

United Nations Development Programme

Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People
برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي / برنامج مساعدة الشعب الفلسطيني



Jerusalem, April 8, 2008

Reference: 52402 Fund - Norway

Attention: Mr. Sten Arne Rosnes,
Representative
Norway Representative Office
Jerusalem

Kære Sten Arne

Dear Mr. Rosnes,

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for your generous and continuous support to the Palestinian people.

I am pleased to submit to you the annual report for the Joint UN Avian Influenza Prevention and Control project implemented by UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNFPA, and UNICEF with funds from the Government of Norway.


Your funds made it possible to actively involve the UN agencies in assisting the human and animal health sectors by implementing Avian Influenza emergency prevention and control measures, each according to its specialization and comparative advantage. The activities implemented under this project, helped to both lead and supplement avian influenza activities carried out under other initiatives, mainly those funded by the World Bank.

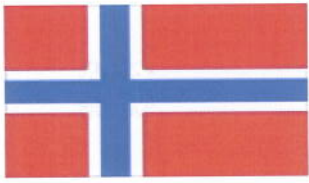
The UN agencies and the Ministries of Health and Agriculture all cooperated actively to ensure that all avian influenza initiatives were dealt with as on integrated programme, in order to enhance the national capacity for providing proper response to Avian influenza outbreaks and possible pandemic.

In the attached report, please find a description of the different components under the Norwegian initiative ranging from development of national capacities in the ministries of health and agriculture to nation wide awareness campaigns targeting the general Palestinian public. In addition, the report describes the status of these activities and the accomplishments achieved up to date.

Thank you for your cooperation and continuous support.

Sincerely,


Jens Toyberg-Frandzen
Special Representative to the Administrator



UN JOINT AVIAN INFLUENZA PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROJECT

PROGRESS REPORT

16 AUG 2007 – 1 MAR 2008

**PREPARED
BY**

UNDP/PAPP

31 MARCH 2008

Project Details

Implementing Agencies:	WHO, FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF
Funded by:	Government of Norway
Project #:	00052403
Grant Amount:	\$1,636,765
Location:	West Bank & Gaza
Reporting Period:	16 Aug 2007 - 1 Mar 2008
Date of submission:	
Prepared by:	UNDP
Submitted to:	Government of Norway

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ACRONYMS

AIPC	Avian Influenza Prevention and Control
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ERP	Emergency Reaction Plan
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organization
CVL	Central Veterinary Laboratory
HI	Haemoagglutination Inhibition
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
IDA	International Development Association
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOH	Ministry of Agriculture
PA	Palestinian Authority
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WBG	West Bank & Gaza
WHO	World Health Organization Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation
SFERA	
RFEOI	Request for Expression of Interest National Committee on Avian Influenza Control
NCAIC	
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health

This report is designed to present the progress and achievements of the project during the assigned period, and to present obstacles issues as well.

This report presents the main progress and activities achieved in the Joint Avian Influenza Project funded by the Government of Norway. The period covered under this report is 16 Aug 2007-1 Mar 2008.

Background.

The emergence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) has placed the West Bank and Gaza (WBG) at high risk due to the large number of migratory birds crossing it, with increased opportunities to spread the infection among domestic poultry. On April 20th, AI H5N1 presence was confirmed in eight locations in Gaza according to FAO/WHO reports. The proximity of outbreaks in Israel, Egypt and Jordan jeopardizes the whole region if not handled quickly and efficiently. Although preventive culling was concluded in infected areas by the end of April 2006 and no outbreak has been detected since, Palestinian well-being, including public health, veterinarian and agricultural sectors, as well as nutritional and socio-economic conditions would be severely threatened if a future outbreak were to occur.

In 2006, a Palestinian Authority (PA) presidential decree established the Avian Influenza National High Contingency Committee to reinforce the Palestinian National Plan for Pandemic Influenza that had been established in late 2005. In support of the National Plan, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), linking efforts with the Ministry of Health (MOH), formed the Avian Influenza Control and Eradication Plan Technical Committee headed by the Veterinary Services and Animal Health Department to supervise and assess implementation of field activities related to the control and eradication elements of the National Plan. Nonetheless, the unequivocal international response to the recent transition in government and the ensuing financial crisis has presented the PA with severe limitations in coping with the AI epidemic. To date, none of the aforementioned plans has reached fruition.

A recent WHO mission revealed that the PA has a limited ability to combat any more outbreaks of Avian Influenza, and they lack a cohesive monitoring and surveillance system for early detection (i.e. the ability to take samples from non-infected areas and to apply appropriate bio-safety measures according to international specifications to prevent further spreading), and hospitals are not properly prepared in case of an outbreak of a pandemic Avian Influenza, due to the shortage of resources and equipment. Furthermore, authorities are unable to compensate farmers and poultry owners for their lost assets, and at the public health level, there is not enough public awareness in both the general public and public health workers on the importance of protecting themselves from the risk of exposure.

INTRODUCTION

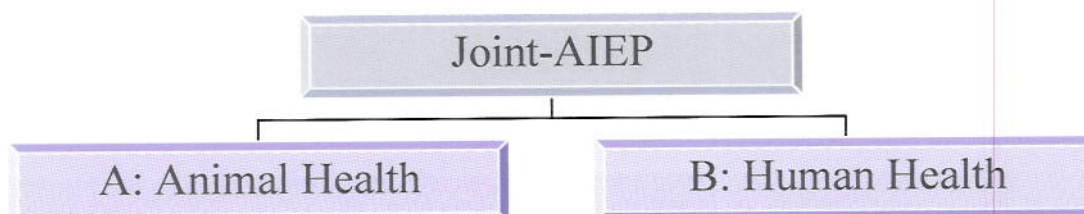
The necessity to respond quickly to contain possible spread of the Avian Influenza requires unique coordination between all UN agencies at one end and all donor countries at the other. Within this context, a UN Interagency Framework for Avian Influenza Response has been developed, which would allow the UN agencies to contribute its technical expertise within a single framework to assist the PA in containing the current AI epidemic and reducing the threat posed to human from influenza pandemic

After a grant was mobilized by the Government of Norway to minimize the threat posed to humans and domestic poultry from HPAI. UNDP launched a comprehensive Joint Avian Influenza Emergency Project in WBG. The project will be implemented by multi-UN agencies involving the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The overall objective for launching such project is to minimize the threat posed to humans by HPAI, and to domestic poultry by Avian Influenza, and to prepare for, control, and respond to Avian influenza pandemic, and other zoonotic diseases by controlling HPAI in animals. The project would in turn limit sporadic human cases and diminish the likelihood of an eventual human influenza pandemic.

To achieve these objectives, two areas of activity will be supported: 1) preparedness and planning 2) response and containment. Conducting these activities will contribute to diminishing the burden of disease and loss of productivity in WBG, and limit the spread of HPAI, and enhance economic, social and environmental prospects in both the animal and human health sectors. The project will aim at supporting parallel efforts in immediate and longer-term responses while ensuring that short-term actions are consistent with, and contribute to the long-term interventions.

The project was scheduled to end in December 2007. Through recent cooperation, and coordination between UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, an extension was granted and a budget revision and revised work plan was approved by UNDP and the Donor in December 2007. Some of the project subcomponents had been re-assessed by UNDP to prevent duplication on implementing some of the planned activities, due to other Grants was mobilized by other donors lead by the World Bank to minimize the spread of HPAI to humans and domestic poultry. UNDP played a catalytic role in maintaining good coordination within the donor community and providing an effective Response to HPAI preparedness and control in West Bank and Gaza. The implementation of the Project will be fully coordinated with donors in order to avoid duplication of efforts while harmonizing activities in a pragmatic manner which will enhance the national efforts to respond effectively.

Project components



Animal Health Component	
Objectives:	Minimize the threat posed to domestic poultry from Avian Influenza by Strengthening (MOA) response capacity. And consequently protect the Palestinian people from AI infection.
Sub Components	1.1 Technical Assistance. 1.2 Improvements in the quality of laboratory services; and diagnostic capacity. 1.3 HPAI control and eradication policy and field surveillance. 1.4 Development of Environmental Management Plan (EMP) 1.5 Advising on compensation schemes for farmers. 1.6 Surveillance database and information system TAD info System 1.7 Training of laboratory technicians and field staff.
Human Health Component	
Objectives:	Minimize the threat posed to humans from HPAI by Strengthening (MOH) health system response capacity.
Sub Components	1.1 Establish a Functional Surveillance system for MOH. 1.2 Capacity building for MOH on Preventive measures. 1.3 Community Awareness and social mobilization.

Role of Implementing Agencies

FAO, as the technical agency on animal health, is leading the effort on strengthening the capacity of veterinary services to monitor, control, and respond effectively to any possible outbreak of avian Influenza in the WBG, further more FAO will assist in the improvements of the quality of laboratory services, and their diagnostic capacity, this will include field and veterinary staff training, technical assistance, supply of personal protective equipment. FAO is also in conjunction with UNDP is advising on compensation schemes for farmers, to protect small farmers' livelihoods and the poultry industry.

WHO, as the technical agency on human health, will lead the support on human disease and nutrition surveillance, infection control, case treatment, including rapid containment through stocks of anti-viral medicines, and personal protective equipment. WHO will also work with national authorities to improve detection and monitoring human cases, and establishment of critical requirements that must be in place to enable governments to contain any emerging pandemic, mainly on the aspects of surveillance, laboratory development ,infection control, and case management.

UNICEF and UNFPA will lead the effort to increase both awareness and sensitization of all actors involved in the poultry and public health sectors, and use messages developed by the technical agencies to intensify action for the social mobilization of communities, households, and school children with a view to catalyzing desired behavioral changes for pandemic prevention and control

UNDP the main task will consist of providing managerial and financial support for interagency planning and coordination across all UN country team members, and provide a strategic framework for a collective response within and beyond the UN system.

Animal health component:**Progress by Activity****1.1 Technical Assistance.**

An international veterinary project coordinator with five years experience was recruited; her role is to provide overall project management and technical assistance. Two national project veterinary consultants were also recruited (one in the West Bank and another in the Gaza) their role is to assist with the project implementation by liaising between the MOA-Veterinary Services, and the FAO office in Jerusalem to oversee the field and laboratory work, manage the supply of inputs and equipment, and to facilitate training and public awareness activities. Furthermore, a national Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) consultant and a national laboratory technician were also recruited by this project.

1.2 Improvements in the quality of laboratory services; and diagnostic capacity.

Veterinary laboratories in Gaza, Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron are almost completely equipped with all necessary items for handling samples, HPAI virus identification and AI outbreak management.

The laboratories has been supplied with a micro centrifuge, a computer for Elisa tests reader, a PCR working station, a precision analytical balance, PCR kit reagents, PBS, low melting Agarose, disposable micropipette, tube-plates, sterile syringes and needles, Vacutainer serum blood collection tubes, biohazard material, protective equipment, autoclaving bags, plastic isothermic containers, necropsy kits, sterile specimen collection bags, cleaning boot brushes, two DeskJet printers, one fully equipped computer station, AIH5 antigens, micropipettes, Eppendorf tubes, tips with and without filters for PCR, and cabinets and benches. The Hebron lab is still being rehabilitated, and is being supplied with items currently stocked in Ramallah.

1.3 HPAI control and eradication policy and field surveillance.

Field teams are established and engaged in their regular field surveillance, according to the established protocols, field surveillance is carried out by veterinary field teams consisting of three persons each, and they are engaged in the routine collection of samples and information. Three field teams are operating from Gaza, and seven field teams are operating from West Bank, in both areas the number of samples that will be collected will take into consideration their local degree of HPAI risk.

The Blood samples collection started on Aug 15, 2007, and it's forwarded to the laboratories in Gaza and Ramallah for Haemoagglutination Inhibition testing. A total of 44,000 blood samples will be collected in Gaza, and 15,000 in West Bank by the end of the project.

1.4 Development of Environmental Management Plan (EMP)

The Environmental Assessment for the Management Plan has been conducted and presented on 15 August 2007 in Ramallah in the framework of the development of the Environmental Management Plan.

1.5 Advising on compensation schemes for farmers.

Compensation mechanisms have been included in the public awareness campaign that FAO and MOA are preparing, which will target farmers, industrial producers, consumers and journalists

1.6 Surveillance database and information system TAD info.

The installation and training for TADINFO surveillance system is delayed, pending FAO headquarters' finalization of its modifications to the satellite mapping element of the TADINFO software for Palestine.

1.7 Training of laboratory technicians and field staff.

Almost all the training courses have been completed, including the training of field veterinary staff and laboratory staff in AI surveillance procedures, laboratory diagnostic procedures, sampling, bio-safety, HI/PCR techniques procedures, virology and epidemiology. The participants and trainers for the remaining three training courses are being identified, recruited and all courses will be completed in the next four months.

The table below outlines all the training activities carried out so far.

Table 1. Training programme summary

	Training title	Scope	Duration	Location	Participants' details
1	Field sample collection, handling, submission	Collection, identification, handling and submission, sample pooling	13-14 August 2007	CVL Ramallah	21 field veterinarians from WB. Using Israeli-trained CVL staff as trainers.
2	HI techniques	Virus characteristics, sample collection, lab diagnostic procedures performance, biosafety	8-4 July 2007	CVL Gaza	2 veterinarians and 4 laboratory technicians from the Gaza Strip
3	PCR Techniques	Samples collection, lab diagnostic procedures, PCR techniques	17-31 July 2007	Gaza	1 veterinarian and 3 laboratory technicians from Gaza Strip
4	Epidemiology for veterinary managers	Analytical concepts in epidemiology, risk analysis, surveillance networks, sampling techniques, data base construction, data analysis.	11-16 November 2007	Amman	6 Central-level veterinary managers, 4 from West Bank and 2 from Gaza. The training was organized in conjunction with epidemiology training for Iraqi participants.
5	Trainer training in poultry production biosafety	To provide MOA extension personnel with information on biosafety standards and procedures for commercial poultry raisers. Will include use of trigger points for AI suspicion.	22-29 November 2007	Ramallah and Gaza Strip	18 vets from WB, 12 vets from Gaza plus 2 central level management/extension staff. Training was held by an international commercial poultry sector expert veterinarian.
6	Laboratory diagnostic procedures for AI	Serological tests, cell culture & virus isolation, molecular biology – RT/PCR, antibody detection, virus isolation, PCR setup & standardization	2-18 December 2007	Morocco	3 CVL staff (WB); 1 CVL staff (Gaza)
7	Study tour	To visit and learn from countries having a fully developed, operational ERP	2-9 December 2007 (1 participant from GS) 24-31 December (2 participants from WB)	Cairo, Central Lab for Veterinary Quality Control on Poultry production; Rabat, Institute Agronomique & Vétérinaire Hassan II	3 senior VS personnel (3 men). One from GS and two from WB

Human health Component:

Progress by Activity

1.1 Establish a Functional Surveillance system for MOH.

WHO is currently working with the MOH on establishing a nutrition surveillance system through strengthening the MOH capacity to monitor nutritional aspects of the population at risk in case of avian Influenza outbreak, and its impact on the availability of foods, particularly the animal protein sources; this will help to identify any nutritional crises at early stage, and to respond to any emergency nutritional needs.

Furthermore Due to the lack of a cohesive monitoring and surveillance system for early detection i.e. the ability to take samples from infected areas and to apply the appropriate bio-safety measures, and the lack of adequate transport of human samples from the hospital to the laboratories. The MOH was provided with some of the needed equipment, accompanied with training to improve the capacity of the laboratory services.

1.2 Capacity building for MOH on Preventive measures.

In order to enhance the capacity of the PA to cope with any new episode of outbreak, the MOH has been provided with hospital supplies and equipment mainly PPE, s, accompanied with training on the uses of these items. Training includes health workers in the PHC and hospitals as well as the laboratory technicians.

Furthermore, the MOH also has been provided with 5,000 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines and mechanical sprayers.

1.3 Community Awareness and social mobilization.

The main goal for this activity is to improve the capacity of MOH in awareness raising on Avian Influenza, and to increase the awareness levels in communities, and schools about Avian Influenza in the 15 governorates; by distributing appropriate communication materials, messages.

to achieve these objectives UNICEF, and UNFPA lead the effort to increase, and scale up AI services, and awareness raising throughout the country, through wider coverage and reach of communities, education, and mass campaigns targeting farmers, community leaders, general public, and provide case management training to service providers as well as counseling and referral services.

The following progress was achieved so far.

- Flyers, message handbills and messages at the back of mobile bills were printed in 2006 and the same reproduced in 2007.
- 50 Community Awareness sessions reaching at least 100,000 to 200,000 people
- 50 trainees - Training of Trainers workshop for health providers
- School awareness raising campaign in 45 schools; and provision of 45,205 nutrition booklets
- Mobilization of vulnerable groups, especially school children and adolescents in all districts
- Mobilization of media, direct marketing and IPC approaches using mobile phone bills, TV and radio - Printing messages on the back of phone and electricity bills
- 200,000 of AI leaflets and posters Re-printed
- Printing and disseminating 2000 AI protocols and guidelines
- Setting up of 2 hotline Emergency operations rooms with equipment and furniture.
- Provision of IT equipments, TV for promoting AI social mobilization, including 30 video players.
- Installing a toll free number for the campaign.
- Coordination visit for five members of the AI national committee from Gaza to the West Bank.

Annex 1 .

Action Plan

ACTIVITY	Time Frame						RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
	2008 Q1			2008 Q2			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
1. printing of posters	X	x	x				UNFPA
2. broadcast messages on AI prevention through local and national TV stations	X	x	x	x	x	x	UNFPA
3. Conduct 50 Community Awareness sessions	X	x	x	x	x	x	UNFPA
4. School awareness raising campaign	X	x	x	x	x	x	UNFPA
5. Setting up hotline room.	X	x	x				UNFPA
6. Training.	X	x	x	x	x	x	UNFPA
1. Nutrition monitoring activities	X	x	x	x	x	x	WHO
2. Training of 8 MOH and MOA staff on surveillance activities				x	x	x	WHO
1. Surveillance	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO
2. Laboratory support	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO
3. Field and laboratory staff support	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO
4. Training	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO
5. Contracts	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO
6. GOE	X	x	x	x	x	x	FAO

Annex 2

Financial summary

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DETAILED COST TABLE (USD)

DATE : 17 OCT 2006

PROPOSED ACTIVITY : UN Joint Avian influenza Emergency Project

PROJECT NUMBER : ATLAS 00052403

DONOR : Government of Norway

COUNTRY/PROGRAM : Palestinian Territories

Component A: Human Health Emergency Activities

Activity	Implmt. Agency	Estimated Budget	Expenditure	Balance
Capacity building for MOH on Preventive measures.	WHO	\$314,150	\$266,913	\$47,237
Establish a functional surveillance system.	WHO	\$310,000	\$165,000	\$145,000
Community Awareness and social mobilization.	UNICEF, UNFPA	\$238,500	\$140,000	\$98,500
Sub total - Component A		\$862,650	\$571,913	\$290,737

Component B: Animal Health Emergency Activities

Technical Assistance.	FAO	\$100,000	\$89,000	\$11,000
Improvements in the quality of laboratory services; and diagnostic capacity.	FAO	\$290,000	\$186,000	\$104,000
Training of laboratory technicians and field staff.	FAO	\$160,000	\$93,400	\$66,600
HPAI control and eradication policy and field surveillance.	FAO	\$62,350	\$40,600	\$21,750
Development of Environmental Management Plan (EMP)	FAO	\$15,000	\$12,500	\$2,500
Advising on compensation schemes for farmers.	FAO	\$15,000	\$14,000	\$1,000
Surveillance database and information system TAD info.	FAO	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Sub total - Component B		\$662,350	\$445,500	\$216,850

Component C: Management of the Joint Programme

Office equipment, furniture, and stationary	UNDP	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0
Communication and transportation	UNDP	\$5,400	\$5,400	\$0
Contingency Expenses	UNDP	\$77,600	\$47,600	\$30,000
GMS- Administrative Agent	UNDP	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Sub-total - Component C		\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0
Total Cost for all components of Joint Programme		\$1,636,765	\$1,098,413	\$537,587