



Animal diseases and livestock emergencies

Prevention, response and resilience



Livestock production comprises about 43% of the global value of agricultural output. The incursion of an animal disease can devastate production, livelihoods and international trade overnight. The burden of endemic animal diseases erodes efficiencies and contributes to the cycle of poverty, hunger and poor nutrition. In an environment of population growth and urbanization, rapid travel and trade, and long market chains, and land-use policies, the risk of disease emergence and spread is on the increase. All countries – rich and poor – are at risk.

What we do

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) helps countries and the most vulnerable communities be better prepared to address the risks of animal disease – some that may affect public health directly – and become more resilient to threats and disasters, prevent the loss of livelihoods, enhance food security and nutrition, reduce poverty and promote economic growth.

FAO works with Member Countries and regional organizations to prepare for, prevent, detect and respond to disease epidemics and livestock emergencies.

FAO develops strategies and policies for improved prevention, detection and response to high impact animal disease threats, whether they affect both human and animals, such as Avian Influenza, or only animals, such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease or Peste des Petits Ruminants. In a disease outbreak, **FAO supports** countries to implement control measures such as strategic vaccination campaigns, targeted surveillance,



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Field training in the use of FAO's Event Mobile App (EMA-i) to veterinarians and animal health technicians in Uganda to report disease events in real time.

promote biosecurity and hygiene, and best practices in eliminating contaminated farms and herds.

Through its surveillance Global Early Warning System, **FAO assists** in monitoring disease trends for early warning and forecasting animal disease threats that could potentially become of regional or even global concern.

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FAO invests heavily in developing the capacities of a range of stakeholders – from farmers, producers and marketers to medical professionals – and delivers technical assistance to strengthen countries and regions in their surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, rapid disease outbreak investigations, preparedness planning and response. It promotes good practices to use, should an outbreak or livestock emergency strike.

When countries face emergencies due to natural disasters, for instance drought or flooding, or man-made crises such as conflicts and wars, **FAO assists** vulnerable communities in vaccinating and treating their animals against diseases. Furthermore, **FAO provides** feed, water and shelter to animals, delivers animals to people who have lost their goods, and provides training.

Understanding the context

Diseases and natural disasters, such as floods and droughts, are expected to increase – both in frequency and severity. They can cause considerable losses in animal production activities and serious consequences on livelihoods.

When animals are lost or debilitated by a disaster or an epidemic, or when the resources and services that support them are disrupted, there is a serious impact on households, communities, and trading partners. In these situations, appropriate strategies and targeted interventions that address the needs of both people and their animals are necessary to protect livelihoods, build resilience and guarantee food security, nutrition and safe trade.

Partners

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO), national government agencies, regional economic communities, specialized regional organizations, FAO reference centres, civil society, private sector and other related UN agencies (WFP, UN-OCHA)

FAO's capacity to respond

The **Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases operations (ECTAD)**, established in 2004, is a global platform to complement **FAO's Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal Diseases (EMPRES)** and to strengthen FAO's capacity to respond to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and other emerging infectious diseases.

The **Crisis Management Centre for Animal Health** unit works alongside countries to assess and control high-impact diseases outbreaks and crises.



Depopulation of an infected chicken farm in Togo

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Over the last two decades, FAO has seen a major increase in requests for assistance in responding to disease epidemics (e.g. the global Avian Influenza crisis), or to livestock emergencies in disaster-prone countries and regions, such as Afghanistan, Pakistan or South Sudan. To address the challenges, FAO draws on its worldwide network and broad multidisciplinary knowledge and experience to provide a timely response, support rehabilitation/recovery and build long-term resilience.

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MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.fao.org/emergencies/emergency-types/transboundary-animal-diseases/en/>

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