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GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE HELPING COUNTRIES TO PREPARE FOR ANIMAL DISEASE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The human food chain is under continued threat from an alarming increase in the number of outbreaks of transboundary animal diseases (TADs).

Avian influenza, Foot-and-mouth disease, and Rift Valley fever, are examples of threats to the human food chain that may have detrimental effects on food security, human

health, livelihoods, national economies and global markets.

Considering the resurgence of certain animal diseases, and persistent threats posed by TADs, a strong emphasis is needed to continue FAO efforts towards building country capacities in preparedness for animal disease emergencies. Planning for emergency disease eradication

and control programmes enables regions and national veterinary services to be better equipped to cope with the emergency and achieve rapid and cost-efficient control.

Building capacity in emergency management helps regions and countries prepare for and manage effective responses to animal disease disasters and crises.

THE GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE: THE ESSENTIALS MANUAL

Created by FAO to better prepare its member countries, the Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP) is an overall approach to preparedness and response for animal health emergencies, supporting veterinary services in increasing preparedness to animal disease outbreaks and decreasing the time needed to respond to a crisis.

GEMP is a collection of organised procedures, structures and resource management tools that help emergency managers detect diseases in an early stage in an animal population, predict

and limit the spread, target control measures, and eliminate the disease with subsequent re-establishment of verifiable freedom from infection. Specifically, GEMP guides national animal health services to prepare an emergency preparedness plan, a contingency plan, an operations manual; and a recovery plan.

The FAO manual, Good Emergency Management Practice: The Essentials, sets out in a systematic way the elements required to achieve preparedness planning for any disease emergency in animals. The GEMP manual guides veterinary services to better prepare and respond in a timely manner when faced with disease emergencies. Many of the principles described in the GEMP manual may also be helpful in preparing for food safety,

KEY FACTS

GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

PROVIDING A TOOL GATHERING FAO'S ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE ON BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING ANIMAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES

HELPING COUNTRIES PREPARE AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN; A CONTINGENCY PLAN; AN OPERATIONS MANUAL; AND A RECOVERY PLAN

SHARING WITH COUNTRIES PROCEDURES, STRUCTURES AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT THAT LEAD TO EARLY DETECTION OF A DISEASE, PREDICTING ITS SPREAD, PROMPT LIMITATION, TARGETED CONTROL AND ELIMINATION

THE GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE ESSENTIALS MANUAL PROVIDES GUIDANCE TO BETTER PREPARE AND RESPOND IN A TIMELY MANNER WHEN FACED WITH ANIMAL DISEASE EMERGENCIES

GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE WORKSHOPS BRING PROFESSIONALS TOGETHER TO LEARN BEST PRACTICES AND EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES ABOUT DEALING WITH ANIMAL DISEASE EMERGENCIES

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zoonotic and even non-infectious disease emergencies.

The GEMP manual is available in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Chinese and Russian and each version can be downloaded from the [FAO website](#).

THE GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE: THE ESSENTIALS (GEMP) WORKSHOPS

To reach a wide audience of animal health professionals and expose them to emergency management tools, the FAO Crisis Management Centre for Animal Health (CMC-AH) in close collaboration with the relevant FAO offices at regional, sub-regional and country levels, organize various GEMP training in countries and regions. The multi-day, interactive workshops bring professionals together to learn best practices and exchange experiences about dealing with animal disease emergencies.

The GEMP workshops serve as a hub of knowledge to help countries assess their level of preparedness, including command structures, risk analysis methods, contingency planning, funding mechanisms, information system, and compensation plans, just to name a few.

The concept also fully embraces a one health approach requiring multiple disciplines to fully address issues affecting human and animal health, food security and food safety.

Some examples of successes as a result of GEMP training are:

- South Africa created the "GEMP working group" with the mandate to work on the finalisation of the national Avian Influenza contingency plan;
- Kenya applied the GEMP principles during the spread of Rift Valley fever through the implementation of the contingency plan in the four high risk clusters of the country (2015);
- Ivory Coast applied the acquired knowledge on GEMP principles to respond to African Swine Fever outbreaks of 2014.

In Tanzania (2017), a workshop was jointly organized by FAO and the Tanzania Department of Veterinary Services – Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. Experts participated from multiple sectors, including animal health, public health, one health, and other specialities. Contingency plans for avian and pandemic influenza and Rift Valley fever were reviewed, an action plan developed, and a Tanzania GEMP working group formed to encourage and track continued progress on the actions.

In Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, more than 55 countries have already benefitted from GEMP workshops.

GOOD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE: FUTURE TOOLS

FAO member countries have identified needs beyond the GEMP Essentials to increase their resilience to existing or probable threats to animal health.

Diving deeper into the emergency management practices using a GEMP "Plus" (GEMP+) approach will help countries build their capacities to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from animal health emergency incidents. GEMP+ will strive to refine contingency planning templates, develop SOP guidance, support review of technical plans, build and deliver training and simulation exercise materials, support resource mobilization, mentor GEMP trainers and provide other capacity-building activities that increase the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises and to respond when they occur.

Animal health preparedness planning goes hand-in-hand with threat reduction by addressing potential pathogens at their source.

Successful emergency management preparedness will help to sustain animal health, human health, food security and community resilience.