



## **Part II: Outbreak communication preparedness**

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Better be prepared than sorry



## **Main objectives:**

- Ensure that the mechanisms that will allow full and comprehensive outbreak communication response are in place and ready to be rolled-out within 48 hours of field-reporting of a suspect-case/event.
- Ensure that ALL stakeholders concerned are fully knowledgeable about their roles during the outbreak and have the means to act.



## **Coordination and planning**

- Inter-ministerial Committee: Are decision-makers and high level spokespersons informed & CONVINCED about importance of communication during HPAI outbreak? Do they know about their role in outbreak communication (or lack of role?)
- National Technical Committee: Communication representative? Role? Status?
- Communication Commission/Task Force in place: formal status? TORs?
- National HPAI Communication Strategy/Plan: outbreak communication plan? SOPs? Media plan?



# Important

## **Need endorsement of senior management and political leaders on:**

- first announcements
- limits of transparency
- who will be the spokesperson



## People

- National HPAI Communication Coordinator? With decision-making power? Spokesperson/s?
- Partnerships: with media, public health, civil society, etc?



## **Budget and resources**

- Is the HPAI control plan costed & financed? With emergency pool of funds to be disbursed within 24-48 hours of confirmed H5N1 outbreak (or other TADs/zoonoses) for outbreak communication.
- Resources & equipment: AV equipment and vehicles for use during outbreak?
- Human resources and mapping (including quantification): frontline workers, networks, key actors for ?



## **The outbreak communication preparedness plan**

The Communication task Force:

- Ensure the Plan (SOPs and guidelines) is prepared, validated and disseminated among all stakeholders BEFORE the outbreak.
- Prevention/containment IEC materials have been pre-tested and prepared in “peace time”. MUST BE IN LINE WITH National HPAI Strategy (as well as culling plan)
- Outreach front-line workers at ground level have been trained in social mobilization & can carry out intensified inter-personal communication activities in affected and surrounding counties.





## **The outbreak communication preparedness plan**

- Spokespersons at the national and county levels are regularly briefed about the evolving outbreak situation and response measures.
- Pre-positioned quarantine and movement control posters/billboards are deployed at planned sites, and information on such controls is communicated to the public.
- National compensation policy for culled poultry is clearly communicated and reiterated to encourage public acceptance of control measures and prevent hiding/selling/movement of poultry in affected areas.



## **The outbreak communication preparedness plan**

- Regular and early press-briefings are conducted for the media with transparency and accuracy, to quell rumours or misinformation from spreading.
- Media and public opinion is monitored for tracking and responding to rumours and misinformation if they emerge.
- Messages from high-level political leadership (presidential or cabinet-level) are prepared and deployed strategically if needed.
- Ending of emergency phase/measures, and guidance on re-stocking/recovery is clearly communicated to the media and the public.

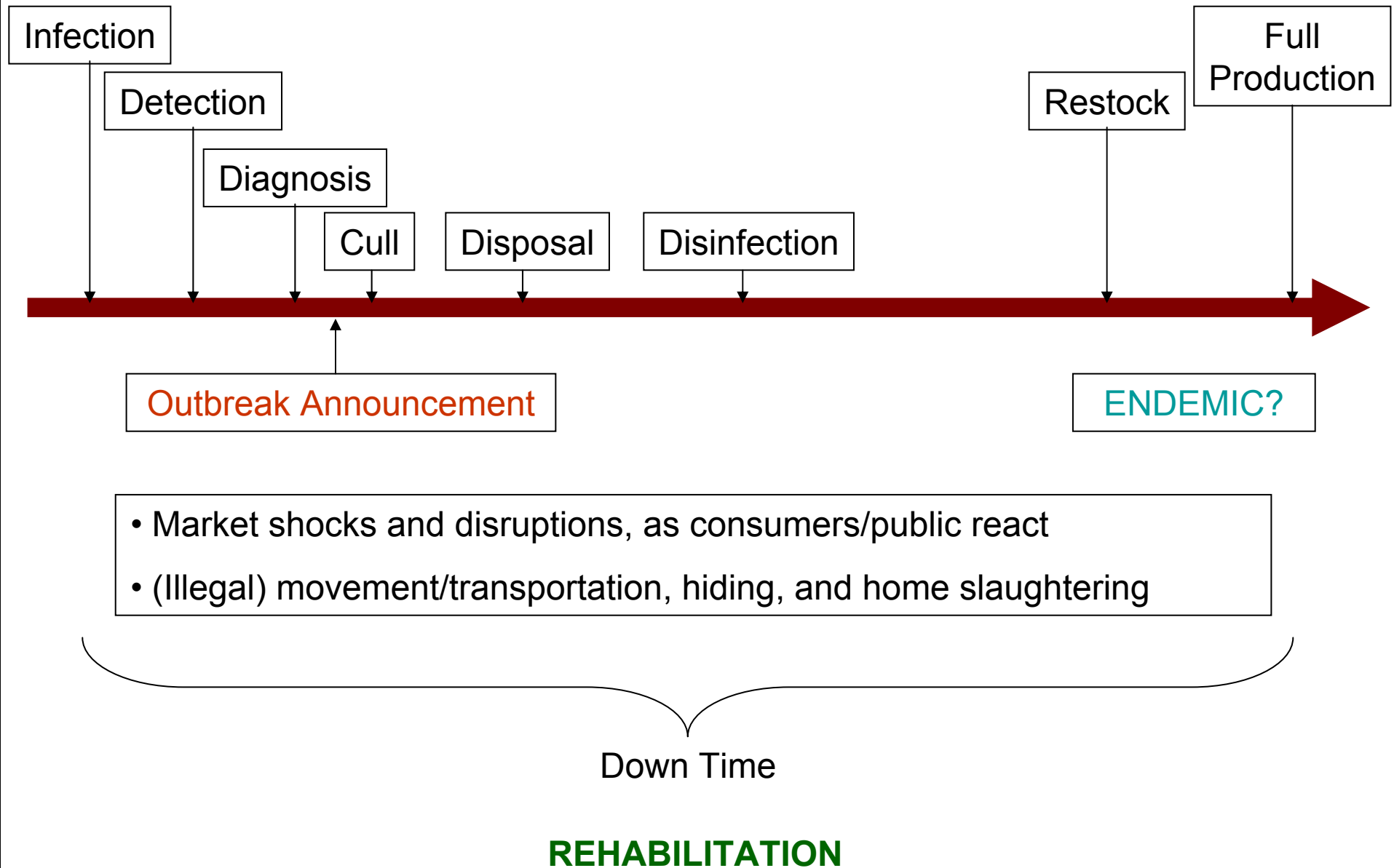


## **How do I know I am ready?**

- BE PREPARED IN ADVANCE
- Run several “simulations” with role-playing until you get it right



# Anatomy of an HPAI Outbreak



## **Remember!!!!**

- Outbreak communication plan **MUST** go along with the technical control measures/ emergency plan so:

**With technical experts  
SEE/DISCUSS/NEGOTIATE where  
communication interventions are needed.**



# 5 Key Principles Outbreak Communication

- Trust
- Announce Early
- Transparency
- Listening = communication surveillance
- Planning



# Trust

"The over-arching communication goal during an outbreak is to communicate with the public in ways that build, maintain or restore trust."

WHO Outbreak Communication Guidelines



# Message Making

- Don't over-reassure
- Acknowledge uncertainty
- Share dilemmas (AI's "unknowns")
- Don't over-plan for panic
- Tolerate early over-reactions
- Don't lie or tell half-truths

P. Sandman: "Recommendations for Crisis Communications"

