentum

The World Bank provided a summary of incentives and investments for progress, noting the outcomes of the flexible financing framework established since Beijing in January 2006. Notable points included that after 4 years of implementation with USD3.9 billion committed, USD 2.7 billion has been disbursed with 70% of this funding going to countries, 20% to regional organizations and 10% at the global level. The number of donors has dropped significantly from 35 donors to 4 due to a gradual decline in donor interest, though there was some recovery in interest with financing for H1N1 specific purposes. Forward estimates for external financing needs were provided, and it was noted that a financing gap continues in Africa. Contributions to discussions from Ministerial and other delegations confirmed this, with World Bank calls for a longer term funding mechanism, and broad support for greater focus on vulnerable groups and strengthening of weak emerging health systems.

Achievements

Endorsement of the Hanoi Declaration, which:

- Reaffirms the importance of international and regional cooperation, timely and transparent communication, and capacity building for health systems capable of addressing emerging threats as well as ensuring effective pandemic readiness and response across different sectors.
- Recognizes significant results achieved since January 2006 in Beijing including the development and implementation of national integrated action plans within the strategic framework of the IHR, FAO and OIE.
- Recognizes the need to learn lessons from responses to H5N1, pandemic (H1N1) 2009 as well as significant learning events, reviews and recent assessments.
- Calls for increased efforts to strengthen early detection and preparedness for, and rapid responding to future events through cross sectoral understanding with a focus on least developed countries, vulnerable groups and the role of local communities.
- Calls for concerted worldwide efforts to better understand the emergence of disease threats at the animal-human-environment interface and the need for multisectoral actions to reduce such threats.

Technical discussions which validated the document 'The Way Forward': a Framework for Action and its six expected outcomes:

1. Progressive control of H5N1 HPAI – with the goal of eventual elimination (with ultimate eradication) from domestic animal populations
2. Maintain vigilance for H5N1 HPAI and other influenza viruses that have pathogenic potential in humans
3. Reduce the likelihood that infectious diseases like H1N1 emerge at the animal-human-ecosystem interface through evidence-based work on drivers of disease emergence.
4. Build systems to limit the impact of diseases emerging at the animal-human-ecosystem interface: the One Health approach.
5. Develop local, national and global capacities for responding to pandemics to reach IHR 2005 standards.
6. Incorporate capacity for multisector pandemic responses within disaster preparedness and response strategies.

Next Steps at International, Regional and National Levels

- Need to maintain momentum building on what has been achieved through existing systems, broadening collaboration and ensuring long term financial and political commitment.
- Need to build on and continue work to ensure that there remains a sense of urgency to strengthen surveillance and response systems and pandemic preparedness capacity.

- The way forward needs to draw on established principles and technical knowledge, through practical actions, with global leadership based on initiatives at local and national levels.
- Key actions identified by participants at the conference included:
 - Establishing country specific strategies (with goals, objectives, modus operandi and timelines) for the progressive control of H5N1 HPAI (in affected countries) and ultimate eradication of the virus from domestic poultry;
 - Commitment for continued collaboration to make the one health approach a reality and to translate high level agreed approaches into practical and implementable actions;
 - Continued strengthening of animal health and public health systems;
 - Promoting healthy poultry production and trade for increased biosecurity;
 - Developing further tools and messages to support effective risk and behaviour change communication interventions as well as communication targeted for policy makers and sectoral stakeholders;
 - Ensuring research and evaluation of pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical interventions;
 - Ensuring explicit commitment to strengthen resilience of vulnerable populations;
 - Strengthening data collection and the evidence base, generating and promoting multi-disciplinary research, and strengthening trust through thematic and regional networks;
 - Ensuring better integration of the Paris principles for improved coordination and collaboration.

UNSIK Follow Up Plans:

- The final UNSIK/World Bank Global Report 2010 will be available within 2 months incorporating the 'Hanoi Declaration', 'The Way Forward: Framework for Action' and outcomes from the Technical and Ministerial Meetings.