

## **Final Narrative and Financial Report**

*1 January 2008 – 31 December 2008*

- 1. Project Title:** Support to the UN System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC)
- 2. Period under report:** 1 January to 31 December 2008
- 3. Amount (US\$) received 2008:** 3,002,695
- 4. Date Report Submitted:** 26 February 2009

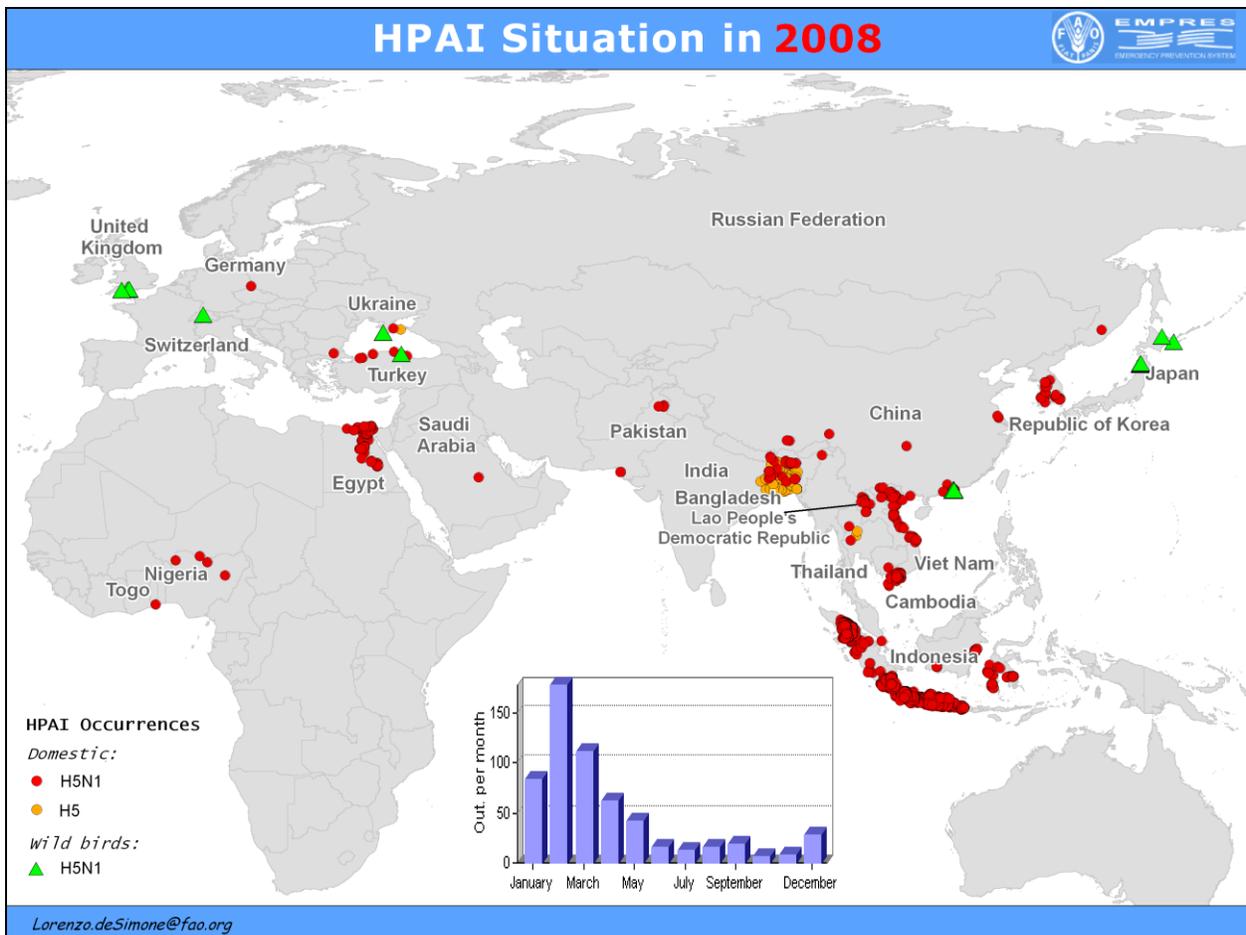
### **AREAS OF SUPPORT**

- 1. TRACKING, ASSESSING AND ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF BOTH NATIONAL EFFORTS AND EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE**
- 2. COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE AT COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS**
- 3. GLOBAL READINESS TO MITIGATE THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC**
- 4. SUPPORT FOR HARMONIZED COMMUNICATION**
- 5. OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

It is now nearly five years since H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) spread across Southeast Asia and then to the rest of Asia, Europe and Africa. The rapid spread, significant socioeconomic losses, and the potential threat of a human pandemic influenza triggered concerted global action to control the disease and prepare for the next influenza pandemic.

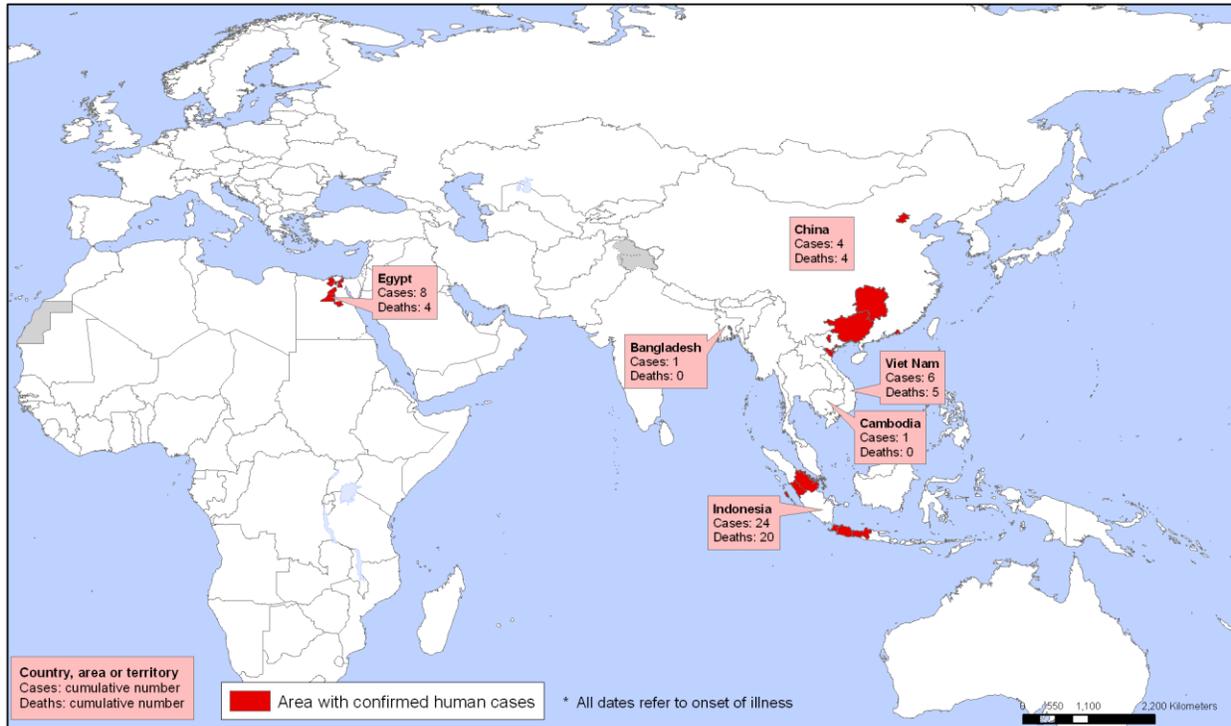
An analysis of the global situation in 2008 indicates fewer outbreaks of HPAI and fewer infected countries as compared to 2006 and 2007. However, despite these positive developments, the virus remains entrenched in several countries and the threat of further outbreaks of HPAI in poultry (and sporadic cases in humans) persists. The disease appears enzootic in Indonesia and it continues to resurface in Pakistan, parts of China, Bangladesh and periodically in India (West Bengal), Thailand, Lao PDR, Vietnam and the Republic of Korea. Infection is endemic in Egypt, and while the overall epidemiological situation in Sub Saharan Africa seems to have improved, Nigeria and Togo reported outbreaks in 2008. In Europe there continues to be sporadic, though well contained, cases of wild and domestic birds infected with H5N1 and other less pathogenic avian influenza.



Although there continues to be an improvement in disease awareness, it is likely that outbreaks/cases of HPAI are still under-estimated and underreported globally because of limitations in the capacity of veterinary services to implement adequate disease surveillance. However, studies suggest that HPAI control succeeds when strategies are properly implemented, and sustained vigilance and continued investment in both surveillance and capacity to respond to HPAI is required world-wide.

Currently, H5N1 still causes infections in people relatively rarely, however when they occur, such infections are frequently fatal. Experts at World Health Organization (WHO) and elsewhere believe that the world is closer to another influenza pandemic than at any time since 1968, when the last of the previous century's three pandemics occurred. WHO reports that at the end of 2008, a total of 395 people were infected with the H5N1 virus, 250 of whom died. The below WHO map highlights areas that faced confirmed human cases of H5N1 in 2008.

Affected areas with confirmed human cases of H5N1 from 1 January to 31 December 2008\*



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. © WHO 2009. All rights reserved

Data Source: WHO  
Map Production: Public Health Information and Geographic Information System (GIS)  
World Health Organization

## THE SENIOR UN SYSTEM INFLUENZA COORDINATOR

The UN System Influenza Coordinator<sup>1</sup> was appointed by the UN Secretary General in September 2005 to help make the UN system work to its best effect to support national, regional and global efforts to address the threats posed by avian and human influenza<sup>2</sup>. Through the course of 2008, the Coordinator's work was principally focused on:

- **Global reporting on progress and funding**, particularly through stewardship of the fourth *UN-World Bank Global Progress Report on Responses to Avian Influenza and State of Pandemic Readiness*, which was published in October 2008.
- **Interagency Coordination** through managing the interagency Technical Working Group on Influenza, chairing the Management Committee of the Central Fund for Influenza Action, supporting the Deputy Secretary-General's Influenza Steering Committee and assisting in the production of the strategy document *Contributing to "One World One Health": A Strategic framework for Reducing Risks of Infectious Disease at the Animal-Human-Ecosystems Interface*, which was published in October 2008.
- **Support to inter-governmental processes**, including support to international groups such as International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI) and regional organizations such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as support for the organization of the Sixth International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza.
- **Support to the UN System's own Preparedness Efforts**, including support to the OCHA Pandemic Influenza Contingency (PIC) team and the testing and refinement of a Concept of Operations for the UN System.
- **Coordinated UN System support for avian and human influenza action in-country by national authorities and other stakeholders**, which included monitoring of progress in country with intermittent country visits.
- **Coordination of Communications** through continued involvement in the UN Communication's Group Taskforce on AHI.

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF UNSIK

### 1. TRACKING, ASSESSING AND ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF BOTH NATIONAL EFFORTS AND EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

For the past several years, UNSIK, together with the World Bank, has monitored and reported on the global response to avian influenza and the status of pandemic preparedness. In 2008 the **Fourth UN System-World Bank Global Progress Report on Responses to Avian Influenza and the status of Pandemic Preparedness**<sup>3</sup> was produced and presented at the October International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt). This report focused on progress with responses to avian influenza and pandemic preparedness particularly between June

<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to as the 'Coordinator'

<sup>2</sup> Given the continued need for influenza coordination within the UN system, at a 16 January 2009 meeting of the Deputy Secretary-General's Influenza Steering Committee, it was agreed that UNSIK would continue this work through the end of 2010.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.undg.org/docs/9457/Progress-Report-PRINT.pdf>

2007 and June 2008, and also reviewed the last three years. The report was based on information provided by national authorities from 148 countries in response to an UNSIC survey questionnaire, case studies, interviews and reports from UN system bodies and other partners, and financial data collected by the World Bank via a donor polling exercise.

Findings of the report indicated that surveillance capacities have improved significantly over the past three years and awareness and incentives for reporting outbreaks have grown. Significant efforts are still needed in biosecurity, and fundamental behavior change by poultry owners/producers remains a long term objective. There remains a need for high political commitment to improve and invest in animal and public health systems. Many countries have made substantial progress for their national pandemic preparedness. However, many of the plans have not yet been fully endorsed or made operational (particularly at the local level) and preparations in sectors beyond health need to be strengthened. Whilst the threat remains, the report concludes that the world is significantly better prepared to respond to HPAI and to mitigate the impacts of the next influenza pandemic.

The report also recognized the continued need for advocacy, support and monitoring of preparations to ensure the capacity to respond to the threat of HPAI (and in many cases other zoonosis) is strengthened and made sustainable. In addition, it noted the importance of reviewing, adapting and updating pandemic preparations - which will not only be of benefit in the event of pandemic but also in case of other emergencies.

The Progress Report included several recommendations for next steps, including:

1. National authorities should
  - continue to generate and disseminate knowledge about the potential threats of HPAI and other animal diseases, and approaches to pandemic preparedness;
  - maintain vigilance so that existing and emerging pathogens are quickly identified and contained;
  - encourage transparency, increased investment, and political commitment to animal health services so as to ensure animal as well as human health security; and
  - ensure that surveillance, preparation and response measures are continually integrated, tested, reviewed and updated.
2. The desired level of pandemic preparedness should be agreed among all concerned entities at national level (with the help of international entities). Progress against this standard should be carefully recorded – at national and local level, testing should be repeated at intervals and the deficiencies identified should be systematically remedied.
3. During 2009, protocols, frameworks and indicators for longer term multi-sectoral pandemic preparedness should be developed, and mechanisms proposed for them to be funded adequately (as part of multi-hazard disaster preparedness) within the context of the International Health Regulations (2005).
4. Nations should take urgent steps to agree on, and pursue, a strategic framework for the better prevention of, preparation for and response to the health, social, economic and political impacts of infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics emerging at the animal-human-ecosystem-interface.

## 2. COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE AT COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

Throughout 2008, UNSIK continued its efforts to encourage UN and partner stakeholders at all levels to work in synergy for pandemic preparedness with a focus on continuity of essential services and mitigation of the social, economic and political impact of a severe pandemic. UNSIK's Asia-Pacific Regional Hub (APRH) based in Bangkok continued to facilitate coordination with UN system and other stakeholders at regional and country levels in Asia-Pacific region in order to bring about harmonization and synergy of activities on avian and pandemic influenza, while simultaneously maximizing efficiency and avoiding duplication, particularly in terms of support to national governments. Much of the progress made in 2008, evident by reduced numbers of HPAI outbreaks, was due to joint efforts and focused work by many individuals and organizations at country, regional and global levels.

### 2.1 COUNTRY-LEVEL COORDINATION

Throughout 2008, UNSIK continued to place importance on the provision of support to UN system action at the country level, and the role of UN Resident Coordinators and avian and human influenza (AHI) Focal Points in promoting coordinated UN action as well as advocating for high level engagement of national counterparts. The Coordinator undertook several trips to the field in 2008, including an early mission to Indonesia. Accompanied by the Head of APRH, the Coordinator worked with representatives of WHO, FAO and UNICEF, colleagues from the UN Country Team, donor representatives, Ministers and other government officials to review challenges in the control and identify priorities for their response of HPAI.

In the Asia Pacific region, APRH regularly liaised and shared information with the AHI focal points, and information was also shared in support of the policy making at the Headquarters level. To support the UN Country Teams, APRH helped to develop joint UN system country level action plans and to establish jointly agreed coordination mechanisms in high-risk countries. APRH also recognized the challenge of frequent staff turnover at the country level, often resulting in loss of institutional memory, which is further complicated by competing priorities within AHI Focal Point portfolios. Consequently, APRH intensified documenting and sharing of best practices, experience gathered and lessons learned, also placing increasing attention on briefing of new AHI Focal Points.

Through country visits and other forms of close support, APRH supported the process of revising coordination TORs and deliverables, and developing a consolidated UN system report and joint action plan in Indonesia, providing support to the AHI Coordinator in particular. APRH participated in a Joint Implementation Review processes in Lao PDR, and provided advice on transitioning AHI coordination as part of the broader disaster management portfolio. During 2008 specific support was also provided to Cambodia, China and Vietnam.

As a follow-up to the Study on Coordination of AHI Activities at Country-Level<sup>4</sup> commissioned by UNSIK and finalized in 2007, an **AHI Coordination Resource Guide**<sup>5</sup> for staff in UNCTs was

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.undg.org/docs/8765/070220\\_Final-AHI-Coordination-Report.pdf](http://www.undg.org/docs/8765/070220_Final-AHI-Coordination-Report.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://un-influenza.org/node/2673>

finalized and has been published and distributed. APRH also published a **Regional Simulation Exercise Booklet**<sup>6</sup>, which is a reference guide containing entries from approximately 20 different countries and organizations sharing experiences of pandemic simulation exercises.

## 2.2 SUPPORTING COORDINATED ACTION AT REGIONAL LEVEL

UNSIK-APRH engaged in effective coordination with South East Asia and Pacific regional offices of UN agencies involved in AHI work, sharing information and organizing meetings with other UN agencies to obtain knowledge on countries' status and preparedness. In March, APRH organized a regional UN System Workshop on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, which was chaired by the UNSIK Coordinator. As the sixth workshop since 2005, this event focused on longer term approaches to better animal health and reduced risks of human impact of animal diseases, on pandemic preparedness, coordination and global trends. The workshop gathered more than 100 participants from 17 UN Country Teams in the Asia-Pacific Region, as well as from regional UN offices and UN headquarters. A session on partnerships between the UN and other stakeholders was also attended by regional donors and NGOs. Two regional UN system meetings on AHI later in the year identified several potential priority areas for future work, including:

- Identification of gaps at the country level, tracking of progress and evaluation of results;
- Development of joint interventions, in particular those linked with multi-sectoral planning, testing of the plans and adoption of multi-hazard approaches, in consultation with partners;
- Transition from an emergency response to longer-term approaches;
- Knowledge management.

APRH also coordinated with regional donors and other stakeholders by organizing donor meetings and sharing information on regular basis. APRH maintained close cooperation with key regional and sub-regional inter-governmental organizations such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), helping to develop a toolkit on Practical Management Strategies for AI, designed to function as a web-based resource center for AI and Emerging Infectious Diseases prevention and control. APRH worked closely with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) to produce a publication on pandemic simulation exercises that have taken place in the Asia-Pacific region. APRH also continued its close work with the Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance (MBDS), facilitating formal and informal interactions among key stakeholders.

## 2.3 COORDINATION AMONG UN SYSTEM AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES, AND THEIR PARTNERS

In an ongoing effort to ensure complementary AHI strategies and synergy within the UN system and other partners, in 2008 UNSIK continued to facilitate and chair the inter-agency Technical Working Group (TWG). Composed of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, Departments of the UN Secretariat, the International Organization for Migration, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the IFRC, IMF and the World Bank, the TWG met four times in 2008, maintaining itself as a

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.un-influenza.org/regions/asia/simex>

fruitful forum for information sharing and policy discussions. TWG members were engaged in major aspects of coordinating the international response to avian influenza and pandemic preparedness, including the production of the UN-WB Global Progress Report, UN System contingency planning and preparations for the Sixth International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. The TWG's work also laid the ground for decisions of the Deputy Secretary-General's Steering Committee on Influenza, chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary General and composed of the heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes, the UN Secretariat, the OIE, the World Bank and the UN System Influenza Coordinator. During 2008, the Steering Committee continued to provide high-level policy guidance and advocacy for concerted action of the UN system and its partners.

### 2.3.1 CONTRIBUTING TO "ONE WORLD ONE HEALTH"

In 2008, UNSIIC worked closely with FAO, OIE, WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank to develop the strategic document *Contributing to "One World One Health": A Strategic framework for Reducing Risks of Infectious Disease at the Animal–Human–Ecosystems Interface*<sup>7</sup>. This document was made in response to recommendations from the 2007 International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (New Delhi), suggesting that the international community draw on experiences with HPAI and develop a medium term strategy to address emerging infectious diseases (EID), under the broad perspective of 'One World One Health' principles.

The strategic framework focuses on EID at the animal–human–ecosystems interface, where there is the potential for epidemics and pandemics that could result in significant and wide-ranging impacts at national, regional and global levels. Its goal is to diminish the risk and minimize the global impact of epidemics and pandemics due to EID through enhancing disease intelligence, surveillance and emergency response systems at national, regional and international levels, strengthening public health services, animal health services, and effective national communication strategies. National authorities would play a key role in devising, financing and implementing these interventions, and successful implementation will contribute to the overall goal of improving public health, food safety and security and the livelihoods of poor farming communities, as well as protecting the health of ecosystems. Five strategic elements of this work include:

- Building robust and well-governed public and animal health systems compliant with the WHO International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) and OIE international standards, through the pursuit of long-term interventions;
- Preventing regional and international crises by controlling disease outbreaks through improved national and international emergency response capabilities;
- Better addressing the concerns of the poor by shifting the focus from developed to developing economies, from potential to actual disease problems, and through a focus on the drivers of a broader range of locally important diseases;
- Promoting wide-ranging collaboration across sectors and disciplines;
- Developing rational and targeted disease control programmes through the conduct of strategic research.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.undg.org/docs/9464/OWOH\\_14Oct08.pdf](http://www.undg.org/docs/9464/OWOH_14Oct08.pdf)

The Strategy document was presented at the Sixth International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza in Egypt in October 2008, and was well-received by government representatives and other participants. It was agreed that further technical analysis and political debate is needed for further development and implementation of the strategic framework. Work with national authorities on the strategic document will continue throughout 2009, with the aim of making long-term political and financial commitments for validation, implementation, and monitoring of the Strategy.

### **2.3.2 THE UN SYSTEM CONSOLIDATED ACTION PLAN FOR AVIAN AND HUMAN INFLUENZA**

The first *UN System Consolidated Action Plan for Avian and Human Influenza (UNCAPAHI)*<sup>8</sup> was published in July 2006; this document described how the UN agencies, funds and programmes work together and support national planning and preparedness efforts. Throughout 2008, this document served as a basis for donor funding made available through the UN Central Fund for Influenza Action. Toward the end of 2008, UNSIC began efforts to update and revise the UNCAPAHI, identifying seven strategic objectives that cover the entire scope of AHI action while taking into account the changing environment and the increasing recognition that more attention must be paid to multi-sector pandemic preparedness. This work will continue through the first quarter of 2009.

### **2.3.3 THE UN CENTRAL FUND FOR INFLUENZA ACTION**

The UN Central Fund for Influenza Action (CFIA) was established in November 2006 to help enable donors to pool their resources and support urgent unfunded and under-funded priority activities within the strategic framework of the Consolidated Action Plan (UNCAPAHI). The CFIA is governed by an inter-agency Management Committee composed of focal points for participating UN Organizations, donors and the World Bank as a permanent observer, and chaired by the UNSIC Coordinator. The Management Committee reviews and approves project submissions by participating UN Organizations.

The CFIA's portfolio grew from US\$ 4 million in 2007 to US\$ 40.6 million by the end of 2008, thanks to generous contributions from the United States, Spain and Norway. Much work was accomplished through the CFIA in 2008. The first Consolidated Annual Progress Report on Activities implemented under the CFIA, covering January through December 2007, was produced in May 2008. Over the course of the year, the CFIA Management Committee met two times (in February and November) and approved US\$ 23.5 million in funding for 20 projects. Agencies that received funding in 2008 include ICAO, ILO, IOM, OCHA, UNHCR, UNWTO, and WFP. These agencies produced periodic updates on the progress of their project implementation, which are available on the CFIA website<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=52>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.undp.org/mdtf/influenza/overview.shtml>

## 2.4 MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE LINKS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-UN STAKEHOLDERS

Throughout 2008 UNSIC continued its engagement with NGOs and other non-UN stakeholders, including the World Bank, with which UNSIC co-produced the fourth *UN-World Bank Global Progress Report on Responses to Avian Influenza and State of Pandemic Readiness*. In the Asia Region, UNSIC-APRH also worked closely with development banks, particularly the Asian Development Bank, which teamed up with UNSIC to track donor funding in the Asia-Pacific region. APRH also supported several World Bank efforts in the region (including Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam), and dedicated part of the March regional UN system workshop (mentioned in section 2.2) for discussions on the UN-World Bank partnership and collaboration, providing opportunities to discuss country level successes and constraints.

APRH also provided support to IFRC in the organization, chairing and planning of the future direction and continuity of the Monthly Regional AHI Inter-agency Coordination Forum. APRH supported the establishment of a Coordination Core Group to compliment and strengthen the focus of the regional coordination mechanism, consisting of nongovernmental organizations (AED, ADPC, IFRC), academia (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine), private sector (Nestle), UN (FAO, UNSIC APRH) and OIE.

## 2.5 SUPPORTING INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

Since October 2005, high-level inter-governmental meetings involving the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI) have been providing political backing for integrated national influenza programmes and support for regional and international agencies. In 2008, UNSIC helped prepare for and support the **Sixth International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza**, which was hosted in October by the Government of Egypt in cooperation with IPAPI, the United States, the European Commission and the international agencies FAO, WHO, OIE, UNICEF, and the World Bank. With nearly 500 people, representing 112 countries and 24 regional and international organizations participating in the Conference, the level of participation underlined the continued relevance and interest in the challenges faced in relation to Avian and Pandemic Influenza.

During the conference, ministers and senior officials addressed three overall challenges:

1. How best to ensure that the world is ready to cope with an influenza pandemic and diseases that can trigger other unforeseen health events?
2. How to sustain efforts to control HPAI, especially in poultry; and eventually to eradicate it?
3. How to initiate longer term action in response to infectious diseases that emerge at the interface between animals and humans, within different ecosystems, that are capable of causing severe damage and affecting livelihoods?

While the objective of the conference was political in nature, the UN System and partners provided critical technical input, which fed into panel discussions and underpinned political considerations. UNSIC worked with the UN System and partners to produce two previously mentioned documents, which served as centerpieces of the conference:

1. UNSIC and the World Bank produced the ‘*Fourth UN-World Bank Progress Report on Responses to Avian Influenza and Status of Pandemic Preparedness*’
2. FAO, OIE, WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank and UNSIC developed the medium- to longer term strategy ‘*Contributing to One World, One Health – A Strategic Framework for Reducing Risk of Infectious Diseases at the Animal-Human-Ecosystems Interface*’

Representatives from the Government of Egypt, UN Systems agencies, the World Bank and partner organizations, together with some of the session chairs, worked together to prepare inputs for the Government’s final statement which was delivered at the end of the conference. The statement summarized main outcomes and conclusions and included the following observations:

- Participants acknowledged that substantial progress has been made in the past three years with regards to combating Avian Influenza and preparing for an influenza pandemic and identified priority actions. They appreciated that as compared with the two previous years, in 2008 there were fewer reports of outbreaks in animals and infections in humans and fewer newly infected countries. However, participants emphasized the need to sustain global efforts and remain vigilant. It was perceived as a unique opportunity to eradicate the H5N1 virus in poultry in the short to medium term, and to build upon the tools and platforms which have enabled this success to address broader global threats. Participants also expressed determination to continue efforts for multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-country pandemic preparedness as the risk of a pandemic remains unchanged.
- Participants indicated a wish to pursue the medium- to longer-term approach, building upon the Avian and Pandemic Influenza efforts and addressing risks associated with emerging diseases of animal origin, and welcomed the Strategic Framework ‘Contributing to One World One Health’. The discussions during the conference presented an important first step; additional technical analysis and political debate will continue for its further development and possible implementation.
- Participants reiterated the factors for success in responding to avian influenza that emerged in 2006 and which are valid for responding to other emerging infectious diseases, furthering ‘One World One Health’ and preparing for a pandemic, which include:
  - Sustained engagement of political leaders;
  - Rapid surge capacity to increase the deployment of skilled professional response teams;
  - Sustained collaborative action across government ministries, including joint training programmes and collaboration between animal and human health research laboratories;
  - Continuous and effective engagement of the private sector and civil society;
  - Functioning systems to ensure incentives and compensation for economic losses;
  - Involvement of communities and decision makers through integrated, sustained and transparent communication, and
  - The importance of research, product development and technology transfer was added as a seventh factor.

- Overall, strong emphasis was placed on ways for taking this work forward in 2009 and beyond. Recognizing that societies derive many benefits from both HPAI control and pandemic preparedness efforts, delegates reaffirmed the need for a continuing spirit of international partnership and equity, transparent sharing of information, and more equitable access to benefits, standardization of indicators of progress and a greater focus on quantitative results, more involvement of the private sector and civil society, and continued engagement of regional organizations in the priority areas.
- While the conference was not specifically designed for donor contributions, a session was allocated for those countries wishing to announce financial assistance. The USA, Japan and Norway pledged a total of more than USD 350 million, bringing the cumulative total of international assistance pledged since January 2006 to more than USD 3 billion.

At the close of the Conference, the Government of Vietnam proposed the host the 7<sup>th</sup> International Ministerial Conference in early 2010.

### **3. GLOBAL READINESS TO MITIGATE THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC**

Following the decision in the 16 November 2007 Meeting of the Deputy Secretary-General's Steering Committee, the Pandemic Influenza Contingency (PIC) Team has been incorporated into the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) as a special project. However, UNSIC and PIC continued to work closely together, supporting both UN and national authorities' plans for continuity of essential functions during a pandemic.

#### **3.1 ENSURING OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM IN THE EVENT OF A PANDEMIC**

In an effort to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the UN System during a pandemic, and ultimately to test and improve the '**Concept of Operations for the UN system in an influenza pandemic**' (CONOPS)<sup>10</sup>, a table top simulation exercise was conducted on 19 June 2008 in Geneva. UNSIC worked closely with the PIC team on the exercise, during which senior staff from 15 organizations including OCHA, WHO, WFP, FAO, the UN World Tourism Organization and UNICEF participated. Following this simulation, CONOPS was revised and these changes were subsequently endorsed by the Deputy Secretary General's Steering Committee. As also agreed in the simulation exercise, the CONOPS will be supplemented by the development of an implementation plan to provide details on how to operationalize it and set out the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of different agencies and coordinating bodies (work is currently underway by PIC). On 29 October 2008, PIC and IFRC also convened a table top pandemic preparedness exercise which included 23 international NGOs, Red Cross/Crescent Movement and UN organizations.

#### **3.2 SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES' PANDEMIC CONTINGENCY PLANNING AND SIMULATIONS**

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=52>

In its research for *Fourth UN-World Bank Global Progress Report on Responses to Avian Influenza and State of Pandemic Readiness*, UNSIK found that there is now worldwide recognition of the need to prepare for an influenza pandemic. This is considered a significant achievement in that only 5 years ago, the world was largely unaware of and unprepared for the threat. Between June 2007 and June 2008, substantial and significant progress was made in pandemic preparedness. The number of countries that developed a pandemic preparedness plan increased, and more countries conducted simulation exercises of their plans. However, many plans remain unendorsed at the highest political level and lessons from simulations are not being included in plan revisions –indicating that many plans are not legally or logistically feasible.

As previously noted, UNSIK’s APRH also worked closely with UN Country Teams, NGOs and Governments in the Asia Pacific region to strengthen pandemic preparedness efforts.

#### **4. SUPPORT FOR HARMONIZED COMMUNICATION**

In 2008 UNSIK continued to manage the UN system web portal on avian and human pandemic influenza<sup>11</sup>. This website provides a single entry point for AHI information for the whole UN system, and links to existing information on websites of the various UN agencies, funds and programmes as well as their partners. The site is actively used as a clearinghouse for all UN system information regarding bird flu, including news on outbreaks, trainings and events.

UNSIK also continued to facilitate communications work on the wider UN response to Avian and Human Influenza through participation in the UN Communication’s Group Taskforce on AHI, which is led by the UN Department of Public Information and includes WHO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNSIK, DPKO and UNFPA. This continued to be an effective platform for sharing communications activities and experiences.

A major function of UNSIK-APRH continued to be the enhancement of information sharing with county level and regional level UN colleagues, and as appropriate, with regional donors and NGOs, in UN system in the region. In 2008 APRH and the regional inter-agency avian and pandemic influenza team launched a regional Asia-Pacific web-page<sup>12</sup>.

#### **5. OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION**

In 2008, UNSIK was composed of a small team of ten people, based in New York, Geneva and a regional support team based in Asia (Bangkok). The UNSIK team included seven international staff on secondment from the Governments of Japan, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, the Asia Development Bank and UN Agencies (UNDP, WFP and WHO).

The Coordinator continued to report to the UN Deputy Secretary General and UNSIK was administered by UNOPS and UNDP. The Coordinator and the UNSIK team are funded exclusively

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<sup>11</sup> <http://un-influenza.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://un-influenza.org/regions/asia/>

through voluntary contributions, and donors who supported UNSIIC in 2008 included Canada and the United States. A complete overview of donor support can be found in Annex 1.

## 5.1 EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF UNSIIC

Upon request by its donors, in 2008 an external evaluation<sup>13</sup> of UNSIIC was commissioned to assess UNSIIC's effectiveness in fulfilling its objectives of coordinating UN system's influenza action. The overall assessment of the evaluation concluded that "UNSIIC's performance has been excellent overall in delivering against its Terms of Reference and the corresponding Workplan. Despite being established for less than three years, the outputs have been impressive." It cited a number of interviewees who felt that "coordination of the UN on AHI was among the most successful examples of coordination in their experience, and was a clear example of what the UN was capable of if it lived up to the ideals of 'delivering as one'."

The evaluation highlighted several positive outcomes of UNSIIC's work, including:

- Establishing the UN's leadership role in AHI and pandemic preparedness;
- Strengthening coordination at global, regional and country level both within the UN system and with external partners & catalyzing action between non-traditional partners within and beyond the UN system, and with the World Bank;
- Raising the profile of AHI within a number of national governments in an attempt to galvanize response and preparedness;
- Helping the UN system and partners to raise pledges of over \$2.3 billion from donors & providing support to inter-governmental conferences in Beijing, Vienna, Bamako and New Delhi to make real practical progress on AHI;
- Stimulating a culture of business/operational continuity planning within the UN system, with UNCT pandemic contingency plans developed rapidly for most countries with UNSIIC and PIC support.

While the overall assessment of UNSIIC was a positive one, the evaluation also identified areas where there have been challenges and gives a number of recommendations. UNSIIC has already taken many measures to address these recommendations, and will continue to incorporate them in UNSIIC's future work.

The evaluation report concluded that the UNSIIC approach has relevance to other complex areas of multi-sectoral work where there is a major global political profile, a wide range of stakeholders, and an urgent need to work in a more coordinated way. In recognition of this success, in 2008 Dr. Nabarro was also appointed as the Coordinator for the UN System High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (a responsibility maintained in addition to ongoing work as UN System Coordinator on Avian and Pandemic Influenza).

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.undg.org/docs/9411/UNSIIC-evaluation-final-report-submitted-July-22-2008.pdf>

## 6. Financial Report

### Report on Expenditure (January – December 2008)

Descriptive	Expenditure
1. Coordination	978,693
2. Contingency Planning	403,756
3. Monitoring and Assessment of Impact	211,345
4. Harmonized Communications	135,976
5. UNSIK Office Management	473,190
6. Resource Mobilization	43,468
7. Food Security	410,652
UNOPS Programme Management Support (F&A)	212,394
Total	2,869,474

## ANNEX 1

CASH CONTRIBUTIONS 2006 - 2008  
(Gross Contributions, USD)

Donor	2006 Contributions	2007 Contributions	2008 Contributions <sup>14</sup>
US (USAID)	800,000	990,100	1,980,200
Canada (CIDA)	888,800	1,724,138	1,022,495
UK (DFID)	380,952		
Norway	1,380,000	1,047,619	
Germany (GTZ)	82,329		
Switzerland	40,000		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,572,081</b>	<b>3,761,857</b>	<b>3,002,695</b>

SECONDMENTS AND LOANS IN 2008

WHO	Secondment of UN Senior Coordinator	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement
WFP	Secondment of 1 Partnerships Officer	Reimbursable Loan Agreement
UNDP	Secondment of Head of Bangkok Regional Hub (January – 15 September)	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement
Japan	Secondment of 1 Policy Adviser for Bangkok Regional Hub	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement
United Kingdom	Secondment of 1 Policy Adviser	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement
Switzerland	Secondment of 1 Senior Policy Adviser	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement
Asia Development Bank	Secondment of 1 Donor Coordination Consultant for Bangkok Regional Hub (January – March)	Non Reimbursable Loan Agreement

<sup>14</sup> The following contributions (USD) were received at the end of 2008, and will be applied to the 2009 budget (which will include activities linked to the High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis).

USAID: 990,100

Irish Aid : 323,834