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Canada's Contributions to the Global Fight Against Avian and Pandemic Influenza

Canada is a strong proponent of a coordinated multilateral approach to the global fight against avian influenza and a potential human influenza pandemic. We recognize the importance of integrated national and regional planning for both animal and human health.

Canada supports the international efforts of multilateral organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and the UN System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC). Canada also actively contributes to avian influenza and human pandemic preparedness in such forums as the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI), the G8, the Global Health Security Initiative (GHSI) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

To help achieve global health and development goals, the Government of Canada has made significant contributions to international efforts to combat avian influenza and prepare for a potential human influenza pandemic. Canada's initial commitments of \$41.1 million focused largely on building response capacity in countries hardest hit by avian influenza. These early interventions were intended to increase the capacity of national public health systems to detect and respond to emerging infectious diseases, and to reinforce and enhance regional planning and response mechanisms. In addition, Canadian initiatives promoted dialogue between a range of international actors and increased collaboration between the animal and human health sectors.

Promoting Global Coordination

- Recognizing the complexity of coordinating global efforts, Canada has contributed \$1 million to support United Nations System Influenza Coordination.
- Canada has committed \$15 million over 5 years to the WHO, FAO and OIE to support collaborative work on avian and human influenza pandemic preparedness.
- Canada chairs the Global Health Security Action Group (an informal partnership of the original G7, Mexico, European Commission and WHO), and actively engages in sharing information, identifying best practices, and exploring areas of cooperation on pandemic preparedness.
- In October 2005, Canada hosted an international meeting of Ministers of Health on global pandemic influenza readiness, attended by delegates from 30 countries and nine international organizations.

Strengthening Regional Preparedness and Response

- Canada is working with the United States and Mexico to develop an integrated North American plan on avian and pandemic influenza preparedness.
- As Chair of the APEC Health Task Force, Canada is engaged in avian influenza and pandemic preparedness efforts in the APEC region.
- Canada has committed over \$18 million to projects in Southeast Asia and China aimed at improving surveillance and outbreak investigation, strengthening laboratory systems, and developing capacity for risk communications and public education.
- As a component of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) health program, Canada has provided \$1.4 million to targeted countries in the region to support the development and implementation of their national influenza pandemic preparedness plans.

Building Capacity and Providing Technical Assistance

- Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) works with scientific research centres in Southeast Asia to advance research on avian influenza viruses, vaccine and antiviral development and production. It is also providing funding for research partners in developing countries for projects that focus on building capacity in underfunded research areas.
- Canada has committed \$1 million to the WHO Global Action Plan on Pandemic Influenza (GAP) to increase the world's supply of influenza vaccine, including in lower and middle income countries.
- In Vietnam, Canada has contributed laboratory support and supplies, trained researchers at the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) and provided a mobile lab to assist with testing avian influenza samples.
- In support of FAO and OIE initiatives, Canada deploys technical and veterinary experts to affected regions to help build capacity to control avian influenza.
- Canada's National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease (NCFAD) was recently designated as an OIE World Reference Laboratory for avian influenza. This designation will lead to increased international diagnostic testing capacity.

The Government of Canada is providing a further \$64.4 million to promote a coordinated multilateral approach to avian and pandemic influenza preparedness and response. This builds on the \$41.1 million previously committed and includes \$57 million announced by the Prime Minister at the G8 Summit in July 2006. Canada's overall contribution to global efforts on avian and pandemic influenza now totals \$105.5 million.

In addition to supporting the broader work of specialized international technical agencies and key regional development banks, Canada provides funding to UN humanitarian agencies that focus on particularly vulnerable populations, and to organizations that specialize in field-level emergency response. Canada's support to the Office of the UN System Influenza Coordinator will help ensure coordination across this spectrum of international actors.

Canada's contributions complement previous and ongoing funding commitments and projects.

Supporting Emergency Response

- Canada has provided \$5 million to the WHO initiative *Rapid Strengthening of the Response Capacity for Avian Influenza in Indonesia*.
- Canada is a founding member of the Global Outbreak and Alert Response Network (GOARN) and provides human resources, including epidemiological and laboratory expertise, for GOARN international outbreak response teams.
- Canada is also a founding member of the International Animal Health Emergency Reserve, a network of veterinary professionals that deploys expertise, upon request, to an affected member country.
- Canada will contribute funding to support the evolution of Veterinarians Without Borders (VSF) and its involvement in the establishment of private sector and non-governmental surge capacity for emergency management and response.



For information on Canada's domestic avian and human pandemic preparedness, please visit www.influenza.gc.ca