

**The inception Workshop – TCP/RAB/3005 – Emergency assistance
for early detection
and prevention of Avian Influenza in the
Middle East region
*Cairo (Egypt) 4-5 February 2006***

<i>Recommendations of group discussions</i>

I- Laboratory group

Recommendation 1

The Laboratory training planned under the TCP should cover diagnostic methods for surveillance in domestic and wild birds (serology, ELISA, virus isolation and PCR) including samples collection, storage shipment and processing. All participating countries should have at the national level the laboratory capacity for serology, virus isolation and virus typing.

The participating countries proposed to have the above laboratory training hosted in the central veterinary laboratory in Teheran (Iran). Jordan and Lebanon are considered as alternatives.

Recommendation 2

Support should be considered for further laboratory training as needed, either in countries or abroad in an International Reference Laboratory.

Recommendation 3

A Laboratory network will be established among the participating countries to promote the exchange of information and knowledge on HPAI. It is proposed to coordinate this network through the OFFLU website.

Recommendation 4

A Regional Supporting Laboratory with the capacity to assist the participating countries is considered. The participants agreed that FAO and OIE will assess different national laboratories in the region to identify one of them as a regional laboratory. The central veterinary laboratory in Amman (Jordan) has been proposed.

II- Epidemiology and Surveillance

Recommendation 1

Knowledge on the wild bird population in the region should be improved and relevant data generated, such as population size estimates, population distribution, migration behavior. This would be facilitated through establishment of a wildlife regional center.

Recommendation 3

A regional surveillance system in wild birds is considered and the surveillance activities in each country should be based on needs of the region.

Recommendation 4

Data sharing of surveillance programmes for domestic flocks and wild birds should be improved, taking into account existing national and regional networks to build a regional risk analysis.

Recommendation 5

Trade in falcons usually used for hunting is an important activity in the Middle East and Gulf states. More attention should be given to improve prevention and control of the disease in captive wildlife including falcons and other raptors.

III- Control and Awareness

Recommendation 1

Facing the HPAI threat, the official authorities are urged to ensure the full capability of their veterinary services to deal with animal/public health crises

Recommendation 2

A national intersectoral avian influenza steering committee should be established in each country with advisory/technical representatives. A focal point for avian influenza should be nominated within each country to facilitate regional information sharing and networking through a regional avian influenza website

Recommendation 3

Preparedness plans should include compensation and awareness strategies as well as simulation exercises. They will be prepared by each country and should be made available to the region in a coordinated manner with the technical assistance of FAO, OIE, WHO and other concerned international and regional organizations for review and harmonization.

Recommendation 4

Countries are urged to allocate with priority own resources for prevention and control of AI.

Grant resources should be used with priority to improve preparedness capacities for HPAI and other transboundary diseases

Loan resources should be used to complement these capacity building efforts and to establish a reliable and fast mechanism for

the case of an outbreak such as compensation, culling and disinfection