

**Proposed Technical Meeting on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and human H5N1  
infection  
27 – 29 June 2007, Rome**

**Note for Distribution to Participating Agencies**

**DRAFT 17 APRIL**

**Background and Introduction**

During the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI) Meeting held in Bamako on 8 December 2006, the need was discussed for a technical meeting on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), to be scheduled prior to the Senior Officials Meeting/Pledging Conference to be held in New Delhi. Further consultations with the IPAPI core group, UNSIC, and main donors such as the World Bank, confirmed the wish to hold the meeting before the end of June 2007. FAO-OIE-WHO in collaboration with UNICEF and UNSIC will co-organize the Technical Meeting, which is to be held in Rome, from 27-29 June 2007.

Participants will be presented a summary of the current global epidemiologic situation of HPAI, and a risk assessment of human infection with the H5N1 virus. An assessment of the current risk of a pandemic of influenza and the state of preparedness of countries will also be presented. There will be an assessment of current strategies and practices as have been applied over the last three years for the control of HPAI and reduction of the associated risk of human infection

A report will be prepared which will provide strategic guidance for the prevention and control of HPAI/H5NI in poultry and associated human infections, in the short, mid, and longer-term. The report, which will be circulated among the donor community and the participants of the New Delhi Conference, is expected to inform and drive high-level policy and decision-making.

At the meeting, subject-specific technical working groups will share and discuss the latest technical and scientific evidence to address key strategic questions. The major focus will be on animal disease prevention and control and the prevention of human infection. There will be a strong emphasis on cross-disciplinary activities and the sharing and comparison of experiences across countries and regions, to reach greater clarity and understanding with regard to the following issues:

- What has been learned of the nature and extent of the avian influenza problem, both in terms of its animal and human health risk aspects?
- What will the future trends and patterns of outbreaks and risks look like? What are going to be the main drivers of these patterns?
- How are the animal health and human disease preventive programs being implemented, and what seems to work under which conditions?
- What are the key constraints on the ground now, in the medium- and longer-term?
- What are the key issues that have not been addressed under emergency conditions but will need attention, such as impacts on livelihoods, gender and environment as result of longer term bio-security measures?
- What strategic interventions need to be refined and further undertaken, and in which order, and at what level, to address these key constraints?
- What are the resource and capacity requirements to implement these interventions?
- What are the institutional mechanisms and partnerships that need to be established or further strengthened to sustain these efforts?

## **Specific Objectives of the Technical Meeting**

- 1) Review the best available scientific, technical and operational evidence to date on the nature of HPAI, and H5N1 infection in humans and for its prevention and control, and provide an authoritative assessment of risk.
- 2) Provide strategic guidance to partners on technical and policy options for cost-effective and cost-efficient measures for the effective prevention and control of highly pathogenic avian influenza and associated human infections
- 3) Identify the current state of pandemic influenza preparedness in the context of H5N1 human infections.
- 4) Identify and build consensus on geographical and thematic priorities and key constraints that need to be overcome, in the immediate, medium-, and longer term, to effectively address highly pathogenic avian influenza and associated human infection.

## **Outputs of the Technical Meeting**

A technical report, based on expert opinion, discussion and agreements, will be prepared, covering the following areas:

- A summary of the current status of highly pathogenic avian influenza in its epidemiological and global context and, progress made towards risk assessment, both of the animal and human disease aspects.
- An overview of key country experiences including where possible multi-sectoral reviews of cost effectiveness and impacts of prevention and control measures, as well as key plans for the future.
- A critical evaluation of strategies and practices, including communication campaigns, applied over the last three years, for their effectiveness and impacts.
- Summary of the state of global pandemic influenza preparedness in the current context of HPAI and human H5N1 infections.
- Identification and analysis of technical, socio-economic, institutional and resource constraints and opportunities for effective disease prevention and control, and draw lessons for scaling-up and replicability.
- Identification of key technical organizational and policy options for improvement in disease prevention strategies in the short and longer term, suitable for different epidemiological, sub-sector, and institutional contexts.
- Identification of priority areas for support from the international community, for research, capacity building, infrastructure and networking.
- An assessment of key institutional support mechanisms, including donor coordination, at the country and international levels, to respond appropriately to priority regional and country needs.
- An assessment of the financial needs to implement future short and long term strategies

## **Participants**

The participants will include scientific experts in avian and human influenza; technical experts involved in the implementation of prevention and control programmes, as well as representatives of international and regional organizations, national governments and selected practitioners. The meeting will draw substantially from their ongoing activities in a range of key countries, multi-

disciplinary work, program evaluations, and reviews of interventions. The total number of participants at the meeting will be around 70-100 persons.

### **Organization**

A joint FAO-WHO-OIE-UNSIC-UNICEF organizing committee is overseeing preparations and conduct of the meeting. A joint Technical/Scientific Committee will provide an agenda and more detailed guidance and technical support to participants in preparing for the meeting. A core group will prepare a preliminary assessment of the experiences, issues and financial needs to implement future strategies. A full document with the outcome of the meeting will be prepared well in advance of the proposed New Delhi Conference.