

Avian Influenza in Azerbaijan

Coordination, Complementarity and Coherence in Avian Influenza.

A warm greeting to you all. As efforts extend for a third year since the Feb 06 AI outbreak in Azerbaijan, and more partners enter the AI arena, I sense the theme for AI efforts should be 3 'C's: *Coordination, Complementarity and Coherence*. Enhanced *coordination* on AI policy is needed for development of sound practice, *complementarity* in the myriad activities embarked upon and improved *coherence* in the division of labour for all AI work.

Adherence to such principles will increase effectiveness and synergy amongst all partners and in turn greatly strengthen the national prevention against an AI/ PI outbreak, consolidating the hard work and solid progress achieved over the past two years.



All progress in combating AI hinges upon sustained political commitment at the highest levels both in Azerbaijan and from international leaders. We hope this commitment will be sustained and that AI leadership and partnership will blossom in Azerbaijan in the face of this very real economic and public health threat. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Embassy of Japan as a major partner in our newsletter production.

I wish you all '*bon courage*' in striving for the 3 'C's in all Avian and Pandemic Influenza endeavours this year.

**With best wishes Hanaa Singer ,
UNICEF Representative, Azerbaijan and AI Task Force
Coordinator**

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(Excerpts from NIAID Biweekly AI Digest)

FAO commends India for its AI efforts in W. Bengal where virus is now under control in West Bengal – intensive surveillance required (www.fao.org/newsroom)

The World Bank has said the avian influenza is a major challenge to the poultry industry of Bangladesh and it has already hurt the sector as 41 out of the 64 districts have so far been affected (www.independent-bangladesh.com/200802242309/health)

While Asian countries are more prepared to react to any outbreaks than before and have vaccine stockpiles, deaths and infections have continued, noted Takeshi Kasai, the **WHO's** regional adviser in communicable disease surveillance and response unit. (www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story)

Human: 5 new confirmed cases/ 3 deaths – Egypt, Vietnam, China

Animal: Fresh H5N1 outbreaks in Hong Kong wild birds (http://presszoom.com/story_143738.html)

CDC: “Influenza season past its peak as of March 1”, www.CDC.gov

Pandemic Preparedness Planning:

Vietnam begins new bird flu campaign <http://vietnamnews.vnagency.com.vn>

China and OIE agree to increased cooperation on animal disease prevention and control [OIE Press](http://www.OIE.Press)

Pan-African Initiative to fight bird flu: A new pan-African initiative to combat bird flu was launched yesterday in Dakar, Senegal, in a breakthrough partnership between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), 30 million euros.

ST. LOUIS, March 5 /PRNewswire/ If history is any guide, a modern-day influenza pandemic in the United States would likely **hit city dwellers and non-whites the hardest**, based on an economic analysis from the Federal Reserve. Bank of St. Louis.

AI cases:

371

human

cases 235

deaths

worldwide

5 March 08

(WHO).



Azerbaijani AI News.....The Second Round of Avian Flu monitoring held in Azerbaijan.

Published in Today.Az , 04 Feb. 08. The second AI Prevention monitoring of 2008 was undertaken on Feb 18th by a special commission, composed of specialists from the State Veterinary service, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Health, Society of Hunters and Institute of Zoology of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Science. Areas covered were: Absheron peninsula, Devechi, Salyan, Agjebedi and Lenkeran regions.

The spokesman added that the avian flu situation is 'normal' in the country. Monitoring revealed the absence of H5N1. But the ban on hunting, use and sale of poultry and its import from neighbouring Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, Poland and Iran, remains effective.



Update on AI activities in Azerbaijan January & February 2008

The State Commission on AI met on 21st Jan 08 and agreed the '**Integrated AI communication Strategy**', according to Azer Melikov, WBAIP. Partners are now awaiting details and a call from the government on the strategy implementation and establishment of '*Communication Working Group*' with "participation from all relevant ministries, donor and related NGOs". We hope these new structures can help harmonise all the new AI communication activities. For more details please contact Azer Melikov: ameikov@agroagency.gov.az



Government striving to improve surveillance systems..

U.S. Department of Defense, in cooperation with the Government of Azerbaijan's DTRA Program's conducted the 2nd **Electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance System (EIDSS) Harmonisation meeting at the Hyatt, March 3-5, 08**. Representatives from Ministries of Health and Agriculture of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine as well as U.S. CDC and U.S. Experts reviewed progress and discussed the EIDSS software updates. During the 3-day meeting, representatives introduced their country's perspectives on human and animal disease reporting and laboratory practices. EIDSS will allow rapid flow of disease data to ministry, republican, zonal, and rayon level facilities. This was an excellent initiative but more information and an update for all partners would be helpful.

The African Swine Fever virus was detected by the State Vet Service in Jan 08: in the Gabala Region's Nidzh, village which was quarantined. The virus has now been controlled, according to the government, and provided a good opportunity to rehearse outbreak procedures.

AI Training Sapporo, Japan, 16-24 Jan, 2008: FAO's 'Central Asia Regional Network on Avian Influenza' project national consultant, Tamilla Aliyeva, participated in a regional AI seminar organised by the government of Japan. 12 countries participated and participants exchanged information, shared work experience and undertook practical training in AI LAMP-diagnostics method and phylogenetic analysis of genes sequencing.

Donor activities update

UNICEF AI activities: continued support to national AI coordination activities esp. AI Task Force and AI Newsletter to promote better coordination, complementarity and coherence. Field efforts include; broadening of the UNICEF AI 1) **social mobilisation** campaign '*Be Healthy, Protect Your Health*' in high risk districts of Agdash, Aghdjabedy, Davechi, and Ter-Ter March to June, 2008, in partnership with Ministries of Youth and Sports and Education, and local youth NGOs, e.g. 112,000 AI booklets, 4,000 posters distributed, 10 school competitions held, etc. (details: aliyev@unicef.org). 2) In collaboration with Save the Children, UNICEF will continue to provide **AI and life-skills training for children aged 5-11** through puppet shows and TV media. For further information please contact: Ayna : amollazade@unicef.org

USAID in 2007 awarded Development Alternatives Inc.(DAI), a global contract to combat avian influenza. The contract, 'Stamping Out Pandemic and Avian Influenza' (STOP AI), is a 3-yr commitment to prevent highly pathogenic AI from evolving into a form transmissible to and between humans, while mitigating the economic hardship arising from the disease. The project will provide technical resources and support services in:

Donor News continued.....

1) preparedness planning, surveillance, and prevention; 2) outbreak response; and 3) re-infection prevention and recovery. STOP AI is led by **Dr. Ross Graham** and his team who met with AI stakeholders in Azerbaijan 18th-29th Feb 08. **Details of that assessment will be shared with partners.**

DAI's subcontractors on STOP AI are Bird Flu Control GmbH; Macfadden & Associates, Inc.; Management Sciences for Health, Inc.; Michigan State University; QED Group, LLC; Training Resources Group, Inc.; UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine; and Winrock International. *For additional information on STOP AI DAI's contact: ross_graham@dai.com*

3) **USAID' AI.COMM program is currently implementing behaviour change communications activities for AI through the Academy for Educational Development (AED).** Information on this campaign, as well as avian influenza materials and messages, can be found at: www.aed.org/avianflu/. The AED team met with AI stakeholders in Azerbaijan 18th-29th Feb 08. *For more details contact: Jale Sultanli: jsultanli@gmail.com or Thomas Kane: thomastkane@yahoo.com*

National Avian Influenza Task Force Meeting

The 2nd jointly chaired National Avian Influenza Task Force Meeting, was held on 27th Feb, 08 at the State Veterinary Service, Baku. The meeting was chaired by Ismayil Hasanov, Head of State Veterinary Department, Republic of Azerbaijan and Hanaa Singer, UNICEF Representative, Azerbaijan.

Participants included: representatives from the Ministries of Health, Education, Ecology, Emergency Situations and Agriculture; UK, USA embassies; UN, UNICEF, FAO, WHO, World Food Program; Booz Allen Hamilton, Raytheon, World Bank, USAID, DAI, AED, and the International Red Cross. Apologies, Ali Mammedov, Cabinet of Ministers.

Action:

- 1) In view of the large potential for **overlap and duplication of AI efforts, esp. in research and media communication**, (e.g there have been 5 separate KAP studies of AI in Azerbaijan in 2 years), **partners were again urged to actively cooperate and communicate regularly on all AI/PI matters.**
- 2) Speakers requested **the government to present their 'roadmap' for AI** in all sectors in Azerbaijan in order for donors to fit into the government framework.
- 3) **USAID was asked to share the "situation assessment"** report of the DAI, AED recent mission and to share the project work plan well *before* it is finalised.



A specific date was not agreed for the next meeting although April 08 is likely. *Minutes of the meeting can be obtained from Dominique: domfreire@gmail.com*

Note from editor: Enjoy our fifth newsletter. I would be delighted to hear any ideas or suggestions and especially to have any contributions! Dominique Freire (consultant to UNICEF): domfreire@gmail.com or mobile: 050 582 54 22.

Focal Points for Avian Influenza in Azerbaijan

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