



# EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

## REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA (BIRD FLU) EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN EAST AFRICA

ARUSHA, TANZANIA  
7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006

Report of the Meeting of Ministers  
(Report Ref: EAC/SC/ -- /2006)

ANNEX IV

EAC Secretariat,  
AICC Building,  
P.O. BOX 1096,  
Arusha, Tanzania.  
Tel: +255 27 2504253/8  
Fax: +255 27 2504255/2504481  
E-Mail: [eac@eachq.org](mailto:eac@eachq.org)  
Website: <http://www.eac.int>

SEPTEMBER 2006

## **REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA (BIRD FLU) EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN EAST AFRICA**

### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ADB	African Development Bank
AI	Avian Influenza
ARIS	Animal Resources Information System
ASF	African Swine Fever
AU-IBAR	African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CBPP	Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia
CCPP	Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna
CMS	Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
EAC	East African Community
ECSAHS	East, Central and Southern African Health Secretariat
EAIDSNet	East African Integrated Diseases Surveillance Network
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NGOs	Non Government Organizations
NTF	National Task Force
OIE	Office International des Epizooties (World Organization for Animal Health)
RRT	Rapid Response Team
RVF	Rift Valley Fever
SOPS	Standard Operating Procedures
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USDA-APHIS	United States Department of Agriculture- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
WHO	World Health Organization

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The East Africa Community is now on the alert phase of avian influenza threat. In Asia and parts of Africa, this disease has continued to kill both domestic and wild birds, causing huge economic and ecological losses and impacting negatively on tourism. It has also caused sickness and deaths to humans. In areas where it has been recorded more than 350 million domestic poultry have died or have been killed. This disease could be very devastating to our infant poultry industry consisting of about 120 million chicken of which 70% is kept under backyard system which is a mainstay for the rural economy. East Africa has a population of 90 million people and about 70% depend on chicken for their livelihoods.

Introduction of the disease into our Region would have more devastating effects to the already malnourished, HIV/AIDS vulnerable populations and to the health services, which are inadequate and already overburdened by diseases such as malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea.

East African Region is at very high risk of contracting Avian Influenza because it is along the migratory bird flyways, presence of numerous and large water bodies, wetlands, extensive wildlife protected areas and international trade in poultry and poultry products. The fact that the disease has occurred in Sudan and Djibouti, its spread to East Africa is most likely now than ever before.

Under the East African Community Treaty of 1999, which entered into force in 2000, the Community's mandate under Article 108, among other tasks, is to coordinate the surveillance, diagnosis and develop control strategies for containing trans-boundary pests and animals' diseases. It is in this context that the Partner States formulated a Multi-sectoral Task Force on AI to review the situation and prepare an action plan for emergency preparedness and response.

This Plan is a culmination of five meetings held between November 2005 and September 2006 (within which there was one GTZ consultancy). The plans' total budget is estimated to be US\$ 3,350,594 for the period of three years as shown in table 1.

The plan will be under the overall management of the EAC Secretariat, coordinated by the Animal and Human Health Desks in collaboration with the AI Multisectoral Coordinating Committee from the Partner States

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza (AI) has led to 241 confirmed human cases and 141 deaths as of 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2006. In birds, the disease has spread along avian migration routes from its initial focus in South-east Asia into Central Asia and Europe. In poultry outbreaks in Africa have occurred in Nigeria, Niger, Egypt, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Ivory Coast and Djibouti. The outbreaks in Africa appear to be more linked with trade in poultry and poultry products. Human cases have been confirmed in Djibouti and Egypt. EAC is particularly vulnerable as it lies in the route of migratory birds and has many wetlands where the migratory birds rest.

### **Current situation in East Africa**

Presently there is no reported case of AI in East African countries. However, the Partner States have completed the preparation of National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans and have institutional arrangements for implementation of the plan.

The Partner states are taking measures to prevent the introduction of this disease which include:-

- Undertaking surveillance in migratory birds, domestic poultry and in humans in high risk areas, A total of 12, 500 samples from wild and domestic birds have been collected where 7,000 have been tested. All the tested samples were negative for H5N1
- Creating public awareness on the dangers of the disease
- Banning importation of poultry and poultry products from affected countries
- Some capacity building has been initiated (through training, acquisition of some personal protective equipment (PPE), laboratory renovation and equipment and reagents, bird capture materials/equipment)

### **Justification**

Despite the efforts being made by the Partner States, the region is faced with inadequate capacity and infrastructure to undertake surveillance, diagnosis and manage the disease. Moreover, the districts and front-line workers are ill-equipped with knowledge and capacity to respond to a possible outbreak. Currently, each Partner State has its own national emergency and response plan; there is need for a Regional mechanism to be in place to coordinate AI activities. It is for this reason that this Regional Plan of Action for Preparedness and Response to Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) proposal is prepared. The proposal is largely based on the recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO), Office Internationale des Epizooties (OIE) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

## **GOALS**

The goal is to safeguard human health and protect the socio-economic welfare of the East African people.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The overall objective of the plan is to harmonise and synergise the national plans and enhance their capacities to manage AI.

## **EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

It is envisaged that the implementation of this plan will result in the improvement of avian influenza surveillance, diagnosis, better understanding of the epidemiology and socio-economic impact of the disease, prevention and control.

## **THE PLAN'S ORGANISATION**

The plan comprises of the following thematic areas:

- a. Planning, coordination and resource mobilization
- b. Surveillance
- c. Laboratory
- d. Capacity building
- e. Information, education and public awareness
- f. Research on AI in EAC partner states
- g. Review of policies and legislation
- h. Prevention and containment
- i. Establishment of emergency preparedness fund

### **1) Planning, Coordination and Resource Mobilization**

#### *Tasks and Responsibilities*

The overall planning, coordination and resource mobilization is the responsibility of the EAC Secretariat. This will be implemented by both the Human and Animal Health Desks, which will work closely with the EAC Avian Influenza Technical Working Group (Annex VI). The AI Technical Working Group consists of nine (9) members, three from each EAC Partner State.

The tasks to be undertaken under Planning, Coordination and Resource Mobilization are

- Overall coordination of preparedness and response to AI pandemic threat,
- Providing policy direction and strategic planning,
- Ensuring accountability,

- Providing an enabling environment and resources for the effective implementation of the AI preparedness plan for EAC.
- To provide transport facilities to all Partner States to enhance rapid response

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation***

The EAC Secretariat shall monitor the preparedness plan and implementation on a regular basis. They will also monitor the progress of implementation of AI preparedness plans in the Partner States.

#### *Establishment of the Animal Health Desk*

The EAC common market for livestock and livestock products as well as international trade requires quality and competitive products. Such products can only originate from zones or regions that are disease free. Co-ordination and harmonization of disease control programmes, especially trans-boundary diseases, is prerequisite to safe trade.

In view of the above rationale and bearing in mind the current global threat of AI, an EAC AI task force, has recommended the establishment of an Animal Health Desk at the EAC Secretariat. The Desk will co-ordinate the control of not only AI but also other livestock trans-boundary diseases in East Africa.

### **2) Surveillance**

Strong surveillance in both animal and human populations is a critical component for early detection of the disease and timely response. This will minimize the extent and impact of potential outbreaks and widespread transmission of the virus.

The EAC Secretariat shall be responsible for harmonising and standardizing systems for surveillance. The Veterinary Services and Wildlife Authority in Partner States shall be the principal agencies for implementing national animal disease surveillance plans. The Ministries of Health shall be responsible for establishing systems for surveillance, situation monitoring and assessment activities of the pandemic in humans.

### **3) Laboratory**

Laboratory strengthening to improve AI diagnostic capacity for both animal and human will be a critical element. EAC Secretariat Animal and Human Health Desks in collaboration with National Laboratories will standardize and harmonize the quality assurance.

#### **4) Capacity building-human resource**

AI is an emerging zoonotic disease and East African countries have inadequate capacities in surveillance, diagnosis, case management and control procedures. Capacity is therefore required in all sectors and at all levels.

EAC Secretariat will undertake system analysis in Partner States, harmonize and implement training of trainers in the areas required including the use of experienced facilitators.

#### **5) Public Awareness**

The objective of the communication strategy is to ensure that the general public gets correct, timely, specific and relevant information regarding the AI threat and steps/actions to be taken in order to prevent the avian influenza in humans and animals.

The EAC Secretariat (Animal and Human Health Desks) shall harmonize the communication materials and equipment so that Directors of principal technical Ministries and their Communication Units can produce the information.

The EAC Secretariat will produce press release on AI status on a regular basis.

Multiple channels of communication shall be used, including regular press briefing and releases, radio messages, TV, pamphlets, posters, brochures and electronic media.

There is need to minimize the impact of AI in tourism and trade industry in East Africa by regularly informing the stakeholders of AI status.

The EAC secretariat will coordinate organisation of stakeholders' workshops in Partner states.

#### **6). Review of policies and legislation**

EAC Secretariat will coordinate, encourage and where possible facilitate review and harmonization of policies and legislation regarding AI. For example, EAC would facilitate Partner States to review and harmonize their legislations on compensation.

#### **7). Research**

The objective of research is to improve the understanding of the epidemiology of the disease, diagnosis and socio-economic impact of AI and disseminate the findings to respective Partner states.

The EAC secretariat will identify areas of research and harmonise research activities in the Partner state; secure funds and sponsor joint proposals in relevant areas.

## **8). Prevention and Containment**

EAC Secretariat shall be responsible for harmonising systems for prevention and containment of the AI infection. The Veterinary Services and Wildlife Authority as the principal agencies in animal disease prevention and containment, while the Ministries of Health are responsible for establishing and implementing systems for the prevention and containment of human influenza.

In order to expedite the work of rapid response teams in Partner states, availability of reliable transport is necessary.

### ***Outbreak management***

EAC Secretariat will also harmonise the simulation exercises in the Partner States. The public, private, mission, military, police and prisons health care providers shall be part of the outbreak management.

### ***Case Management***

Health care personnel and workers at all levels shall be trained in diagnosis, management and control of the disease. Training of trainers will be conducted under EAC Plan and produce guidelines for implementation by Partner States.

## **9). Establishment of emergency preparedness fund**

There is need for EAC Secretariat to establish an emergency fund to manage AI and other emerging diseases.

## **POSSIBLE SOURCES OF FUNDING**

In view of the fact that EAC Secretariat has limited financial resources for the implementation of the proposed Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, it is therefore, proposed that the EAC Secretariat explores other sources for funding.

These possible sources for funding include:

1. Partner States
2. African Development Bank
3. African Union – Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
4. Global Fund on Avian Influenza Preparedness and Response (e.g. from the Beijing Pledging Conference on AI)
5. European Union
6. GTZ
7. USAID
8. DFID
9. US-Centres for Disease Control and Prevention



10. Other Development Partners (e.g. FAO, WHO, UNICEF)

**Table 1- Budget Estimate Summary – EAC Regional Avian Influenza Plan**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Estimated Costs (US\$)</b>			
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Planning, coordination and resource mobilization	868,096	288,126	250,126	1,406,348
2. Surveillance	126,153	118,153	118,153	362,459
3. Laboratory	40,457	0	0	40,457
4. Capacity building-human resource	170,033	0	0	170,033
5. Public Awareness on AI	67,534	47,910	47,910	163,354
6. Review of policies and legislation	38,310	38,310	38,310	114,930
7. Research	511,493	0	0	511,493
8. Prevention and Containment	96,660	96,660	96,660	289,980
9. Establishment of emergency preparedness fund	97,180	97,180	97,180	291,540
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,015,916</b>	<b>686,339</b>	<b>648,339</b>	<b>3,350,593</b>

